CAUGHT! THE RISE AND RUIN OF DISNEY'S WEB WHIZ

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE OF THE INFORMATION AGE

DISNEY

NEWS CORP.

JANUARY 2000 \$3.95US \$5.95CAN 0 1> 0 1> 0 1> 0 1> 0 1> 0 1>

BRILL'S

move solely to electronic distribution.

with cardboard panels and paper. fine art and photography, and for those who prefer a print reading experience. computer or other personal viewing device.

VAR

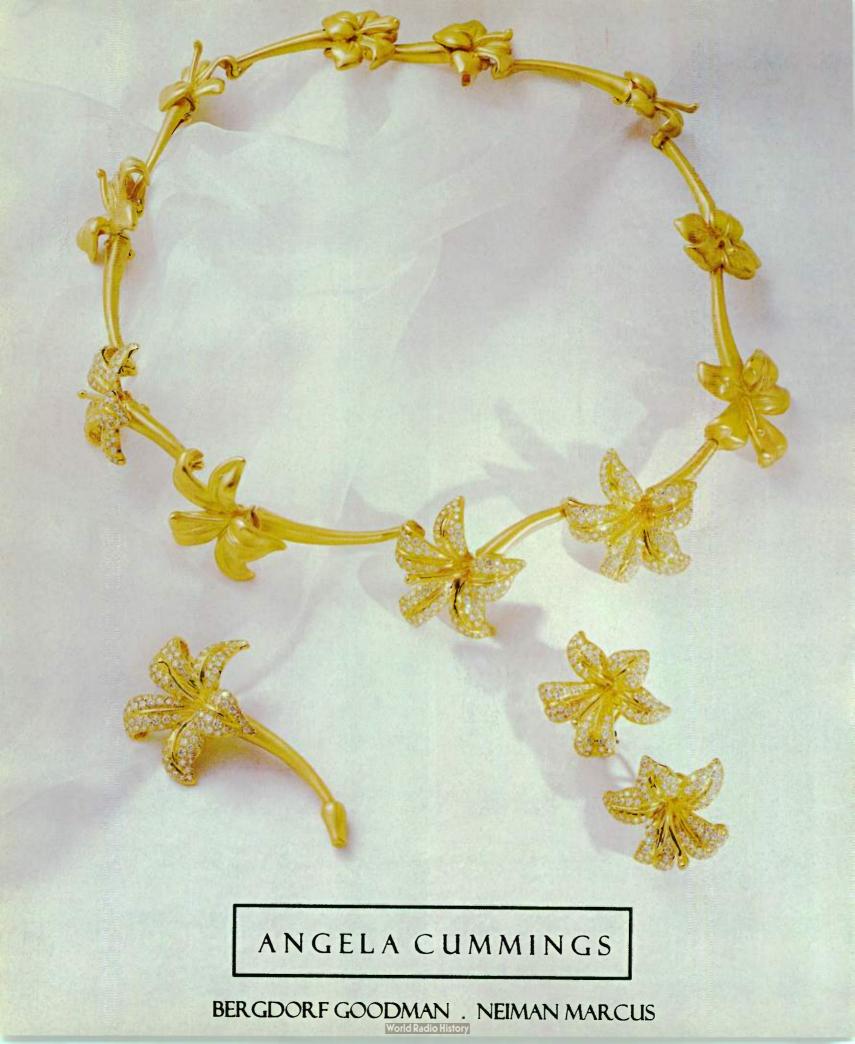
paper form. Webster alters its 1st definition of the word "book" to refer to eBook titles read on screen.

Is this what's ahead?

TACOMICES

With Mierosoft Doode

POLO RALPH LAUREN



[LETTER FROM THE EDITOR]

HOULD WE BE ALARMED BY ALL THE MERGERS taking place in the world of media? How does this conglomeration of ownership affect what we read and watch? Does it really matter who owns the news programs we rely on or the TV shows we enjoy?

We've assembled a special package this month that tackles these questions head-on, with a chorus of smart voices and varied perspectives—from satirist Harry Shearer to author Scott Turow to Time Inc. news honcho Norman Pearlstine—that we hope will leave you a lot more informed about what living in an era of Big Media means.

It's not simply that a handful of big companies are buying up so much of the content—although this "vertical integration" is itself significant. There are also many "horizontal" business relationships that link media giants. General Electric, for instance, owns NBC (which in turn runs CNBC and MSNBC) and is now tied to Dow Jones & Company through a complex relationship between CNBC and the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*. GE is also linked to Microsoft Corporation, which co-owns MSNBC. "In another era," explains senior writer Rifka Rosenwein in her introduction to our 20-page report, which begins on page 92, "these media outlets would be engaged in healthy competition against one another. Now they are partners."

Clearly, this all bears watching, and just as clearly, it's complicated and intimidating. That's why we've included an eye-opening chart mapping the still-evolving landscape of media consolidation. We've also tracked the media diets of ten consumers to find out just how conglomeration has affected their actual intake of news and entertainment, and we've provided an assortment of "Synergy Snapshots" showing how companies use their power in the content marketplace.

This ambitious project was overseen by executive editor

Elizabeth Lesly Stevens, with contributions from Rosenwein, staff writers Jennifer Greenstein and Leslie Heilbrunn, and assistant editors Matthew Reed Baker, Amy DiTullio, Leslie Falk, Jane Manners, Jesse Oxfeld, Julie Scelfo, and Chipp Winston.

While there's no question that ownership structure has a big impact on what media produces, it's also true that much of what we see is the result of individual choices by individual people. For instance, since November 1998, *Newsweek* has been run by Mark Whitaker, who took over after the devastating death of his mentor, Maynard Parker. Senior correspondent Gay Jervey, in her profile of Whitaker, finds that his reserved management style and his interests have already had an impact on the powerful magazine.

"The magazine operates on a different rhythm under Whitaker's watch, one more modulated than Parker's raucous rendition," Jervey reports. "But Whitaker exhibits traits essential for a newsmagazine editor, ones Parker possessed: He's smart, frighteningly competitive, and willing to tear up the magazine at the last moment if the story is right" (see "The Iceman Cometh," page 80).

Also this month, we're pleased to introduce two regular features. In "On The Trail" (page 65), staff writer Ted Rose will follow the press and the candidates to chronicle the media's role in shaping our view of the 2000 presidential campaign. And in "The Pitch" (page 70), columnist Leslie Savan (author of *The Sponsored Life*) takes a close, critical look at how advertising—subtly and otherwise—seeks to influence what we know and how we act.



ERIC EFFRON EDITOR

WHAT WE STAND FOR

1. ACCURACY: Brill's Content is about all that purports to be nonfiction. So it should be no surprise that our first principle is that anything that purports to be nonfiction should be true. Which means it should be accurate in fact and in context.

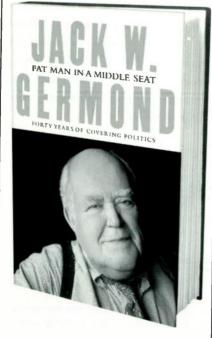
2. LABELING AND SOURCING: Similarly, if a publisher is not certain that something is accurate, the publisher should either not publish it, or should make that uncertainty plain by clearly stating the source of his information and its possible limits and pitfalls. To take another example of making the quality of information clear, we believe that if unnamed sources must be used, they should be labeled in a way that sheds light on the limits and biases of the information they offer. 3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST: We believe that the content of anything that sells itself as journalism should be free of any motive other than informing its consumers. In other words, it should not be motivated, for example, by the desire to curry favor with an advertiser or to advance a particular political interest.

4. ACCOUNTABILITY: We believe that journalists should hold themselves as accountable as any of the subjects they write about. They should be eager to receive complaints about their work, to investigate complaints diligently, and to correct mistakes of fact, context, and fairness prominently and clearly.

POLITICAL REPORTING IS A BATTLE.

MEET THE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION.

He's been there. He's done that. And now the revered (and irascible) political pundit tells all—from back-of-the-plane meetings, off-the-record briefings, and run-ins with the century's most notable figures to accounts of his fast-paced, red-eye-taking life as a reporter.



"Germond is the closest thing we have to a kingmaker in American politics today."

—The Wall Street Journal

RANDOM A HOUSE www.randomhouse.com

Steven Brill Chairman and Editor in Chief

> Eric Effron Editor

Anick Pleven Managing Editor Elizabeth Lesly Stevens Executive Editor Senior Editors: Lorne Manly, Laura Mazer, Nicholas Varchaver Senior Correspondents: Gay Jervey, Abigail Pogrebin Senior Writers: Michael Colton, Rifka Rosenwein, Katherine Rosman, Robert Schmidt Ed Shanahan Senior Associate Editor Bob Ickes Copy Editor Dimitra Kessenides, Bridget Samburg Associate Editors Staff Writers: Kimberly Conniff, Jennifer Greenstein, Leslie Heilbrunn, Matthew Heimer, Ted Rose Contributing Editors: David Johnson, Jon Katz, David McClintick, Jeff Pooley, Mike Pride, John R. Quain, Calvin Trillin Paisley Weinstein Assistant Managing Editor Howard Witt Editor, brillscontent.com Ari Voukydis Online Manager Assistant Editors: Kendra Ammann, Matthew Reed Baker, Amy DiTullio, Leslie Falk, Ron Klein, Jane Manners, Jesse Oxfeld, Julie Scelfo, Chipp Winston Olga Georgevich Assistant to the Chairman and Editor in Chief Gernell A. Welcher Assistant to the Editor Bill Kovach Outside Ombudsman Stephanie Bleyer Editorial Intern

> Josh McKible Acting Art Director Stella Kramer Photo Editor Walter Bernard, Milton Glaser Design Consultants Phaedra Brown Assistant Photo Editor Heather Sears Designer Natalie Julie-Ann Hoo Photo Assistant

> > Margaret E. Samson President

Adrienne Cleere Publisher Carl Trautmann Advertising Director Kathleen Frawley Johnson Advertising Services Manager SALES REPRESENTATIVES Scott Claster, Robert M. Edmunds (WEST) Karen Fraser 310-472-3561 (DETROIT) Mary Pat Kaleth 248-203-9899 Jennifer Bedoya Sales Assistant

Stephanie Kanarek Vice-President, Finance Miriam Ko Accounting Manager Noreen McInerney Financial Consultant Cindy Rosenthal Director of Public Relations David Doscher MIS Director Patrick Whalen, David White Technical Consultants Renee Lindsay Director of Office Services & Human Resources Mary Sapounakis Administrative Assistant John W. Elmore Jr., Beatrice ElDarir, Anitria Wilson Office Assistants Publishing Experts, Inc. Manufacturing and Production Circulation Specialists, Inc. Circulation Irwin Billman, Ralph Perricelli Newsstand Consultants

BRILL MEDIA VENTURES, L.P.

Steven Brill Chairman and CEO Cynthia M. Brill Executive Vice-President and General Counsel Margaret E. Samson Senior Vice-President 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175 212-824-1900 Subscriptions 1-800-829-9154 Customer Service 212-824-1975 • customerservice@brillscontent.com AOL Keyword: Brills • www.brillscontent.com ABC membership applied for.

Occasionally, we offer our subscriber list to other companies whose products and services may interest you. Many of our subscribers find this a valuable service. We strictly monitor use of our list. If you would prefer not to receive these mailings, just send us your label with instructions not to release your name. Printed in the USA

TOGETHER IN CONCERT FROM JAMAICA ERYKAH BADU TRACY CHAPMAN JIMMY CLIFF SHERYL CROW LAURYN HILL QUEEN LATIFAH RITA MARLEY STEPHEN MARLEY ZIGGY MARLEY & THE MELODY MAKERS SARAH MCLACHLAN BUSTA RHYMES SEAL

ONE LOVE THE BOB MARLEY ALL-STAR TRIBUTE



8PM ET/PT



BOB MARLEY: CHANT DOWN BABYLON TUFF R GOB AVAILABLE AT BEST BUY NOV. 16

BLE AT BEST BUT NOV. 16 WWW.BOBMARLEY.COM THE ISLAND DEFJAM GROUP UNIVERSAL MUSIC COMPANY





They're fighting an uphill battle. They knew they'd face steep competition, but the guys at Igneous took their passion and made it a profession – custom building high-performance skis. After years of working and sleeping in their Jackson Hole factory, they're finally breaking even. But for them, success is secondary. They're in it for the sport.





René Deixary drick responsibly. Contact is at were deviating other con-Courses and the Rener or responsible magnetics. Chart Annu Device & Devicourses and the Rener to Bener the Course of the State of the Course of State Courses of State of the Stat

Dewar's PROFILE



DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000 · VOLUME 2 · NUMBER TEN

FEATURES **ON THE COVER** SPECIAL REPORT

92 Is This What's Ahead?

What are the consequences of living in a world in which a few conglomerates create and distribute the bulk of our news and ideas? In our survival guide to the age of Big Media, leading industry figures offer reports from the front lines; ten average Americans keep track of one day's media diet; and our Big Media Roadmap lays bare the tangled assets, joint ventures, and cross-ownerships of today's conglomerates.

The Iceman Cometh

BY GAY JERVEY

Newsweek editor Mark Whitaker tries to shed his reserve and keep his magazine relevant in an intensely competitive media world.

Deep Into Crime

BY BRIDGET SAMBURG

A local TV station in Fresno, California, produces crime stories that aren't shallow or sensationalistic. But is this what people want to watch?

112 **Risky Business**

BY KATHERINE ROSMAN

Java creator Patrick Naughton was a prince of new media. But an FBI sting operation revealed a secret side to Naughton that has ended his climb to power.

ON OUR COVER:

Illustration by Bonnie Hofkin



92 Media conglomerates are scrambling to claim as much of

your "mind share" as possible.

112 Whiz kid Patrick Naughton got caught in the Web he had

helped create.

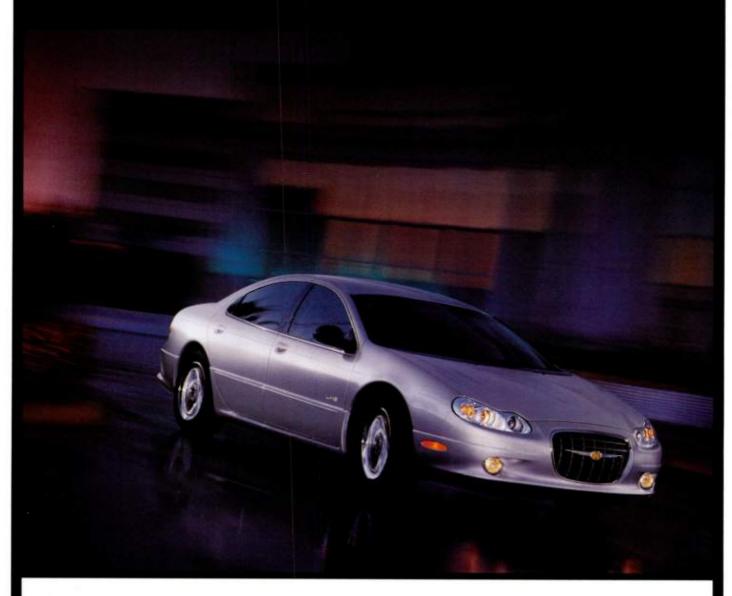


80 One year into Newsweek editor Mark Whitaker's tenure, the magazine has changed to reflect his own reserved and deliberate style.

80

88

A rare moment when your heart, mind and wallet can agree.



And how could they not? The 2000 Chrysler LHS is a car with all the amenities you'll ever desire. Such as a leather-trimmed interior, power heated front seats, speed-sensitive steering and a 253 hp engine. And priced at \$28,695,* it'll bring your heart, mind and wallet into perfect harmony—at least on one thing. For more information, call 1.800.CHRYSLER or visit us on the Web at www.chrysler.com.



*Base MSRP includes destination. Tax & wheels shown, extra-



62 The publication of

Edmund Morris's biography of Ronald Reagan sent the literary elite into a spin.

COLUMNS

REWIND

REPORT FROM THE OMBUDSMAN

An independent review of questions and complaints about Brill's Content.	
-BY BILL KOVACH	2

OUT HERE

High-speed auto racing is thrilling to watch. But NASCAR didn't want
newspaper readers to see how bloody it can be.
-BY MIKE PRIDE

THE WRY SIDE

THE BIG BLUR

FACE-OFF

THE CULTURAL ELITE

ON THE TRAIL

TALK BACK

THE PITCH

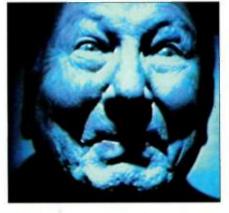
34

Want to wrangle a star like Gwyneth Paltrow for your cover? An American Society of Magazine Editors seminar offered some tips.

70 PSInet is one of many dotcom enterprises relying

on the old media to

advertise the new.





48 Time Warner says a caped Canadian jeweler looks a lot like Superman. Trillin says: So what!

WORKING BOTH SIDES OF THE STREET

THE ODESSA FILES: PRESS DIGS TEXAN FOR DIRT Wilmer Ray finds himself caught up in the Bush drug rumors........35

THE LONG ROAD TO A SHOCKING WAR STORY

The Associated Press's Korea scoop caused the wire service its own share of pain......42

PUNDIT SCORECARD

Our latest measure of pundit accuracy has Capital Gang member Al Hunt ascending and Pat Buchanan dropping out......43 BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

NBA OMT NJ tuesdays + fridays

DEPARTMENTS

LETTERS

Readers give a thumbs-up to the proposed restrictions on invasive reporting we set forth in the October issue, but had other ideas about our

HOW THEY GOT THAT SHOT

Matty Stern snaps an after-dinner tête-à-tête between U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

STUFF WE LIKE

A few of the things that bring us pleasure.

CREATORS

For more than 25 years, Tony and Maureen Wheeler's Lonely Planet guidebooks have led explorers to every corner of the world.

THE MONEY PRESS

What are companies not telling the average investor? A lot, to judge from a recent story in TheStreet.com. -BY ROBERT SCHMIDT......

FINDINGS

(CREATORS); JAMES WORRELL (NEXT)

HARRIET LOGAN/NETWORK (HONOR ROLL); ERIC MILLETTE

A layperson-friendly roundup of intriguing findings in recent media scholarship.

-BY JEFF POOLEY 120



Harriet Logan enters dangerous territory to convey the stories of oppressed women, like the one pictured here.



Maureen and Tony Wheeler created the perfect travel companion: the Lonely Planet guidebooks.

HONOR ROLL

British photographer Harriet Logan steps into her subjects' worlds to create heart-stopping images of oppressed women.

CREDENTIALS

Editorial cartoonists on drawing the news.	
-BY AMY DITULLIO	

UNHYPED BOOKS

The Junction Boys recounts a football team's ten days of boot-camp hell with coach Bear Bryant. Also: The power and money behind the Mormon

SOURCES

Get ready to hit the slopes with some help from our guide to skiing and snowboarding. ----BY BRIDGET SAMBURG

TICKER

Our running database of facts and figures......135

KICKER

A satirical look at our media culture.

NEXT

THE TOP 10 CONTENT TOOLS OF 1999

In the ever-expanding world of electronic gadgets, consumers face hundreds of choices when it comes to creating and consuming media. From high-speed modems to personal digital assistants, we present the year's top ten tools-the ones that hold the most promise to change the content we read, see, and hear in the next millennium. BY JOHN R. QUAIN



The Apple iBook with AirPort, one of the Top 10 Content Tools of 1999.

comments@brillscontent.com.

Ν S P R Ε Т Ο С Ο R С Ο

I. We always publish corrections at least as prominently as the original mistake was published.

2. We are eager to make corrections quickly and candidly.

3. Although we welcome letters to the editor that are critical of our work, an aggrieved party need not have a letter to the editor published for us to correct a mistake. We will publish corrections on our own and in our own voice as soon as we are told about a mistake by anyone-our staff, an uninvolved reader, or an aggrieved reader-and can confirm the correct information.

 Our corrections policy should not be mistaken for a policy of accommodating readers who are simply unhappy about a story that has been published. BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

NEWS CHOOSERS

*In your article on privacy you state, "Sure, we were all curious to see the grieving family." No, sir, we are not! I am not, and I cannot believe I am alone in that sentiment! You and others in the media have a fundamental misunderstanding that leads to debates such as the one described in the article. The "media" and even its critics actually think there is a definable "thing" out there called news. There is not! News is what a limited number of people choose to relate to the public through whatever technology is currently available.

> GREG GAULT Raleigh, NC

NO MIKES, PLEASE

I do not speak for others, and I am not a famous person, not even infamous. However, I do know that if in my moment of grief some TV reporter put a microphone in my face, I would make every effort to see that he immediately wore it as a rectal thermometer.

> J. PHILIP SCHEDIWY Apple Valley, CA

DOESN'T INFORM

*Your October article proposing voluntary privacy limits ignores one of the most basic tenets of journalism—that its primary purpose is to inform and enlighten. A photo or video clip of brokenhearted family members teaches us nothing we do not already understand; rather, it reveals the very act of newsgathering as the remorseless economic lever it has become.

> KATHLEEN STEBBINS Sparks, NV

SO WHO'S WATCHING?

*I read with interest your article in the October 1999 issue regarding the protection of privacy. I found the results of the public poll a little curious. The article states that "[t]he results were overwhelming. By margins ranging from about three-to-one to nine-to-one, those polled favored the adoption of these restrictions." If these results are to be believed, why do CNN, MSNBC, and others record huge numbers of viewers while covering such events as the death of John F. Kennedy Jr.?

> JOHN VON SEEBURG San Leandro, CA

BIASED VIEW

*I was troubled by [senior writer] Katherine Rosman's article ["Why The Media Kept Their Eyes Wide Shut," October] in the issue I just cracked open today—troubled and surprised.

Ms. Rosman's biases are evident in every sentence: She clearly hated Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* and wanted us to know how she—and everyone else had been "had" by the movie. There is nothing remotely objective about this

piece. She repeatedly talks about the scathing reviews, quoting from The New Yorker's half-baked review by David Denby, "among the most influential reviewers in the country." (Really? I would suggest that relatively few moviegoers even know Denby's name and that fewer still have ever read one word of his reviews-or care to.) Rosman conveniently ignores the facts of the response to Eyes Wide Shutthat [some] reviews were mixed (The Wall Street Journal) and many were glowing from distinguished sources including The New York Times, Roger Ebert, and others. She also missed an even more important truth about Kubrick's movies: They are complex works of art that nearly always get mixed reviews before later being acknowledged as masterpieces.

> BOB KNOTTS Oakland Park, FL

ISN'T IT A PITY?

*The overselling of Stanley Kubrick's *Eyes Wide Shut* should have provided a number of interesting themes for consideration in your publication, including: the deceased, famously secretive filmmaker's long relationship with Warner Bros. executives and their attempt to market the film in a Kubrickian manner without Kubrick; Tom Cruise's decision to brake his career's momentum for the film; the interest of the studio(s) and entertainment media in maintaining his stardom and profitability; and, not least, the question of how an intelligent and difficult, if flawed, film about adult relation-



ships can elbow its way into a cineplex filled by zillion-dollar special effects work and self-conscious pseudo-independents.

What a pity that Katherine Rosman chose not to write about any of these issues. Instead, she lazily rehashed built-up puffery and then quoted a couple of nasty jokes from reviews, which, she assured us, were "scathing" (they were, in fact, wildly mixed).

> WILLIAM W. HARDESTY Austin, TX

GOOD LAST LAUGH

*I devour *Brill's Content* cover to cover every month. I particularly liked Katherine Rosman's "Why the Media Kept Their Eyes Wide Shut." Her last sentence made me laugh. While great closure, it was nevertheless a little inaccurate: "Dead men have no publicists." Elvis Presley and Walt Disney come to mind.

> DAVID ERICKSON St. Paul, MN (continued on page 131)



IT'S WHAT YOU GET AWAY FROM. IT'S WHAT YOU GET AWAY TO.

JACK DANIEL'S SINGLE BARREL WHISKEY A SINGULAR EXPERIENCE



how they got that SHOT

MATTY STERN IS PRIVY TO MANY HISTORICAL MOMENTS, SOME MORE PRIVATE than others. An information assistant at the United States embassy in Israel, the Israeli-born Stern has served as an official photographer of countless dignitaries visiting his native country in the hope of establishing peace in the Middle East.

In early September, U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright traveled to the Middle East to assist with negotiations between Israeli and Palestinian leaders who had been struggling to implement the Wye River peace accord. On the evening of September 3, when Albright visited Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Gaza City, Stern was one of only two photographers granted virtually unlimited access. (The other was Arafat's official photographer.)

Following an orchestrated photo session, Stern was present as Albright attended a dinner hosted by Arafat, after which she retreated to a private office to phone President Bill Clinton. After several minutes, Arafat joined her. "I understood that eventually they were going to put [Arafat] on the line," says Stern. A few minutes later, "she passed the headset to him. He was talking to the president in Arabic," recalls the photographer, explaining that typically, a translator is also on the line.

At first, Stern says, Albright was standing near the desk, shown in this picture, while Arafat was sitting. But then, "he was a real gentleman. He came up from the chair while talking" in order to offer a seat to Albright. Stern says Arafat then "signaled for her to get closer to listen to the president." And the result is this têteà-tête, one of 16 pictures the photographer took while in the office with Albright and Arafat.

Stern, who was testing a Sony Digital Mavica camera that evening, notes that he is disappointed with the pictures' resolution. However, he says, digital technology allows images to be transmitted at an unbelievable speed. "Ten minutes later the pictures were in the [Associated Press] offices in New York," says Stern. "It's amazing." Stern says another memorable aspect of that night was the sense of excitement between Albright and Arafat. "The whole evening, the environment was very good," he recalls. "There was lots of smiling." Close to a peace agreement, Albright and Arafat had reason to smile.

This photo was picked up by The Associated Press and MSNBC.com.

-Bridget Samburg





Beyond buzz: How the flimsiest of stories take on a life of their own. Plus: Attaching names to the sleaze.

NAMING NAMES

In honor of the special package we have done for this issue on media conglomerates, here's a simple proposal that would make these often anonymous corporate giants more accountable for their products in a way that might get them to discard some of the truly trashy stuff: Congress should change the copyright law so that as a condition of any corporation's claiming a copyright on any of its products it would have to list in large type the chief executive of the company that has ultimate ownership and control of that product. For example, after the sleaziest Jenny Jones show or World Championship Wrestling match, Time Warner CEO Gerald Levin's name would be displayed prominently as the person ultimately responsible, because those are Time Warner products; following some trashy Dateline NBC segment or NBC Movie of the Week, we'd see Jack Welch of The General Electric Company get top billing; and after The Jerry Springer Show we'd see Barry Diller (and maybe even Donald Graham of The Washington Post Company, if we extend the requirement to include those, such as the Post company, that control the local TV outlet where a show like Springer's appears). Who knows? The power of embarrassment is often a great antidote to unappealing human conduct.

THE TROUBLE WITH BUZZ

Did George W. Bush use cocaine? Is family-values Republican presidential candidate Gary Bauer having an affair with a campaign aide? Does Bill Clinton plan to run for the Senate from Arkansas? Is Al Gore running for president only because his father wanted him to?

None of these questions is shocking, because each is now "out there" in the public arena, courtesy of the kind of groundless and in some cases vicious speculation that in our new media age has moved up the discourse food chain into all kinds of our most respectable media.

Once upon a time, each of these questions would have been a great topic of Washington dinner parties or latenight booze-a-thons among the press corps, as in "So-andso knows someone who knows someone who heard that Bush was a druggie in college" or "Bauer keeps having meetings with that cute staffer." But they would have gone no further absent real reporting and real proof, assuming the issue was relevant enough to be worthy of reporting. Now this stuff is everywhere. We all know that every reporter who can say *Woodward* and Bernstein has tried to get the goods on George W. Bush and drugs. The problem isn't so much that it's irrelevant whether he has ever used illegal drugs. After all, how can anyone claim that this is private conduct if as a governor Bush wants the state involved in that conduct to the point of putting others in prison for doing it? The real problem is that the press should not raise the issue publicly without proof, any more than on a lark or on some hearsay I'd shout out a question to him about child molestation at his next press conference, let alone write a story in a newspaper about someone else's having shouted out the question.

The Bauer case is a better example. This "issue" became public on September 27, when New York's *Daily News* ran this item near the end of its "Rush & Molloy" gossip column: "What presidential candidate is praying that a former secretary doesn't go public with her claim that he's been having an affair with a twentysomething woman? Many on the married Republican's campaign staff are already jumping ship...."

The same day, *The Hotline*, the influential online newsletter read by most political reporters ["*Hotline*'s Heat," November] dutifully ran the item under the headline "WH 2000 Rumor Mill: Dishes GOP Dirt," introducing a reprint of the one-paragraph item with "New York Daily News' Daily Dish writes." On his radio show the next day, when Don Imus asked *Newsweek* political reporter Howard Fineman whom the *HotlinelDaily News* story might be referring to, Fineman didn't bite. But when Imus then asked which candidate was losing staffers, Fineman mentioned Bauer's name. The same day, the *San Francisco Chronicle* reported that Bauer had acknowledged in an interview that he was the victim of a rumor planted by an opponent's camp. And the next morning he held a press conference to deny it.

Many criticized Bauer for having called attention to the rumor by holding that press conference, but, as he rightly explained, his name was already associated with it, and it was bound to dog him if he didn't confront it.

George Rush, the *Daily News* columnist who started it all, says he trusted what he claims is his "more than one" source on the story and did not call Bauer to get his comment or denial before running the item because he knew he was not going to use his name. This, of course, means that Rush is claiming the ultimate in a reporter's free pass: Simply leave out the name in a story that is bound to get a name attached to it soon enough and you don't have to worry about whether it's true, let alone try to get the other side to comment.

The Hotline's primary mission is to report what others are reporting about politics. So its story was not only accurate (the *Daily News* did report what it said it had reported) but also completely consistent with what its readers pay it lots of money to do.

In other words, everyone involved in the Bauer story has a good defense. And they can all argue that if the story did unfair damage to Bauer (or unfairly helped him attack his opponents for allegedly leaking it), that has to do with how others reacted to the story.

Much the same can be said for the "Bill Clinton/senator from Arkansas" story. This one was hatched in a "Talk of the Town" column in *The New Yorker* by Jeffrey Toobin, a highly regarded staff writer for the magazine. Toobin wrote in the July 5 issue, "Over the past several weeks, some old friends of the First Family have been talking about a different [from Hillary] Clinton and a different campaign. These people believe that Bill Clinton will run for the United States Senate from Arkansas in 2002. One person who has spoken to the President about the possibility of this campaign described his reaction as 'noncommittal but interested.' "

To be sure, Toobin spent much of the rest of his column carefully and almost completely backpedaling, citing all the reasons such a campaign wouldn't happen and concluding, "Of course, no one knows the answers to any of these questions, and we may as well get used to stories about the First Couple's future job prospects." But it was enough of a tease that *The New Yorker*—which makes sure that newspaper editors and others who can create buzz get the magazine on Sunday before it hits the newsstands Monday—got all



kinds of pickup. In a process that is typical of how buzzed items get used—the juicy part is magnified while the qualifiers are mostly ignored newspapers around the world reported that *The New Yorker* had all but declared that Bill Clinton was on the verge of a Senate run.

Toobin knew what he was doing. Though he says that he was surprised by the intensity

of the pickup, he was not, he says, surprised that it got picked up. "I knew it had the potential to be talked about," he says, chuckling over how the item was "overplayed." *New Yorker* editor David Remnick, who has been described in several profiles as disdaining—or, in the alternative, not being able to attract—the buzz for his magazine that his predecessor Tina Brown thrived on, also wasn't surprised. "You never know what will get attention and what won't," he says, "but this did have that quality."

In fact, whether consciously or not, Toobin and

Remnick produced the classic buzz-for-buzz's-sake item, and, like Rush of the *Daily News*, they did it in a way that was exquisitely defensible line by line at the same time that, as an item whose only value was its buzz, it was indefensible, if harmless, journalism.

Put simply, on closer look, there was no "there" there in Toobin's "reporting." First, how many "old friends" of the Clintons' (also known as "these people [who] believe") were actually talking about Bill Clinton's running? The Clintons

are well known to have hundreds of such friends. Toobin says he does not want to say how many friends he meant when he used the plural because "I don't want to recapture the writing process for you," whatever that means. Remnick, however, concedes that Toobin did not have "more than two" sources.

Then the item goes from "some old friends" to only one "friend" actually being quoted. He says that the president was "noncommittal but interested." As in: Some guy mentioned it to the president while he was reading something

RUSH & MOLLOY Itemizing

WHAT PRESIDENTIAL candidate is praying that a former secretary doesn't go public with her claim that he's been having an affair with a twentysomething woman? Many on the married Republican's campaign staff are already jumping ship...

San Francisco Chronicle GOP Roce Getting Nosty

and to be polite he said, "Hmmm," and then went on with whatever else he was reading at the time? Or as in: "Wow, what an idea. I'd be really interested in that, but I can't commit right now"? Your guess is as good as mine and presumably Toobin's, but I'd bet that if this "one person" had gotten a response anything like the latter, he'd have quoted it back to Toobin.

Then, of course, there are all of Toobin's qualifiers, such as the election is more than three years away, and why would a president want to go back to a statewide race, let alone go back out there looking for campaign money. Put it all together and, assuming Toobin didn't fabricate the whole thing—which we should assume because he and Remnick are honest, stellar journalists—we may well have one friend, whose degree of closeness with the president is not at all assessed, who mentioned it to the president, who nodded or mumbled; and we may have a second friend who might have "talk[ed] about" it to the first friend or even just to Toobin.

As with Rush's *Daily News* item, what you don't have is any comment from the subject himself. "I might have called [the White House] but if I did, I did not leave any kind of message about what I was writing about," says Toobin. "But I'm not sure. In a situation like this, you're only going to get a denial anyway." Once the story appeared and had made buzzy headlines all over the world, that is exactly what *The New Yorker* got—a statement from the president's press secretary at a daily briefing saying the president thought the story was "crazy." Of course, had Toobin gotten that statement first, let alone interviewed and quoted a few more

"friends," some of whom presumably would have shot the story down, his item would have been a lot less buzzy.

Ditto The New Yorker's October 10 story, also in "Talk of the Town," in which Jane Mayer, writing about how Al Gore is not a natural politician, reported that "[I]n a recent conversation President Clinton suggested to a confidant that the only reason Gore ever sought the Presidency was to please his father, Tennessee's Senator Al Gore Sr., who died last year. 'The President,' this friend says, thinks that 'a lot of Gore's baggage is his father.' Clinton went on to say that... 'but for his father, he would have been a professor, or something more solitary."

That story, too, generated buzz following its distribu-

tion to the press on the Sunday before its publication, including this headline in the Monday morning New York Post: "Clinton: Gore Wants To Please Pop, Not Be Prez."

As the Gore campaign goes South, even Bill Clinton is having doubts. To me, this story seems a lot more plausible than the others because, well, it just seems plausible. It jibes with Gore's much heralded (if much exaggerated) public stiffness and with the common sense idea that lots of kids feel compelled to emulate their parents. At a cocktail party, I'd be delighted to tell this story. But publish it?

Asked why she, like Toobin, had not contacted the White House for comment on whether the president had, in fact, ever said anything like that to a "confidant," Mayer of The New Yorker said, "What makes you think I didn't?" Then why was there no indication in the story that Mayer had asked the president for a comment about the supposed statement? "Maybe it depends on the ground rules," Mayer responded, offering no further explanation. That cryptic response seems to imply that White House spokesman Joe Lockhart was the anonymous source, because he could then presumably not have allowed himself to be involved in denving it on the record. But Lockhart says, through assistant Barry Toiv, that neither he nor anyone else in the press office was asked on or off the record by Mayer about the story. And the only White House official comment, offered after the New York Post picked up on the story, was from spokeswoman Julia Payne, who, after citing all of the president's public praise of Gore, wondered "if this is the same anonymous source who told The New Yorker [that the president] was going to run for Senate from Arkansas." Then again, that's not a denial that President Clinton ever said that about Gore, something that Toiv acknowledges but claims is because "we can't get into denying every ridiculous private conversation that someone reports the president had with some anonymous person."

Why had The New Yorker simply stated as a fact that the president had said this rather than saying "a confidant" says

that the president once said this? Because, Remnick says, "I knew who the source was and trusted him...and so did Jane." (It's worth noting that Mayer, a veteran reporter who skillfully covered the White House during the Reagan years for The Wall Street Journal, no doubt has some excellent sources.)

Remnick acknowledges that stories like this will generate buzz, though he emphasizes that the attention he's proudest of is the longer-lasting type his magazine gets for its more substantive, sometimes trailblazing articles. And he defends a piece like Mayer's as being a fast, short window on an aspect of the presidential campaign worthy of the kind of informal look at things a reader often finds in "Talk of the Town."

Which it is. And "Rush & Molloy" is just a gossip column. And those reporters are just asking questions about THE NEW YORKER

George W. and talking about how others are asking questions about him, not offering answers.

That's all true. But what's also true is that the media machine today doesn't worry about those details. Everything

becomes fodder for everything else and assumes added weight as it gets processed through the media maw. Every blind quote or piece of idle speculation that sees the light of day in some corner can, depending on the com-

peting news out there at that moment, quickly ricochet around from website pickup, to newspaper pickup, to Imus or

Rush, to Leno, to cable TV news talk, to accepted wisdom. In a perfect world, that would make those who produce that fodder more careful about what they uncork. That's

not likely, because the temptation to be part of the buzz is so strong. Every newspaper, television show, website, and magazine, including this one, covets buzz. Being talked about in the rest of the press is the way we think we prove to readers and advertisers that we're important.

In a perfect world, the potential for abuse would also make those who give these items their larger afterlives more careful. That's not likely, either, because the media machine constantly needs more material, and this stuff is defensible because someone else, after all, has said it, so it's already "out there," ready to be blown up and otherwise mangled.

Which, I guess, leaves the job up to everyone else-those of us who are bombarded in print and over the air with these "buzz" items. We need to be more discriminating. We need to look out for stuff that tips us off to how newsless some "news" might be-like plural sources where the names and even number of the sources are hidden, or items where the only "news" is that someone else reported something or, worse, is considering reporting something. Indeed, we need to be especially skeptical of stories whose excuse for relevance is that the controversy or the accusation is already "out there." Most of all, we need to stop rewarding buzz just for its buzziness.

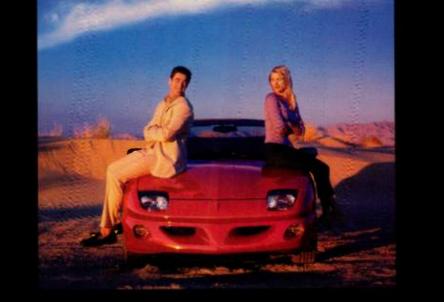


WIND ON CAPITOL HILL











Reliability FINALLY, THE PERFECT LOW-MAINTENANCE RELATIONSHIP. IF ONLY IT WEREN'T A CAR.





GMC

But then it's not just a car. It's a GM. Which means you can rely on it. Depend on it. Count on it to be there for you. Because GM cars and trucks are engineered to go up to 100,000 miles between tune-ups, up to 150,000 miles between coolant changes, and require no timing adjustments, ever.* Plus, 93% of all GM cars and trucks built in the last ten years are still on the road.** Making your GM not only easy to love, but easy to live with. Which is a lot more than can be said for, well, you know...

*Mointenance needs may vary. Consult your owner's manual.
**Based on Polk's Ten Year Vehicles In Operation Study from 7/1/89 through 7/1/98.





week a rotating panel

of writers and journal-

Blount Ir. and Sue

Ellicott), along with lis-

teners who call in.

matches wits with host

Peter Sagal in a series

of games that test their

week's events. This

knowledge of

humorous show

Roy

the

is

ists (including

Calling All Newshounds

SINCE ITS DEBUT IN JANUARY 1998, WAIT WAIT...DON'T TELL ME! has been steadily growing into one of National Public Radio's more popular programs. The hourlong news quiz show, created by *Car Talk* producer Doug Berman, is broadcast on some 110 NPR stations nationwide. Each



Wait Wait host Peter Sagal (left) and official judge and scorekeeper Carl Kasell ponder the news.

both informative and addictive: Recurring features include the "Listener Limerick Challenge," in which callers attempt to complete the last line of a news-based limerick. And on "Not My Job," NPR reporters answer questions outside their area of expertise on behalf of callers. For example, *Weekend Edition Saturday* host Scott Simon recently tackled questions about the fashion world (the veteran journalist answered only one of three questions correctly). There is even a prize for winning listeners (two or more correct responses qualify): NPR *Morning Edition* newscaster Carl Kasell, *Wait Wait*'s official judge and scorekeeper, will record the outgoing message on your home answering machine. —*Anick Pleven*

LATKA: THE UNTOLD STORY

IN THE 15 YEARS SINCE HIS DEATH, ANDY Kaufman and his performance-art comedy have become legendary among his peers and the public. Now, with a bio-pic starring Jim Carrey opening in December, Kaufman's having a much deserved moment in the sun. Andy Kaufman

ANDY ANDY KAUFMAN Revealed Best Friend Tells All BOB ZMUDA

FINAL JEUNI

Revealed! Best Friend Tells All (Little, Brown and Company, 1999), by Kaufman's writing partner, Bob Zmuda, with Matthew Scott Hansen, details the brilliance of Kaufman's career beyond playing Latka Gravas on the sitcom *Taxi* and regular appearances on *Saturday Night Live*—as seen by his closest confidant. Kaufman redefined the relationship between performer and audience; he would rather make his audience angry than make it laugh. Or, perhaps, as Carrey says in the book, "Andy was the director and the audience"—and we were his performers. —*Michael Colton*

A Barnload Of TV Trivia

SOME PEOPLE MERELY WATCH TELEVISION, BELIEVING THAT IT offers nothing more than fleeting entertainment. Those people are mistaken. For anyone who recognizes that prime-time programming is as worthy of study as, say, nuclear physics, there is Aaron Barnhart's TV Barn (www.tvbarn.com). Each weekday, Barnhart, the television writer for *The Kansas City Star*, updates his site about entertainment television. There are links to Barnhart's *Star* television column and feature stories. His original Web content includes analysis of industry trends and program reviews. More links to what Barnhart terms the TV wires provide up-to-the-

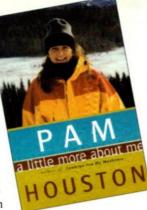
minute news on the TV world. Added features include synopses of standard TV-business reference books, as well as a regular "on this date" feature. We recently learned, for example, that on September 14, 1967, Robin obtained a driver's license and could thus pilot the Batmobile. Holy trivia, Batman! — Jesse Oxfeld



BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

Navigating Life's Adventures

PAM HOUSTON HAS SPENT HER ADULT LIFE CROSSING THE globe from one extreme situation to another and fictionalizing her exploits in such best-selling books as *Cowboys Are My Weakness*. With **A Little More About Me**, Houston takes off the fictional mask and uses her adventures to reveal what makes her thrill-seeking soul tick. In the five years during which she compiled the 24 essays that appear in this book, Houston rafted more than 40 whitewater rivers, hiked more than 3,000 miles of backcountry, visited 43 countries on five continents, put 400,000 miles on three different cars, and was mugged three times. She got married and divorced; had a miscarriage; and lost her mother to heart failure, her best friend to cancer, and her favorite dog to the wild. Through all this Houston



finally started to appreciate the value of her life. The tales of her various feats—from dogsledding in Alaska to trekking in Bhutan—are breathtaking. And Houston's descriptions of the natural environment she inhabits and the risks she takes will inspire any working stiff to pack a sack and head off in search of his or her own adventures. A Little More About Me introduces a world that the realities of

everyday life often prevent us from experiencing firsthand. It is a world filled as much with the simple pleasures of the outdoors and nature as it is with the adrenaline-pumping quality of living life on the edge. —Leslie Heilbrunn

<u>Celebrating The Century In Pictures</u>

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 20 YEARS, researchers at the National Archives and Records Administration have combed through the roughly 8 million photographs taken on behalf of the federal government over the past 100 years and emerged with **Picturing the Century: 100 Years of Photography From the National Archives.** This extensive exhibition is on display through July 4, 2001, in Washington, D.C.'s, National Archives Circular Gallery. (An exhibition catalog has been published by the National



Lewis Hine's "Power House Mechanic Working On Steam Pump" (1920)

Archives and the University of Washington Press.) Many of the images, such as one from Easter Sunday 1900 that depicts New York City's Fifth Avenue filled with horse-drawn carriages, serve a documentary role. Others enter the realm of art. A 1920 Lewis Hine photo features a mechanic wrestling with a steam pump—an arresting exploration of the relationship between man and machine. —Ted Rose

ARE YOU TIRED OF JOURNALISTS' SUMMARIZING THE PAST 100 years in portentous prose? Century: One Hundred Years of Human Progress, Regression, Suffering and Hope (Phaidon Press, 1999) presents a refreshing alternative. The book's 1,060 startling images—some by legends such as Henri Cartier-Bresson,

Robert Capa, and Margaret Bourke-White—document the 20th century, from the Boer War to the Kosovo war. The photos speak for themselves, while brief explanatory text appears in separate sections. *Century* covers nearly every continent and subject while touching on diverse emotions: We can see



Thomas Edison with his Dictaphone (1908)

the horror of a Korean War decapitation but also the joy of children who have donned fake beards to greet Fidel Castro. With a beautifully spare design, the quality of this book is worthy of its weighty theme. And at 12 pounds and 1,120 pages, *Century* should not be overlooked amid all the millennial hype. —*Matthew Reed Baker*

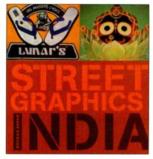
headline poetry_

BILLED AS "ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO PRINT IN 17 SYLLABLES AND THREE LINES," Haiku Headlines of the Week (www.cootwebsite.com, then click "Haikucaracha") may not pass muster with the great haiku masters, but it's sure to please readers looking to infuse their news intake with humor and Japanese-style verse. The site features poems crafted from the week's headlines. Michael Sheinbaum, the site's founder and editor, notes that his interpretation of traditional haiku is somewhat loose in subject matter. But his syllable structure is more defined: All headlines take a 5-7-5 pattern. Consider this October 4 entry about New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani's attempt to shut down a controversial art exhibit: "brooklyn art show starts,/mayor fumes—virgin mary/ throws dung in his face." Many of the "headlines" are accompanied by links to the stories from which they're drawn. —*Chipp Winston*

TALES HOM	territer all	Herrs Batters in Anna M. And Same Marine	-	
Heran Cile	Halku Headlines of the Week			
The Am il	vel Pl, to . eb	October 18, 1999	With rows that a mapha a life takes and there the	
6ur	International			
Heiku Celdefines Saheut Haikut	pilitetan oraș chief lideo oraș t.v. stalina bat den pris stage faight	-	ten ten tenerer	
Submit Limerickal Sitz Archites	An parter		randon jagonaria	
Elinka WAQ	a a p chaffe ban particulation and particular an ball, "as in state."		soldares hetch desh plot peasate slave on with plot burky pelara	
Ngs Hand Giambook Kides	Alaar galand		temper deal	
Support this shu? Erroll un?	und forme finds hat spots		admonished to fight com	



A PASSAGE TO INDIA



STREET GRAPHICS India (Thames & Hudson, Inc., 1999) presents a stunning display of religious icons, political slogans, and pop-culture images from that country taken by photograph-

er Barry Dawson. The vibrant pictures open a window on India's cultural diversity and showcase the graphic style seen on everything from public transport vehicles to fashion advertisements and movie billboards-even street signs. In his introduction, Dawson, who has worked and traveled extensively throughout Asia, provides cultural context for these renderings of animals, people, and religious figures: "Images [in India] are not produced with the uniformity of computer design and lithographic printing, but are individually crafted by street artists with particular and regional variations in style and technique." And it is in these contemporary street graphics that the traditions of India's people endure.

-Dimitra Kessenides

FUNNY BOY

TO THE DELIGHT OF CONQUERED peons everywhere, writer Andy Borowitz regularly skewers the antics of the country's media kings with his contributions to The New Yorker and the op-ed pages of The New York Times. Borowitz's faux memos and news stories are laughout-loud funny because they draw so adroitly on real-life events.

Borowitz knows of whom he lambastes; as a TV writer and producer, he has battled his share of Hollywood titans. A parody of an ABC memorandum, published in the October 4 *New Yorker*, satirized the entertainment industry's proclivity for misguided quick fixes in

the face of PR debacles (in this case, the NAACP's threatened TV boycott in reaction to what the group considered to be a predominance of white cast members on network shows). "After four years of 'The Drew Carey Show,'" Borowitz's memo reads, "we feel that we have mined all of the comedy possible in Drew's current workplace....It is time for a change of venue-to a swinging salsa club in Miami, Florida. Imagine the sparks that will fly as Drew lives la vida loca with the club's manager, sexy spitfire and Ph.D. candidate in economics Chichi Martinez." Coming next fall?

—Katherine Rosman

Beauty Standards

Andy Borowitz

WITH HER NEARLY UNATTAINABLE PROPORTIONS, BARBIE probably has never struggled with the body image issues facing today's woman. The archaic beauty standard Barbie represents has inspired 28 women writers to examine the influence of body image over identity in Adiós, Barbie: Young Women Write About Body Image And Identity (Seal Press, 1998). In their essays, the writers, who vary in race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, offer a fresh and diverse perspective on the female body, in such chapters as "My Jewish Nose" and "The Skinny on Small." In "Becoming *La Mujer*," Marisa Navarro writes, "After twenty-



one years of confusion, I realized I could be happy only when I defined my own idea of beauty and sensuality." Ironically, the book's message is similar to the slogan featured in recent advertisements for Barbie: "Become your own hero." For more on this topic, visit www.adiosbarbie.com. —Stephanie Bleyer

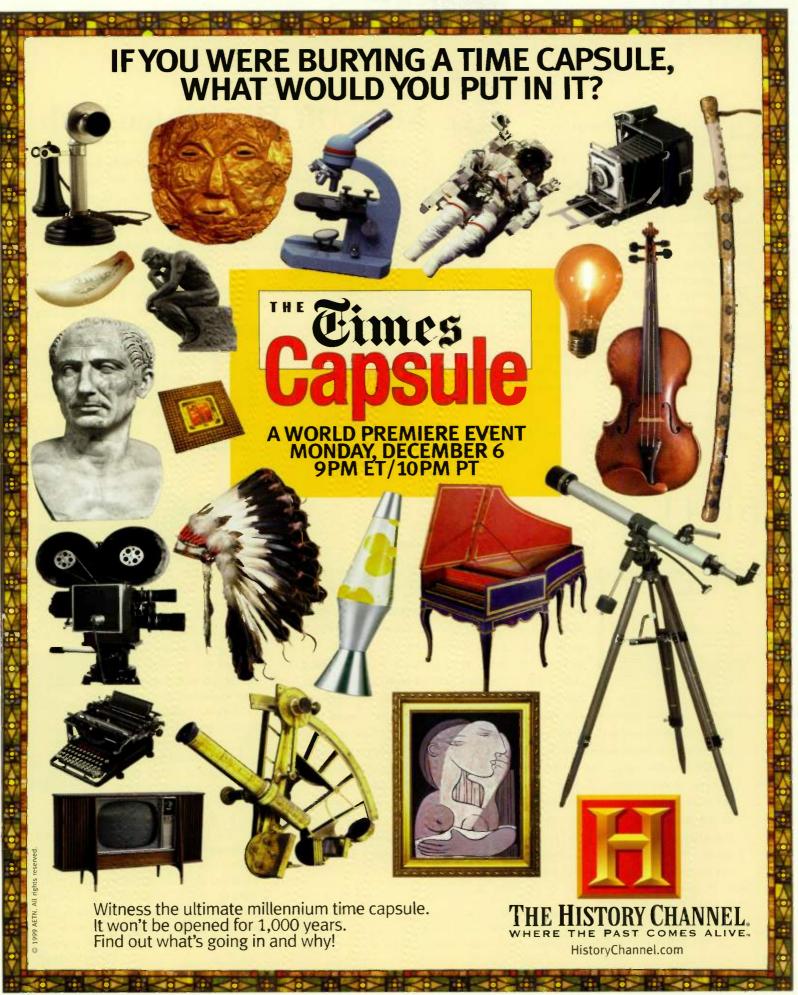
PUNK ROCK AT GROUND ZERO

DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE RAW SOUND, THE GRAINY images, or even the cartoonish hilarity of the narrator intoning about the punk rock "explosion." In fact, those qualities are what make **Blitzkrieg Bop** (Ivy Video; call 800-669-4057 to order) an enjoyably authentic—if not quite definitive—chronicle of the not-so-long-ago era that saw rock and roll briefly reclaimed as the loud, fast, dangerous form of entertainment it was always meant to be. The best parts of this 52-minute documentary about the birth and infancy of the punk rock "scene" at New



York City's famous CBGB circa 1977 are the live performances from the Dead Boys, Blondie, and the Ramones. But it's also funny to hear New York Times music critic John Rockwell (today the editor of that paper's influential Arts & Leisure section) opining two decades ago about how punk "all has to do with what you regard as the value of irrational energy." Or as the Ramones put it: "One two three four. Cretins wanna hop some more. Four five six seven. All good cretins go to heaven."

-Ed Shanahan





IN THE VEAR

FORMER YALE ROOMMATES Hilary Liftin and Kate Montgomery share a year's worth of correspondence in

Dear Exile: The True Story Of Two Friends Separated (For A Year) By An Ocean (Vintage Books, 1999). After college, Liftin worked for an Internet company in Manhattan and Montgomery signed on to teach with the Peace Corps in eastern Kenya. The collected letters, which were written during Montgomery's year abroad, contrast the obstacles each woman confronts in her new environment. Montgomery makes light of a treacherous ride on a crowded minitruck while suffering from an upset stomache; Liftin gives a tongue-incheek account of the discomforts of living with her father. Throughout the exchange, both women combine humor and gravity in describing the challenges they face. Dear Exile is most striking for the global perspective it offers readers in juxtaposing Liftin's urban woes with the hardships faced by Montgomery and her Kenyan neighbors. -Jane Manners



News Off The Beaten Path

ALTERNATIVE JOURNALISM IS ALIVE and well at www.AlterNet.org, the companion site to the AlterNet news service. A not-forprofit organization, AlterNet was set up in 1987 by the Institute for Alternative Journalism (now the



Independent Media Institute) to dispense news and opinion that are hard to find in most other media outlets. The site carries both original content from the service as well as links to other independent stories, which range from

weighty ("Kosovo's Wounded Environment") to wacky ("My Sweatpants, Myself," detailing male fashion frustrations). Readers can sign up to receive a weekly e-mailed version of "Media Mash," a media news and gossip column, or the latest AlterNet headlines.

-Julie Scelfo

sources for news and information.



Baton Rouge resident Robert Mann, state director for U.S. Senator John Breaux of Louisiana, writes:

AN IRREVERENT AND OCCASIONALLY PROFANE website has captured the attention of Louisiana's political and media community. The Deduct Box (www.deductbox.com) gives any political junkie a daily digest of Louisiana political news, along with discerning and witty media criticism. Former Louisiana and Washington political journalist John Copes pro-

vides summaries with an edge for the stories and columns he culls from the websites of several dozen publications, both local and national. (In the interest of full disclosure, I have known Copes for more than 15 years, since the days when he was a reporter in Washington, D.C., and I was a press secretary on Capitol Hill.) One of the site's best features is the comparison that Copes provides of multiple versions of the same story from several newspapers. The Deduct Box is named after a legendary slush fund maintained by Huey Long, Louisiana's populist governor and senator. Here all reporters, regardless of what Copes calls their papers' "dead tree" circulations, operate on a level playing field.

Readers share their favorite

If so, write in and share your favorite media sources. Send ideas to: Stuff You Is there STUFF Like, Brill's Content, 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10175. Or e-mail us at: **VOU** Like, Brill's Content, 521 Fifth Avenue, Ivew 1016, IV. 1. 101/3. Of c-mass m, w **VOU** Stuffyoulike@brillscontent.com. Please include your address and contact numbers.

CAPITAL SNOOP

THINK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS RIFE with intrigue? The Washington Post's Al Kamen proves it is, breaking news and sniffing out gossip in all three branches of government for his column In the Loop. (It runs Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

on the "Federal Page," Sundays in The Washington Post Magazine, and online at www.washingtonpost.com.)

Kamen's column covers much ground-tracking federal appointments, congressional weddings, and the occasional speech during which a public official indelicately inserts his foot into his mouth.



Al Kamen

"The Loop" (as it's affectionately known in the capital) is a must-read for the city's movers and shakers. Kamen's coverage of who's up, who's down, and who's out in the Beltway power game fills a void in 🗧 Washington journalism. And his quirky sense of humor is a terrific antidote to the weightier news on the paper's front pages. —Robert Schmidt

Makes a great gift. On the other hand, you've been very, very good this year.

d 15E .



The Bose[®] Wave[®] radio/CD is an ideal gift for your favorite music lover. But listen to it once, and you may not want to give it

away. After all, the Wave radio/CD can fill any home this holiday season with lifelike, full stereo sound. And yet it's small enough to fit on an end table, on a kitchen counter — just about anywhere.

There really is nothing like the Wave radio/CD. In fact, the Oregonian says, "...the system remains one of those little unexplained miracles of acoustic physics...." The miracle is our patented acoustic waveguide speaker technology, and it's what produces such clear, room-filling sound from such a small enclosure. It even won its team of engineers the "Inventor of the Year" award.

The Wave radio/CD is available directly from Bose, the most respected name in sound. Try the Wave radio/CD or Wave radio risk free in your home for 30 days. If you are not completely satisfied, return it for a full refund, no questions asked. Call today at 1-800-492-2073, ext. T3634, and ask about

our interest-free installment payment plan. The Bose Wave radio/CD will make

For free shipping, order within 30 days.

your favorite music lover — who just might be you — very, very happy.

1-800-492-2073, ext. T3634

For information on all our products: www.bose.com/t3634 Please specify color when ordering: Wave radio/CD:
□ Platinum White or
□ Graphite Gray Wave radio:
□ Platinum White or
□ Graphite Gray

Name Address/City/State/Zip

Day Phone Mail to: Bose Corporation, Dept. DMG-T3634, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168



© 1999 Bose Corporation. Covered by patent rights issued and/or pending. Installment payment plan and free shipping offers not to be combined with any other offer. Installment payment plan available on credit card orders only and subject to change without notice. Oregonian, 3/5/99.

REPORTEROM THE BY BILL KOVACH

Question And Answer. "I hope you will look into the accuracy and the reporting methods used by Steven Brill in 'Curiosity Vs. Privacy' [October]. I was cited (in big type, I might add) as a person who 'would not answer' his questionnaire. Not true. I answered it in detail, e-mailing him several paragraphs which explained what happened in the daily world of journalism vs. the celebrity world...." That was the request in the e-mail I received from Sandra Mims Rowe, editor of *The* [Portland] *Oregonian* newspaper. And Ms. Rowe is right. She did respond to the magazine's questionnaire, which proposed two voluntary guidelines that

would limit press intrusion in times of public grief. What she did not do was respond in a way that suited the format insisted on by *Brill's Content*. The magazine would apparently accept only an answer that could be placed in an "agree" or "disagree" category. When I asked Steven Brill about it, his answer was "She responded, but did not

She responded, but did not respond with an answer. She sent the long letter you have, but did not send back the simple yes-no question form that had been faxed to her for her to return. Thus I remember sending her back a quick e-mail saying something to the effect that that language is nice, but what are the answers to my questions. She did not reply, as I recall....In most cases we decided to call these a 'no,' but only after checking with the person who had sent the response and trying to pin that person down."

I think it was a mistake to insist on a yes-or-no answer. A response such as Ms. Rowe's is relevant to any serious treatment of the questions Mr. Brill was raising about an intrusive press. More so because of all the people whose views were quoted, none has spent more time thinking about press behavior on such issues as privacy than Ms. Rowe. During her presidency of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, in 1997-1998, she launched the organization on a multiyear project to upgrade newspaper credibility that continues today. Speaking about the project to the ASNE membership at its annual meeting, Ms. Rowe

Bill Kovach, curator of Harvard's Nieman Foundation for Journalism, was formerly editor of the Atlanta Journal and Constitution and a New York Times editor.

challenged the editors of most of the country's newspapers this way:

"The high road is there if we will just take it. If newspaper journalism and journalists long for greater respect, then newspaper editors must supply the discipline to play down not play up—the trivial, the perverse, the bizarre....And this individual decision making by individual editors—reinforcing the highest journalistic standards—is the only way out of the muck for us. The notion that readers have created the demand for lowest common denominator journalism is false. We are doing that ourselves. We can and must stop."

HOW TO R	CAN BE REACHED BY:
VOICE MAIL:	212.824.1981
FAX:	212.824.1940
E-MAIL :	bkovach@brillscontent.com
MAIL: I Francis	Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138

That sense of a need for dedication to a set of journalistic principles is inherent in the response Ms. Rowe sent to *Brill's Content* and is worth recording, at least in part, here. "Unlike national media, which deal with the occasional tragedy in somebody else's hometown, we live with the

people we cover. They hold us more accountable than any 'voluntary restrictions' ever could," Ms. Rowe wrote in a fax to *Brill's Content* on August 5. "In our communities, as opposed to the celebrity world, we actually go into schools and neighborhoods and talk to kids about their activities, their interests, even their feelings about news events and issues that affect their lives....On occasion when we believe the newsworthiness is too considerable to ignore, we go to the trouble of describing the scene to a family member or even taking the photograph to their home so they can see it and express their views to us. But in this newsroom and in hundreds of others across the land, we always discuss the potential harm of publishing vs. the newsworthiness or potential benefit....In my world that's called ethical decision making and after years of working at it we do it pretty well."

It seems to me that Ms. Rowe outlines practices that should be considered in an effort to encourage moderation of press intrusiveness. They are practices pretty much in keeping with the spirit, if not the letter, of the respect for privacy *Brill's Content* advocates. What she seems to be resisting is the idea of signing guidelines, not the idea of enforcing standards of behavior.

Having said that, I think Ms. Rowe overstates the care

exercised by much of the press. If the behavior in hundreds of newsrooms were as thoughtful and sensitive as those she maintains at *The Oregonian*, there would be little need for ASNE's concern for the credibility of newspapers. Local newspapers may be required, if for no other reason than their proximity to the people they write about, to be more sensitive to the impact of their intrusiveness in time of suffering and grief. That kind of sensitivity is what shines through every month in the columns written for this magazine by Mike Pride, the editor of the *Concord Monitor*, in New Hampshire.

But satellite technology and a desire to market emotional news in order to maximize profit produce stampedes of mostly local television anchors far from home accompanied by boom mikes and infrared telephoto lenses to intrude into the private lives of people when they are most exposed and vulnerable. Digital technology and a web presence also allow regional, even local, newspapers to join the stampede to faraway places—far enough that the victim-as-reader can no longer be counted on to provide a check on behavior.

Brill's Content highlighted an important issue when, in the aftermath of yet another feeding frenzy by the press corps—national and local—on a celebrity death story, the magazine decided to raise a question of press responsibility. Its suggested remedy—that individual news organizations sign a proposed set of voluntary restrictions on their coverage of people caught up in highly newsworthy public events—met with mixed results. Many of the news organizations queried opted out because of a historic fear among journalists that industrywide guidelines are the first step in the loss of independence and an invitation to outside control.

Ms. Rowe's response suggests the possibility of another approach. *Brill's Content* might survey the practices of the most responsible news organizations and distill from them a set of standards that could serve as a model for others. Such a description of "best practices" would help guide the magazine's readers' search for information by providing a standard against which to measure their options when choosing a news supplier. Who knows—in a supply-and-demand world, an audience so armed might grow to create a potent demand for quality, responsible journalism.

Born Again Endorsement. Norman Pearlstine, editor in chief at Time Inc., thinks it's unfair that an old, 1994 cover of *Money* magazine (a publication of Time Inc.) was used in "The Money Press" department ["Magazine Showdown," October]. The article said, basically, that personal finance magazines do not deliver on what they promise.

"There have been many changes at *Money* since then," Mr. Pearlstine said in a phone call, "many of them designed to bring us away from just that sort of approach," of outperforming the market.

There is a new managing editor at *Money*, and it may be that the magazine has changed its approach since 1994. But the 1994 cover, along with a recent issue of *Smart Money*, legitimately illustrated the time period (1994-1998) used to examine the magazines' performance. The burden of the article's point was carried in the text and the accompanying graphic, not by the photo of two magazine covers.

My conclusion may come as a disappointment to Mr. Pearlstine, who expresses a newfound faith in the role of ombudsman. He ended our conversation by saying, "I have become born again about ombudsmen. I think it's great to have an ombudsman to complain to. It means I don't have to talk to Steve Brill."

Editor in chief Steven Brill replies: I disagree with Bill about our approach to Ms. Rowe's comments. Journalists routinely ask people for a yes-or-no answer; indeed, journalists and editors alike love to make fun of politicians on TV shows or in print who when asked a yes-or-no question respond with some long-winded answer that ducks the question.

Ms. Rowe's comments were similar to those we did publish, and I used them to make the point that those high-minded ideals have been expressed for years by everyone ranging from the *National Enquirer* (whose comments we published), to the New York *Daily News* (whose comments we published), to Time Inc. (whose comments we published). They all sound alike and, in the overall context of today's media, seem to mean nothing when it comes to specific decisions. That's why I focused on something specific while pointing out that such specificity hardly made for a perfect, all-encompassing guideline.

That said, had I known Ms. Rowe had held the position at the trade association that Bill describes, I'd have included her comments, too—to help prove my point, which is that even the best, most well-meaning journalists live in a self-absorbed world where they think that what they and their colleagues do all day, every day, actually matches that wonderful rhetoric. Sometimes in some places it does, but in the example I used of the invasion of the Kennedy-Schlossberg kids' privacy it often didn't.

As for Norm Pearlstine's comment, I wonder if that means that Time, Fortune, People, etc., are about to bring on their own independent ombudsmen.

Kovach responds: I think Steve is way off base on this one. It is simply not right to say that Sandra Rowe did not answer. She did. He did not like the form of her answer.

Some might call that approach "gotcha" journalism. What Sandra Rowe did was describe the values at work at her newspaper. Either she should have been allowed to do that or her name should not have been included in the listing of people contacted.

e sem ii, əsnezəq əsuəs əpeur the author ID wouldn't have been "too gooty" and doing it in Livingston in the piece would have claims that citing her work for spokesman. Via e-mail, Noonan mund e pue ueuoon hes 'on tion between writer and subject? to readers the financial connec-נבני נוי החי לסתוות אשתב מוזכרוסצבק shouldn't she of for that mat-Livingston's resignation speech, Even if Noonan didn't write

with the speech she highlighted in the Journal וושנבי שווק נוושו בויב ושק עסנויוווצ גם קס tial draft of his first speech as speaker desigvices ended with her helping to pen the ini-Noonan and Livingston say these ser-

61 Arenuel no "Bandappeechwriting" on January 19 Tol oon a that he paid Noonan \$9,000 for of this year. Republican's July Federal Election Commission reported on August 16 that the Louisiana when the Capitol Hill newspaper Roll Call Newt Cingrich's successor. That fact emerged to COP House members upon his election as month eatlier to help write the speech he gave George Bush, had been hired by Livingston one speechwriter for Presidents Ronald Reagan and Unmenuoned by the Journal: Noonan, a

Noonan as "the author of Simply Speaking « (8661 'syooks' 1888) » author ID attached to the column described moment of the Clinton impeachment." An resignation speech as "the most electric House speaker designate Robert Livingston's as the impeachment unfolded, singling out praised House Republicans for their behavior Good Guys Finally Won, Peeer Noonan

In her December 21, 1998, piece, "The op-ed column surveying the drama created by the historic event. The Wall Street Journal Published an Working Both Sides Of The Street to impeach President Bill Clinton,

octabolat

"Peggy Noonan has been an adviser to most or the senior people in the Republican party for fifteen years," he says. "It's a given that every-one who reads The Wall Street Journal editori-one who reads the says." al page knows that." quantum of knowledge, about Noonan. Readers, Tofel adds, should have "a certain

connection to their subjects. Otherwise they wouldn't be writing about them." they write. It's assumed that they have "some about their ties to the subjects about which don't routinely "cross-examine" op-ed authors know of it Journal editors, Tofel says, to Livingston because Boot didn't tipped readers to Noonan's connection Max Boot, says the paper couldn't have ing on behalf of Journal op-ed editor the speech she praised. And Totel, speak I STREET ed, in part because Noonan didn't write also argues that no disclosure was need-Journal spokesman Richard Torel

MALL that I had helped him on a speech skew my reaction to his actions." sobe [in no way would [the] face piece, [Livingston] was a walk-on." She THE Firingston; for the purposes of the piece about [President] Clinton, not

Bridget Samburg

THE QUESTION: Is that a did or a didn't? chat maybe [Paltrow's decision to pose] had something to do with that" father was ill, adds Motley, "Someone...said preparing for the shoot that Paltrow's grandkeepsake." Magazine staffers learned while دربعد "لابو درمورج شعاده م دوعاله ماده فعساله requests include à standard line suggesting the second. Motley says Life's written passed on Life's first request but agreed to "and we're not that desperate." Paltrow dim, says Life managing editor Isolde Motley. THE EXPLANATION: "We're not that up." says Stephen Huvane, Paltrow's publicist THE DENIAL: "That is completely made Cover of Life magazine while he's still alive?" granddaughter and [daughter-in-law] on the well and don't you think he'd like to see his grandfather is not doing said...'' see that Gwyneth's

34

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

called up the publicist and -Yes of aven I nemow Verine is very bally siya Gwyneth's Brandfather Yois sem this editor read that movie out.....So then ested, she didn't have a cific time. [Paltrow] wasn't intermom-they couldn't get her to pick a spe-Canyneth wasn't available, and then her she said ... that it was really hard to sec said ... 'Great cover How did you get it!' And Day issue:"I was talking to the editor ... and I actress Blythe Danner, for its 1999 Mother's actress Gwyneth Paltrow and her mom, people's managing editor, on how Life got

THE ANECDOTE: Christina Ferrari, Teen come to us to change the way you think still the magazine...where people actually about them.") Love, Rolling Scone's managing editor: "We're THE INTRO: Panelists on their roles. (Bob THE AUDIENCE: Junior editors and staffers. THE PANEL: Senior magazine editors.

OUT OF SCHOOL

and don'ts of celebrity interviews. THE RGENDA: "[W]e'll explore the do's How to Work with Celebrities and Publicists." Magazine Editors seminar: "Star Wrangling: THE SCENE: An American Society of

The Odessa Files: Press Digs Texan For Dirt

Somehow, Wilmer Ray was deemed key to confirming the Bush drug rumors.

N MAY, WILMER RAY SUDDENLY BECAME A VERY popular person with the national political press corps. Out of nowhere, the longtime Odessa, Texas, resident started getting calls from reporters for, among others, *The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, even a London tabloid.



Why was this man so popular with scandal-minded reporters?

The reporters weren't interested in anything the 58-year-old Ray was doing in his current job as an Ector County commissioner, he says. They wanted to question him about something they'd heard he might have done almost 30 years ago and how it might help solve the "Did George W. Bush ever take cocaine?" riddle, which—despite a lack of credible evidence-has dogged the Texas governor's presidential campaign.

It happens that in the

early seventies, Ray ran the Three Tier Learning Center, an acclaimed program geared toward Odessa's high school dropouts and other troubled teens. Though Three Tier had no specific drug-counseling function, Odessa happens to be the next town over from Midland, where George W. Bush happened to have spent his childhood and some of what he has described as his hard-partying younger years. (Never mind that Bush was living in Houston and was in his twenties when Three Tier was operating, which would have made him older than the kids in Ray's program.) Ray also happens to be a Democrat; Bush, of course, happens to be the favorite to become the Republican presidential nominee.

As it turned out, Ray would not answer the reporters' drug questions, though he tells *Brill's Content* that he never had any dealings with George W. Bush. And Ray is still trying to figure out exactly how his name popped up as a possible source who could confirm the drug rumors. None of the reporters he talked to would tell him, though he says he has heard that his name surfaced in an anonymous letter circulated among reporters.

"I just asked, 'Well, where did you get my name?'" he recalls. "[They would say,] 'Oh, a source.' I said, 'Well, tell that source to go straight to hell.'"

Wall Street Journal reporter Ellen Joan Pollock, Ray says, was the first to call. "So my first question was 'What is it you want?'" he says. "[She said,] 'Well, I heard....'" Ray hates the drug questions so much that he can't bring himself to repeat them during an hourlong interview. "When she asked me, I was just so disappointed," he says. Pollock, who wrote a lengthy profile of Bush in May, says she cannot "confirm or deny" that she has spoken to Ray.

Ray and his 92,000 fellow Odessans aren't used to the media onslaught the Bush campaign has unleashed. The city is a dry, hot, flat place that sits in what's known as the Permian Basin. The major local excitement is generated by two high school football teams. In fact, the city's last brush with the national press came in 1990 after the publication of H.G. "Buzz" Bissinger's *Friday Night Lights: A Town, a Team, and a Dream,* a book on the Permian High School Panthers' 1988 football season. (Residents still feel the burn of that spotlight's glare.)

With Odessa back on the itineraries of national reporters, Ray isn't the only local who was answering questions from out-of-towners this summer. Attorney Michael McLeaish says he was contacted by three reporters, including one from the supermarket tabloid *Star*. The reporter, McLeaish says, claimed he was actually from something called the *Fort Lauderdale News*. "If they're in Odessa," McLeaish says, "I told them, 'You're in the wrong place.""

Odessa is small enough that the *Star* reporter's visit made the front page of the local daily, the *Odessa American*, whose editor, Gary Newsom, says his staff has also heard some of the rumors about Bush. "We checked around with people we knew," Newsom says, "and they all said they didn't know anything firsthand."

Ray, who stopped hearing from political reporters by September, has a request for those who tracked him down hoping to confirm the Bush drug rumors: "I would hope that one of them writes the article that says, 'He ain't talking to anybody about this, and you know, quit bothering him."

He's still waiting for that article to be published.

—Robert Schmidt

History Mystery.....

nenotebook

THANKS IN LARGE PART TO THE EFFORTS OF two enterprising reporters back in the early seventies, many of us are used to hearing the U.S. media describe the past 25 years as the Post-Watergate era. But what about those brought up during that era-do they even know what the term Watergate refers to? In August, Sally Sue Garris, who teaches U.S. government to seniors at Spring Valley High School, in Columbia, South Carolina, asked that question of her middle-class, suburban

students. Some of what they told her follows. It Was Many Years Ago

"Watergate was a fight against the Constitution. [It] involved the British against the U.S. People. The British didn't agree with the Constitution, and they wanted to abolish it.... This event happened around 1789."

"Watergate took place in the mid-1900s....I think it had a lot to do with bribery. Nixon was giving money or buying out people to do numerous task[s] like buying votes."

"Watergate was an event that happened in the late 1800s."

Alternate History "Nixon embezzled money from the U.S. government and used it to build the

"A place where a war took place." "In the movie Forrest [Watergate] was the name of a high-Price[d] hotel. Someone was trying to Gump steal secret documents. And Bill Clinton

"President Nixon was accused of giving out secrets of the U.S. to other nations."

"It had something to do with **WWII**." "The Watergate scandal had something to do with the Vietnam War. Some documents or files were discovered. These items forced President Nixon to resign." "Watergate was a scandal that involved Richard Nixon, Bill Clinton, and his wife,

Hillary. The Watergate scandal started in 1996 and is still going on today."

Close, But No Cigar "Richard Nixon had the Democratic Party bugged, and then he got caught by some guy from The Washington Post. [T] hey made some movie about it with Dustin Hoffman." anity Production

"I remember something with President Nixon and him saying, 'I am not guilty' and putting the peace sign up with both of "Watergate...was an incident involving

WATERGATE

then-President Richard Nixon and some guy named Henry Kissinger." "Richard Nixon lied about something, and when everyone found out the truth, they attacked him."

-Robert L. Bryant Jr. Robert L. Bryant Jr. is a copy editor at The State

newspaper, in Columbia, South Carolina. ...

PRADA. GUCCI. TOMMY HILFIGER. CALVIN KLEIN. If you're a hip young star, you're likely to be sporting labels like these when you show up for a magazine photo shoot, even if the clothes are just jeans and a sweater. But what if your designer of choice doesn't advertise in the

Saturday Night that she sat for the December 1998 shoot wear. ing overalls and a jacket bought at a thrift shop. When Vanity Fair came out, however, the cover credit identified her pants and black leather jacket as Tommy Hilfiger products. A call to Vanity Fair editor Graydon Carter was directed to Beth Kseniak,

a magazine spokeswoman. Kseniak claims the faulty credit resulted from an honest mistake: A Hilfiger jacket that looked like Polley's was on the set, and an assistant mistakenly thought Polley had worn it while being photographed. "It was total chaos," says Kseniak of the photo session. "There were fourteen people, seventeen racks of clothes, and three hours to do the shoot." It must have been a coincidence that Hilfiger had four full-page ads in the issue. Kseniak insists the magazine has no agreement with advertisers stipulating that they will get a certain number of credits in photo spreads.

-Kimberly Conniff

magazine for whose cover you're posing? In April, Vanity Fair splashed 14 rising actors and actresses across the three-panel cover of its "Hollywood" issue. When the featured players met for the Annie Leibovitz photo shoot, stylists let them choose between wearing their own clothes and borrowing, say, a Prada sweater or an A.P.C. coat. Actress Sarah Polley told the Canadian magazine Actress Sarah Polley (center) didn't get credit for her thrift-shop finery when she sat for a Vanity Fair cover.

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

36



\$9.99 for any online trade*' Free unlimited real-time quotes' Real-time portfolio updates Secure transactions Accounts protected up to \$10.5 million Free news, charts and research Easy to use investing tool Access to the financial marketplace



* All internet trades are only \$9.99, up to 5000 shares. †Some restrictions apply. \$500,000 of account protection (\$100,000 maximum for cash) provided by SIPC, with the remaining \$10 million for securities only, provided by private insurers. Total indemnity by private insurers cannot exceed \$100 million. Account protection doe: not cover risks or losses associated with investing. Please check our website for complete details. Non-marketable Nasdaq orders are represented on the Island ECN. Orders executed through Datek Online Brokerage Services LLC, member NASD/SIPC. @1999 Datek Online.



Dubner says Talk editors didn't tor] was trying to make Ted more evil." Dubner says, adding, "I think [the edimovie "more unabashedly heroic," presumably dominate the Disney David" - whose side of the story would Talk "scenned to be trying to make brothers. But the final edits made at relationship between the Kaczynski sented a nuanced exploration of the -sid Suiver se sure drafts as having pretened" his article. Dubner characterizes says the last-second edit "essentially flat-Were made in the final revision, Dubner

Asked to describe the changes that satisfied him, he pulled the article. reach an agreement on revisions that the changes, and after he was unable to ping that night. Dubner disagreed with told him that it was ship-

version of his story-and the drastically altered editors showed Dubner of September 17, Talk issue. But on the evening sion in Talk's November being readied for inclu-Dubner's article was In mid-September, for this article.)

(The couple declined to be interviewed They stopped cooperating with him. David and Linda apparently were not article's new direction, Dubner says. Tulk editors were enthusiastic about the scathingly critical of David and Linda. was an article that included material book into his piece, and what resulted view with Ted and excerpts from his in-law Dubner incorporated an interrelationships with his brother and sisterpublish his book, which dwelled on his learned that Ted Kaczynski was about to his story over the summer when he Dubner had already filed a draft of under a production deal with Disney. دربعد دبوك ماعسيدم ده مومدوم دبو مدها مراودد

had inked the deal with the couple and Company rold Daily Variery that they film's producers at The Avner/Kerner Time published Dubner's story the film rights to their life stories. After cized: David and Linda had sold the thing that had not been widely publicouple last May Dubner learned some Patrik. As he prepared to interview the David Kaczynski and his wife, Linda intended his piece to focus solely on Dubner writes in Time that he had وعندبورا ده بده دعدبه مدعوده مر دبو ددمده so iti the published version, he says, was

made substantial last-minute changes

took it to Time because talk editors Dubner says he withdrew the piece and to turn his brother in to suthornics. he has described as the painful decision and is seeking a retrial, and David

shared story. versions of their ons os uo ploy Disney couldn't David (inset): and his brother (nabomber) (a.k.a. the Ted Kaczynski

year to murder and bombing charges Kaczynski, 57, who pleaded guilty last relationship between two brothers: Ted mitted to Talk as a tale of the complex describes the 6,000-word article he sub-The New York Times Magazine, Dubner, à former story editor at ers to announce the film deal earlier than they had intended. the stricle prompred the film's producarticle's "death" and the movie's life-ופשע סטב כופשו בסטטבכנוסט הבנאבט נויב the Kaczynski saga. So fat, there's at to tell a sharply contrasting version of

38

BRILL'S CONTENT

DECEMBER 1999JANUARY

2000

planned Disney movie that is expected the same corporate media unbrella as a the article would have coexisted under commissioned from Stephen Dubner, Talk published the story it originally that hit newsstands October 11. Had ending up instead in the issue of Time The article never appeared in Talk,

the anti-technology terrorist known as the Unabomber. blockbuster story about Ted Kaczynski, might have cost the magazine a whether Talk's Hollywood connection the magazine raises the question of הפצמנועכ געופרצעי? א וככבחו וחכולכחו מנ But can there be such a thing as

موردامه داردس into hit movies. The Walt Disney Company, would articles, and Miramax, a subsidiary of Brown, would reel in buzz-generating world: Talk's celebrity editor, Tina between Hollywood and the publishing Neggeive Synergy. lication as a breakthrough in synergy -qnd sup pone (ureduoo launch Talk magazine, the

sunounced its plans to HEN WIKAWAX FILMS 2'912itha Elicie'a

henotebook World Radio History

GENTLEMEN, MEET YOUR MAKERS But Morris isn't the only artist to take some liberties of late. Country music superstar Garth Brooks released his latest album as Chris Gaines, a gloomy-looking rocker who sports a soul patch instead of a Stetson. The disc, Garth Brooks in... The Life of Chris Gaines, features liner notes that detail

Which of these two went to greater Gaines's history as a pop star. lengths to craft a new self? We'd have to call

it a draw.

EDMUND MORRIS'

August 9, 1912, Illinois Arthur Morris, a wealthy Jewish Artnur morris, a wearing jewi Republican politician; Annette "Bess" Dowling, a Chicago opera singer As a child, fond of writing stories about fighter pilots

Encounters "Dutch" Reagan on a high school football field, November 11, 1926

Suffered from polio as a teenager; led to a Sumered from polio as a teenager; led to a lifelong regimen of therapeutic swimming

Reagan's colleague at the Eureka Pegosus, Reagan's colleague at the Eureka Pegasus, Eureka College's weekly newspaper; writer in Army Air Forces First Motion Picture Unit, with 2/Lt. Reagan; publicist for California Fertilization Association, 1958

- "Sam Marx, the legendary story editor Sam marx, the legendary story editor turned producer...was impressed enough to option [my novel]."
- "I owed these last seven decades to Dutch."

CHRIS GAINES

August 10, 1967, Brisbane, Australia (as Christian Gene Gene Gaines, former coach for U.S. and Australian Olympic swim teams; and Australian Olympic swim teams; Carolyn Johnns-Gaines, former Olympic Quit Morningside High School senior year (but eventually earned a GED in 1987) swimmer First solo album, 1989's Straight Jacket, vins Grammy for Album of the Year Nearly killed in a 1992 auto accident; reariy kined in a 1774 auto actionin re-emerged after two years of plastic surgery on face, shoulder, and hands In 1991 records dark, angry album, Fornucopia, which debuts at No. 1; star of upcoming film The Lamb Dubbed "The New Prince" by the media after releasing 1996's Triangle

"Please, love one another."

AN ARTIST at his career peak faces a challenge: how to take his fame to the next level, create a lasting work, and also sell a lot of copies. The solution? Devise an alter ego. Edmund Morris spent 13 years researching his biography of President Ronald Reagan yet ultimately found himself creatively blocked. In response, Morris made stuff up, inserting a fictionalized version of himself into his book, Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan [for more on Morris, see "The Cultural Elite," page 62].

offer him a clear rationale for the revisions.

(Brown has a reputation for making signif-

Had Talk run the story, it would have

meant that one arm of the Disney empire

had produced an article that allowed Ted

to vent his anget at David while another

arm produced a movie in which David is

expected to be portrayed more sympa-

thetically. The situation raises a legitimate

question: Were Talk's Disney backets

behind the last-minute revisions that

placed David in a more favorable light,

perhaps to fend off the possibility that he

might get angry and scuttle the film deal?

That question draws little response

from within the Disney-Talk axis. A Talk

spokeswoman says that Brown and other

editors at the magazine would not discuss

the changes they made to Dubner's piece

because "we've never, ever, commented

publicly on editorial stuff." The spokes-

woman says Brown was unavailable to

icant eleventh-hour changes to articles.)

EDMUND MORRIS May 27, 1940, Kenya NAME Eric Edmund Morris, an East African Airways pilot; BORN May Morris Advertising copywriter in sixties PARENTS Wins 1980 Pulitzer Prize for The Rise of EARLY YEARS London Having written himself into a corner trying Theodore Roosevelt traving written nimsen into a corner tryin to make sense of Reagan's life, stumbled LIFE-CHANGING to make sense of Reagan's life, stumpled onto unconventional literary device while MOMENT visiting Eureka College Appointed President Reagan's official biog-TRIUMPH OVER ADVERSITY Appointed President Reagan's official blog-rapher in 1985; Roosevelt biography named rapner in 1985; Kooseveit biography namby Modern Library in 1999 as one of the century's top 100 nonfiction books CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

"[D]ishonorable...an act of bad faith." —George Will on Dutch It was "the perfect technique to capture

a person whose entire life was a performance." MOTTO GARTH BROOKS February 7, 1962, Tulsa NAME (as Troyal Garth Brooks) BORN

Troyal Raymond Brooks, a draftsman for Union Oil Company; Colleen Carroll, a Capitol Records singer in the fifties Won scholarship to Oklahoma State PARENTS

University on strength of javelin throwing; University on strength of Jarenn unowing studied advertising; worked as a bouncer "The Dance," a ballad from his first album, 1989's Gorth Brooks, becomes a phenomenon After jokes about "Girth Brooks" and LIFE-CHANGING

wher jokes about Girch prooks and "Pillsbury Cowboy," slims down from a high MOMENT weight of 237 pounds The top-selling recording artist of the TRIUMPH OVER i ne top-sening recording artist of the nineties and second only to the Beatles ADVERSITY

in overall all-time sales Entertainment Weekly on Garth Brooks CAREER HIGHLIGHTS in...The Life of Chris Gaines

"I've got friends in low places." CRITICAL REACTION

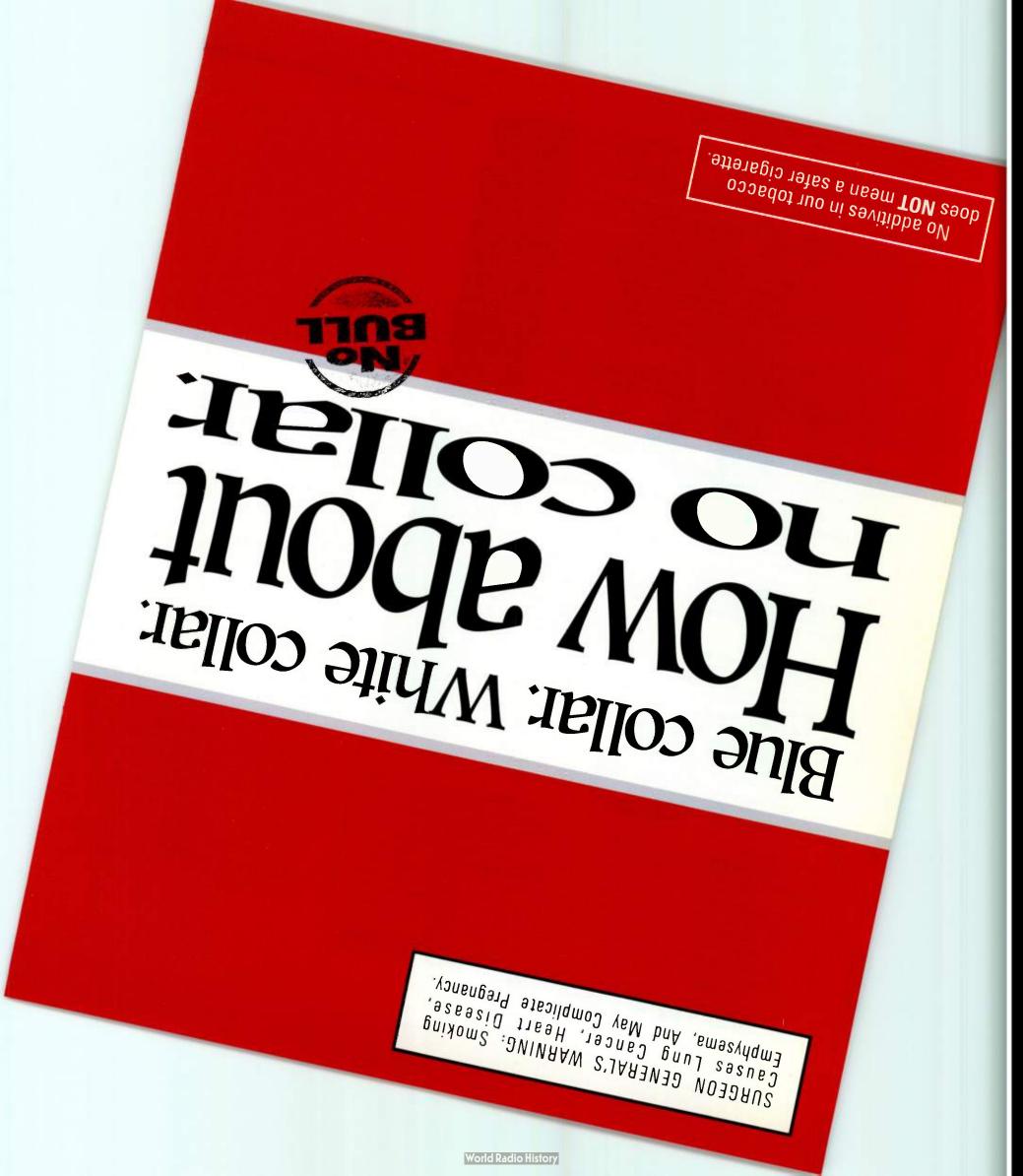
comment on whether she knew about the Disney-David Kaczynski deal when Dubner's article went under the knife. Elizabeth Guber Stephen, the Avnet/Kerner executive who spent three CRITICAL REACTION years negotiating David and Linda's film deal, confirms that the pact was completed "at least three months ago," well before Dubner's article took shape. But Stephen insists the couple never raised the topic of Dubner's piece with her, and says she brought it up with them only after it was Stephen also says Avnet/Kerner wouldn't have publicized its deal with published in Time. the Kaczynskis as early as it did if it hadn't been for the negative publicity about David and Linda stemming from Time's publication of Dubner's piece.

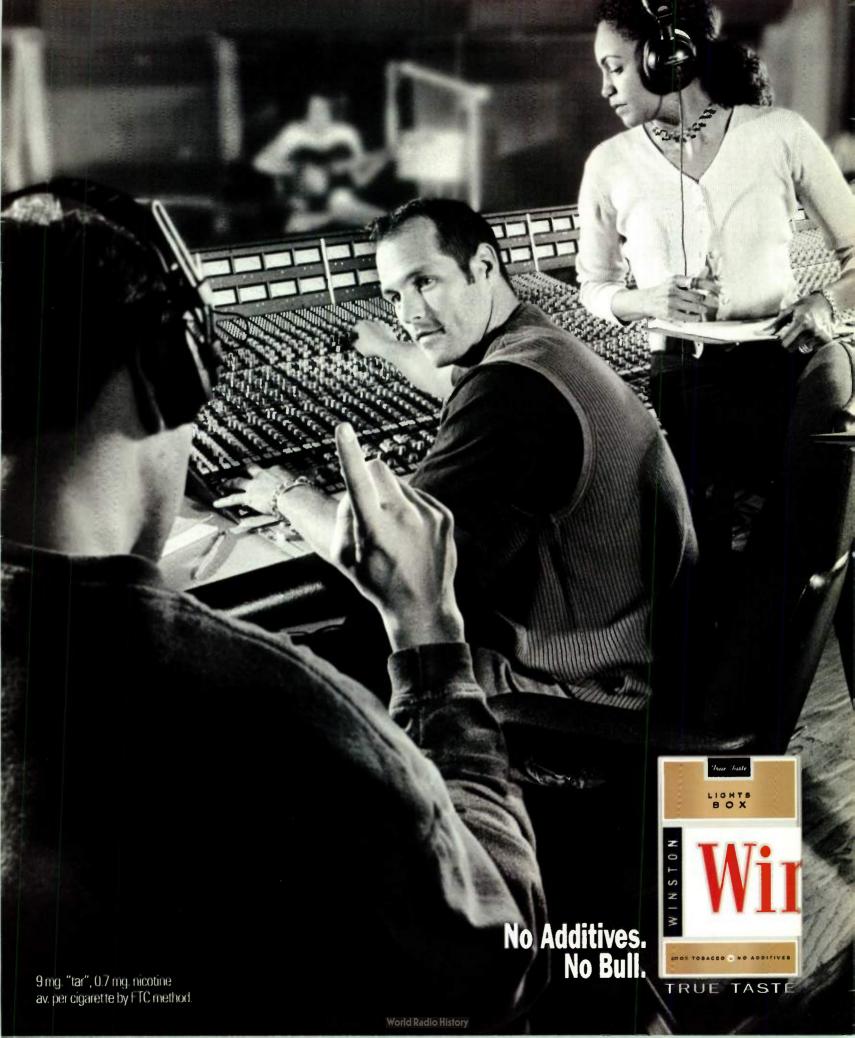
Though David Kaczynski has said he plans to give all his proceeds from the film deal to bombing victims, Stephen worried that readers of the Time article would think that David was going to personally profit from his brother's (MORRIS): crimes. That's presumably the kind of publicity that Talk would have generated LEDERHANDLERIAP (had it published a version of Dubner's story that resembled his original draft. -Matthew Heimer

World Radio History

MOTTO

EARLY YEARS





nenotebook

The Long Road To A Shocking War Story

The AP's Korea scoop caused the wire service its own share of pain.

HE STORY WAS STUNNING: DURING THE confused early weeks of the Korean War, U.S. troops indiscriminately machine-gunned to death hundreds of refugees under a railroad bridge near No Gun Ri. The alleged My Lai-style massacre had gone unreported for almost 50 years.

But almost as stunning as the story was the news organization that broke it: The Associated Press, a wire service with 1,700 print members that isn't widely known for such explosive, enterprising reporting. The AP first moved the story on September 29; it was published prominently in papers around the world over the course of the following week, even making the front page of *The New York Times*.

But while the No Gun Ri report is the kind of story that forces governments—the United States government in this case—to investigate themselves, the editor who led the massacre probe doubted it would ever be published.

Bob Port, the editor who supervised the project's reporters, says it sat for more than a year once the reporting was completed. In that time, the special assignment team Port oversaw was dissolved, and he resigned from the AP, in large part out of frustration over the way the No Gun Ri story had been stymied. Three sources within the AP confirm that those doing the reporting were frustrated with the way it languished. "The people I worked for," Port says, referring to AP

president Louis Boccardi and executive editor William

Ahearn, "just didn't want to do the story."

A No Gun Ri survivor near the infamous bridge



G.I.'s Tell of a U.S. Massacre in Korean War

G.A. O ACHI VI G	o.b. massacre ul Rolea		
Is the instrume from the relation of parars, found from our of the advector of parars, found from our of the second second second second of help the second second second of help the second second second second of help the second seco	Disc, door averages in program of a second secon	"He past anothers A third reterant, by of Clarkerille,	

"That's absurd," Boccardi says of Port's claims. Ahearn admits that producing the story "shouldn't take a year," but also labels "absurd" the idea that the AP wasn't interested in it.

The No Gun Ri story was born on April 30, 1998, when Sang-Hun Choe, a Seoul-based AP correspondent, wrote that the South Korean government had denied a compensation claim filed by self-described massacre survivors—and that the U.S. government had denied any involvement in the alleged massacre.

Kevin Noblet, an AP deputy international editor now on academic leave, says he then suggested that Port, a reporter for 17 years and an AP editor since 1995, lead an investigation into the matter. Within days, investigative researcher Randy Herschaft had obtained documents that placed U.S. troops at the scene of the alleged atrocity. Within a week, Port says, "we had retrieved copies from the National Archives of written orders from 1950 authorizing the killing of civilians."

Port tapped special correspondent Charles Hanley and national writer Martha Mendoza for the project. While Choe interviewed survivors in Korea, Hanley and Mendoza reconstructed the movements of every U.S. military unit that could have been in the area at the time of the incident. By late July 1998, after interviewing more than 100 veterans, the first draft of the No Gun Ri story was delivered.

"A year before publication the essentials of the reporting had been done," says Noblet. Those essentials never changed, he adds, but "it took a long time to deal with issues of basically how to write the story." Among those issues, according to Port: the project's

timing. In June 1998, CNN aired its Operation

Tailwind report, which alleged that the U.S. military had used nerve gas against American defectors in Laos during the Vietnam War. By early July, CNN was forced to retract the Tailwind story amid questions about its sourcing. AP brass, Port says, "worried we could be pulling another CNN." Asked whether the AP was concerned about a Tailwind-like backlash, executive editor Ahearn says, "This is what can happen if you don't get it right."

Several more drafts of the story were submitted as the months passed. By spring, dismay had taken hold within the AP, according to three wire service sources. A critical concern was that word about the No Gun Ri story had gotten out and that the AP was on the verge of being scooped.

All the while, Port and his reporters continued working on the story. That work involved the unusual practice of having editors listen in on the phone while reporters went back to their sources to confirm basic facts, according to Noblet. "There were a lot of frustrations along the way," Noblet concedes. "But in the end, was all the effort and pain and length of time worth it to produce the story? Yes."

Port remains convinced that the AP should have moved on the story—and on a follow-up produced two weeks afterward—sooner. "The AP talks about being careful...," he says. "What I saw was procrastination and denial."

Nonetheless, Port adds, the story is "one we should be proud of." That's how Edward Daily, one of the veterans who acknowledges that he took part in the massacre and was interviewed for the AP report, feels. "I was interviewed sixteen months ago, and a lot of people thought [the story] was going to be slipped under the carpet," he says. "But I think we owe a lot to the Associated Press." — *Chipp Winston*

CNN Plays Ball With The Boss

LASS WALKWAYS CONNECT THE GLEAMING PHILIPS Arena, Atlanta's newest sports venue, to CNN Center, the cable network's headquarters. That's not the only link the structures share. Like CNN, the \$213 million arena-home to the National Basketball Association's Hawks and the National Hockey League's expansion Thrashers-is part of the Time Warner Inc. empire. When CNN/U.S. president Richard Kaplan instructed one network show to produce a feel-good feature about the arena, some staffers thought the network had crossed the line between news and corporate promotion-and protested in a small but significant way.

The September 26 arena report aired as a "special edition" of Business Unusual. That half-hour show-described in promotional materials as profiling "companies and individuals who have 'what it takes' to succeed"-is hardly a hotbed of skeptical reporting. But according to two CNN employees, when the assignment to prepare the Philips Arena segment came down, some business-news staffers raised concerns with senior producers about what they saw as a thinly disguised infomercial. And when the segment aired, the staffers opted not to attach their names to the project by declining to use the credits that introduce Business Unusual segments.

As balanced reporting, the show had mixed results. Business

Unusual did avoid one corporate synergy pitfall: Narrator John Defterios disclosed that Turner Broadcasting the System-the fieldom of CNN founder and Time Warner "Ted" vice-chairman R.E.



Surprise: CNN likes Atlanta's Philips Arena.

Turner-owns Philips Arena. The show was direct, if a bit fawning, about the financing behind the arena's lucrative sponsorship deals and skyboxes, but it paid little attention to local controversies over the new venue-most notably a brouhaha over the aesthetics of the arena's six-story sign and facade.

Kaplan says the idea for the arena story was his but pitching it was purely a matter of news judgment. "If we could have realized a large economic benefit" by promoting the arena, he says, "we wouldn't have done the story." Kaplan, who has an extensive background as a newsman, says that although he's a member of CNN's management, he's a journalist, not one of the "business people." As for news staffers' objections and their refusal to attach their names to the show, Kaplan says that "if anybody decided it was a shitty show, they didn't tell me." -Matthew Heimer

PUNDIT SCORECARD: FAREWELL TO PAT

AS WE ENTER OUR SECOND YEAR of tracking the accuracy of the nation's weekend political savants, we have a brand-new leader: Al Hunt of The Capital Gang. With six newly verifiable predictions this month, Hunt batted a sterling 1.000. In jostling for second place, Tony Blankleywho went three for four-ended up in a statistical tie with Eleanor Clift, who dropped out of first place after going three for five. Mark Shields moved up a notch, from fourth to third, merely by standing still: He had no newly verifiable predictions in our latest tally.

Also this month, we're dropping Patrick Buchanan from our rankings. Some of the predictions he has offered since we began keeping score may come true, but he has made his quadrennial move from pundit to politician and is now more likely to be the subject of such predictions than someone dreaming them up. He moves on knowing he was never bested by our chimp.

Sam Donaldson & Cokie Roberts

Al Hunt, CG (51 of 80)	.638
Tony Blankley, MG (52 of 82)	.634
Eleanor Clift, MG (71 of 112)	.634
Mark Shields, CG (18 of 29)	.621
Robert Novak, CG (47 of 76)	.618
Margaret Carlson, CG (30 of 49)	.612
Bill Kristol, TW (62 of 102)	.608
George Stephanopoulos, TW (60 of 101)	.594
Michael Barone, MG (34 of 58)	.586
Sam Donaldson, TW (21 of 36)	.583

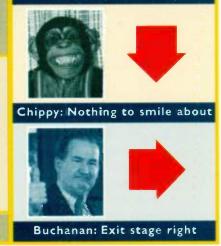
RON SHERMAN/ARISTOCK (ARENA); ERIC DRAPER/AP (BUCHANAN)

Cokie Roberts, TW (16 of 29)	.552
Kate O'Beirne, CG (19 of 35)	.543
Chippy the chimp unaffiliated (28 of 54)	.519
John McLaughlin, MG (45 of 93)	.484
Morton Kondracke, BB* (43 of 95)	.453
George Will, TW (19 of 46)	.413
Fred Barnes, BB* (39 of 106)	.368

Barnes and Kondracke. Four weeks' worth were available for all others.



Hunt: The new champ



BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000 43

nenotebook

Radio: The Next Big Thing

RADIO WAS STILL IN ITS INFANCY WHEN DAVID SARNOFF PROPOSED THAT THE recently formed Radio Corporation of America transform it into a mass entertainment medium. Recognizing Sarnoff's talents, RCA chairman Owen D. Young asked him in 1920 to assess radio's commercial prospects. Having failed to spur the company to move as aggressively as he had hoped, Sarnoff reiterated and updated his key points two years later in the following letter. By 1929, U.S. radio sales would total \$950 million. Sarnoff would lead RCA for some 40 years.

The letter from which the following is excerpted is published in its entirety in Letters of the Century: America 1900-1999 (The Dial Press, 1999), a vast collection compiled and edited by Lisa Grunwald and Stephen J. Adler.

January 31, 1922

Dear Mr. Young,

Now that the idea of radio broadcasting and the sale of devices for use at home in connection therewith have met with such great enthusiasm and interest, you may wish to review that part of my report to



you dated January 31, 1920. I quote from my report to you as follows:

"For some years I have had in mind a plan of development which would make

radio a 'household utility' in the same sense as a piano or phonograph. "While this has been tried in the past by wires, it has been a failure because wires

do not lend themselves to this scheme. With radio, however, it would seem to be entirely feasible. For example-a radio telephone transmitter having a range of say 20 to 50 miles can be installed at a fixed point where instrumental or vocal music or both are produced. The receiver can be designed in the form of a simple 'Radio Music Box' and arranged for several different wave lengths, which should be changeable with the

throwing of a single switch or pressing of a single button. "The 'Radio Music Box' can be supplied with amplifying tubes and a loud speaking

telephone, all of which can be neatly mounted in one box. The box can be placed on a table in the parlor or living room, the switch set accordingly and the transmitted music received. There should be no difficulty in receiving music perfectly when transmitted within a radius of 25 to 50 miles. Within such a radius there reside hundreds of thousands of families, and as all can simultaneously receive from a single transmitter, there would be no question of obtaining sufficiently loud signals to make the perfor-

"The same principle can be extended to numerous other fields. Baseball scores can mance enjoyable. be transmitted in the air by the use of one set installed at [New York's] Polo Grounds.

The same would be true of other cities. This proposition would be especially interesting to farmers and others living in outlying districts removed from cities. By the purchase of a 'Radio Music Box' they could enjoy concerts, lectures, music, recitals, etc. which may be going on in the nearest city within their radius. There are numerous other

fields to which the principle can be extended."

Very truly yours, David Sarnoff General Manager

IIN SHORT

JUST DOING THEIR JOBS

The New York Times reports that the uproar over a publicly subsidized art exhibit in Brooklyn, which includes what some deem a sacrilegious painting of the Virgin Mary, began when a WCBS-AM radio reporter asked New York City mayor Rudolph Giuliani a question about the show that had been fed to her by a mayoral aide. Frank Raphael, WCBS's director of news and programming, confirms the Times's account but calls it "a tabloid depiction of a benign event." Adds Raphael: "In this case, the mayor was being a politician and my reporter was being a reporter. I don't have any problem with what my reporter did. I would have had a problem if she didn't follow it up."

During a September 23 appearance on CNN's Inside Politics, ostensibly made to discuss the controversy swirling around his views related to U.S. participation in World War II, pundit-politician Patrick Buchanan unleashes a tirade aimed at the network that employs him as a cohost of Crossfire in between his presidential campaigns. During the rant, Buchanan labels CNN correspondent Bruce Morton a "dishonest journalist that really was trying to win...the Peter Arnett trophy" and calls a story Morton reported about Buchanan a "piece of political-hack work."

MAKEOVER OF THE MONTH

After a consultant's study finds that the Girl Scouts have an image as "nice, but not necessary," the group launches an image overhaul, reports PR Week. Says a spokeswoman: "[W]e're a dynamic, cutting-edge organization, and the largest informal educa-

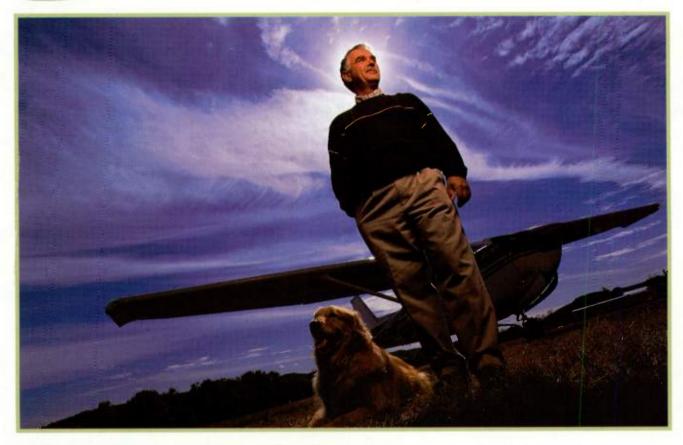
tional organization in the country. The study was a real wake-up call." The spin is apparently working. Reporting on the image cam-

paign, The Boston Globe singles out one girl who put the new ethos to the test this summer "when she leapt into jellyfish-inhabited waters" while at a scout camp in Florida.

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

Media Lives

Behind-the-scenes people who help make it happen



Eyes On The Road At 1,000 Feet

IKE ALAN IS 1,000 FEET OVER Hartford in his four-seat Cessna 172 RG, searching for car wrecks, traffic snarls, and anything else that might create headaches for commuters.

"Good afternoon," he says into his headset, kicking off one of the 28 fifty-second updates he'll deliver on this mid-October Friday. "This is Mike Alan, flying WTIC's *Air One.*"

Among traffic reporters, Alan is an oddity: He not only updates listeners on road conditions—he also flies the plane. In fact, when he started working as the *Air One* pilot, more than 19 years ago, flying the plane was *all* he did. Five months into the job, he became a broadcaster, too.

Every weekday—at 6:30 A.M. and at 3:45 P.M.—Alan drags his Cessna out of the Simsbury (Connecticut) Airport's hangar No. 13 and takes to the skies over Connecticut's capital city. He often has his golden retriever, Oliver, in tow.

Thousands may tune in to Alan's broadcasts to learn the fastest way to get to work in the morning or back home at night, but he has no illusions about his place in the media firmament. "I'm basically an obscure person," he says. "One of

Mike Alan pilot, traffic reporter Metro Networks, Inc. (WTIC) the nice things, for me at least, is that I'm not really recognized."

Alan (his real name is Mike Bourgoin), 43, grew up near Hartford. His career was set at 18 when he couldn't buy the car he had saved for

because insurance was too expensive. He headed to flight school instead, earning his pilot's license by the time he was 19. (After many years as a WTIC employee, Alan now works for Metro Networks, Inc., the country's largest provider of local weather, traffic, and news for radio stations, WTIC among them. For more on Metro, see "Trafficking In News," July/August 1999.)

On this crisp autumn day, Alan hears from a WTIC colleague that a modular home has fallen from its trailer and is blocking an exit ramp off Interstate 691. Alan heads south toward Weathersfield on a course that takes him over a pumpkin field, the Connecticut River, and hundreds of what look from his vantage point like Matchbox cars. Within minutes he has spotted the fallen house and has fresh information for his next update.

Seeking out the next traffic obstacle, Alan scans the empty skies he patrols: "It's just me—or me and Oliver—up here." —Bridget Samburg

Photo Opportunity

High-speed auto racing is thrilling to watch. But NASCAR didn't want newspaper readers to see how bloody it can be.

IMI ALLEN WAS IN A FIX. IN AN INSTANT, THE dream assignment of his short career as a news photographer had turned into a nightmare. Allen's assignment was to ride with and photograph an emergency-rescue crew at work during a NASCAR race weekend at the New Hampshire International Speedway in Loudon. But something had gone wrong. Just after he and the crew returned to the pit from a wreck on the track, a security guard knocked on the emergency vehicle's window and demanded that Allen hand over his camera. When Allen refused, the guard took him into custody and drove him in the pace car to Winston Cup headquarters. Allen correctly guessed what was coming next: The security man was going to demand his film.

Jimi Allen was working for the newspaper I edit, the Concord Monitor. His predicament exposed the fault line between journalists and a huge commercial enterprise that is expert in controlling how the public sees its product. Danger is one of auto racing's big selling points. No one wants anyone to crack up, but long-range photographs and video images of spectacular crashes are part of the sport's mystique.

What is not in NASCAR's interest is close-up views of the human toll auto racing can take—the kind of photographs Allen was shooting that day.

The speedway is in the heart of our circulation area. The asphalt oval is known as the Magic Mile and has a spectator capacity of 90,000 and growing. The track has been good for the *Monitor*. We sell thousands of extra newspapers each year during events there, especially NASCAR's two Winston Cup races, which always sell out. Our first sign that the fans are headed our way is a big increase in hits on our website, as fans check out the weather forecast and the latest news from the track. In the days before a Winston Cup race, thousands of campers roll into our area and converge into nomadic communities in the campgrounds near the track.

There is fierce competition among the local newspapers to serve these fans. To compete, we are constantly in search of ideas to broaden and deepen our race coverage. Dan Habib, our photo editor, had been trying for two years to arrange for a photographer to spend a race weekend with a rescue crew.

Mike Pride is the editor of the Concord Monitor, in Concord, New Hampshire. His column on editing a daily local newspaper appears regularly. The answer was always no.

In July, Habib's luck seemed to turn. While at the track to scout shooting locations three days before the first of this year's two Winston Cup races, he ran into Dick Girard, whose company provides fire-rescue services for the races. Habib mentioned his idea, and Girard said he'd





be glad to have a *Monitor* photographer accompany his crew if it was all right with the track's public relations people. Habib called the speedway PR office, and, to his surprise, this time the answer was yes.

Habib gave the assignment to Jimi Allen, a graduate student in photojournalism at Ohio University who was working as an intern on our staff. The plan was to have Allen shoot for a special photo spread that would run during the second Winston Cup weekend two months later.

When Allen showed up that morning, Girard explained how the operation worked. The crew had three principal jobs: to eliminate the danger of fire, to extricate drivers, and to help remove disabled cars.

Girard gave Allen a seat in his emergency vehicle. The crew answered five calls that day, including a 13-car pileup. Each time, Allen went out onto the track with the crew and

After Concord Monitor photographer Jimi Allen took these pictures of emergency-crew members extracting a driver from his car after a pileup during the Winston Cup race weekend in July, NASCAR officials prevented him from taking more photos.

ALLEN/ CONCORD

MONITOR

photographed the rescue work. He even climbed onto and around wreckage to improve his angles.

To a photographer, access is everything. Allen found that day exhilarating—"like photographing the moon landing when NASA got there." When Habib and Allen spoke that night, he marveled at his good fortune and spoke with excitement of the big race the next day.

On Sunday, Girard gave Allen a red shirt like the ones worn by emergency-crew members and asked him to wear it during the race. The drivers were nearly two thirds of the way

through the 300-lap Winston Cup race when Girard's crew got its first call. Bobby Labonte had crashed in turn four. Allen went along and was on the track shooting when someone from NASCAR spotted him. Almost as soon as the crew returned to its spot, there came the security man's knock on Allen's window and the demand for his camera. That was the first he knew he had run afoul of NASCAR's rule against photographers on the track. Somehow, he had escaped the notice of NASCAR officials the previous day, but they had seen him now, and they wanted him out.



Emergency-crew leader Dick Girard monitors a race, ready to give orders to his team if a car crashes.

As Allen waited in a speedway trailer, fearing that his film might be confiscated, his mind was racing. Losing the film would compound the violation he felt at being detained; to give it up, he thought, would be like a reporter surrendering notes. So Allen took the six rolls he had shot that day and stuffed them into his socks.

When track officials returned to question him, they said no one had authorized his assignment. Because he was wearing a red shirt rather than a news photographer's vest, they accused him of impersonating an emergency-crew member. Then, as Allen had known they would, they demanded his film. He gave them six rolls of unexposed film as well as the film in his camera. They checked his bag for more film, took his press credential for the race, and escorted him out the front gate.

Allen was shaken when he returned to the office that afternoon. Word of what had happened quickly reached our reporters at the track. The veteran among them, Ray Duckler, did the right thing and informed track officials that Allen had sneaked the exposed film back to the office. This was a smart decision. To maintain a good relationship with the track, it was better to let them hear about the smuggled film from us rather than to let officials be surprised when they saw the pictures in the newspaper.

The best of Allen's photographs showed the crew in action rescuing a driver hurt in a Saturday crash and Bobby Labonte running to check his engine after hitting the wall on Sunday. As planned, we prepared to use them in a photo-story spread during the speedway's second Winston Cup race weekend in September. Although harsh words were spoken the day Allen was kicked out of the track, things had cooled down by the time track officials came to the *Monitor* to talk things over a few days later. Then and in later discussions, they said they had erred in giving Allen permission to ride with the emergency crew and requested that we use only the most generic of his pictures.

They also explained why NASCAR allows no news photographers on the track. The most obvious—and legitimate—reason is safety, although safety concerns could not explain the effort to take Allen's film. They also said that if a driver were injured in a crash, NASCAR did not want the victims' families to see gory pictures. The track

> officials did not say so, but it also seemed clear to us that NASCAR did not want images of drivers writhing in pain running in newspapers all across the country.

> This effort at image control is in keeping with big-time auto racing's reputation. Of all the major sports, it is perhaps the most commercial and the most aggressive at marketing products—including its own. The cars, uniforms, and helmets are covered with ads. No matter what the venue, drivers manage to work their sponsors into every TV or radio interview. In victory lane, products are

hauled out and strategically placed so that it is difficult to keep them out of a photographer's frame. Winners often smile for the camera wearing the cap of one sponsor, then change caps two or three times to make sure all the sponsors get their due. Meanwhile, an adoring trade press follows the circuit, which is why you sometimes hear applause during a winner's press conference. All of this commercialism and boosterism can give some journalists the willies.

Against this backdrop, Allen's adventure illuminated the challenge in providing news coverage that reflects the reality of auto racing. Although we wanted to maintain good relations with the speedway, there was never a question that we would use the photos as planned. We took them with the track's blessing, even though track officials later said bestowing that blessing was a mistake. Habib laid out the photo spread, and it ran as part of our coverage for the second Winston Cup race at Loudon this season.

The layout did present one hard choice. We chose not to play Allen's most graphic picture, of an injured driver, on the front page. We led the paper instead with a good but less striking picture that focused on the rescue crew in action. This was a journalistic decision, not a concession to the track. Leading the front page with the stronger picture might have misled readers, creating the false impression that the accident in the photograph had happened just the day before.

The coming of the Winston Cup races has challenged our news staff in many ways, but our main objective is the same as it is in all our endeavors: to show what really happens. Jimi Allen's opportunity—and his brief ordeal—reminded us of how difficult that can be even during an event that occurs in broad daylight in front of 90,000 people.

A Tug On Superman's Cape

A spandex-clad jewelry merchant known as Cashman fends off the villainous Time Warner empire's accusations that he's nothing more than a Man of Steal.

> LIKE THE WAY THE CASHMAN STORY IS shaping up. It's one of those contemporary David and Goliath sagas that cast a gigantic corporation in the role of Goliath and a small businessman of enormous pluck as David. In the end, of course, the plucky businessman usually gets crushed like a bug, but meantime there's a lot of pleasure in rooting for him. It's sort of like rooting for one of those guerrilla bands in the Caucasus that seem able to run circles around the Russian Army for a while.

> The plucky businessman in this case is Russell Oliver, a paunchy, middle-aged Toronto jeweler who for the past two years has advertised his willingness to buy jewelry for cash by appearing on Canadian television in a tight-fitting spandex superhero costume and referring to himself as Cashman. The gigantic corporation is

Time Warner, customarily described in the press as The Media Giant, which, as the owner of DC Comics, controls all intellectual property rights to the Superman character. The fact that the simple businessman is Canadian and the bullying conglomerate is American has to be considered a bonus.

Time Warner has sued Oliver for \$300,000. According to a statement of claim it filed in a Toronto court, both Clark Kent and Oliver go into phone booths and emerge in costumes (of the same colors) to assume a "triumphant-like stance"—all of which makes Cashman "confusingly similar" to the Man of Steel. That claim, I have to say, is a lot more persuasive if you haven't actually seen Russell Oliver in his spandex costume attempting a triumphant-like stance.

In these cases, it is customary for the gigantic corporation to defend its trademark or service mark or copyright ferociously even at the risk of appearing silly-nowhere is fear of the thin edge of the wedge more pronounced than it is among intellectual property lawyers-and for the plucky businessman to do everything in his power to make the corporation look as silly as possible. As an indication of how well Oliver is holding up his end of that contest, one Canadian paper's coverage of his statement of defense to the charge of confusing similarity-a document that included the arguments that "Cashman is not vulnerable to any of the numerous forms of kryptonite," that "Cashman does not have an athletic physique," and that "Superman has no need to purchase jewelry as he has been known from time to time to...manufacture diamonds from

as he has been known from time to time to...manufacture diamonds from the compression of coal using super strength"—was headlined "Cashman Says He's Too Fat To Fly." So far, the lawyers in the

case have played their assigned roles in the prescribed manner.

Time Warner is, of course, represented by a firm from Bay Street, where the high-end sliver of the Toronto bar does business. In court, with appropriate humorlessness, the Bay Street lawyers have complained that references to such matters as the planet Krypton are an effort to make a mockery of a serious lawsuit; out of court, they have declined to comment at all. On the other side, Cashman's lawyer, a solo practitioner named Jerry Levitan, has not been a difficult man for reporters to find. By chance. Levitan is something of an expert on Superman. He claims to know precisely what distinguishes the six types of kryptonite. A conversation that Levitan had with a television reporter recently raised the question of whether Time Warner has, in effect, become LexCorp, the all-consuming conglomerate owned by the truly wicked Lex Luthor, who began his criminal career as an evil scientific genius and evolved into an evil entrepreneur. All of this palaver, Levitan is happy to admit, is for effect; in real life, he is sophisticated enough to know that it's Rupert Murdoch who has become LexCorp.

Both Levitan and Oliver delight in speaking of Lois Lane and the planet Krypton and villainous Brainiac as if they were not fictional. Almost any time he's interviewed, Oliver, who once did a promotion from the ring at a World Wrestling Federation bout, says that he'd like to dispense with all of these fancy lawyers and meet Superman "one on one, mano a mano." The press, of course, plays along. One television reporter was inspired to do all of his interviews as Reporterman, and arrived in the outer office of Time Warner's lawyers in appropriate costume. They were not available.

In theory, when it comes to disputes over intellectual property, those of us who count ourselves among the jackals of the press have divided sympathies. We obviously have a personal interest in protecting just about any kind of speech. I long ago stated for the record that I am very close to being a First Amendment absolutist-the one exception being my belief that people who show other people slides of their trips abroad should be arrested and put in jail for a very long time. Also, I haven't forgotten that about 20 years ago I might have barely escaped being sued myself by Warner Books-which I assume is one of the companies that became part of Time Warner, since nearly everything else is. Victor S. Navasky, then the editor of The Nation, had given me a secretly photocopied manuscript of a new Richard Nixon book before it came out and told me to reveal something.

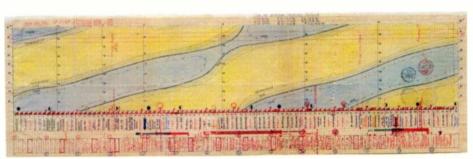
I knew the risks. This happened not long

after The Nation, apparently having purloined a galley of Gerald Ford's memoir (which, somehow, was not called White House Memories of a Lucky Klutz), printed some of the juicy bits about the Nixon pardon and got sued by Harper & Row-an episode that led me to refer to the magazine's distinguished editor in my column for a while as Sticky Fingers Navasky. ("I suspected things might not be going well for The Nation's side when I noticed that every time Navasky sat in the witness chair next to the judge's desk the judge edged his silver water pitcher just out of Sticky Fingers's reach.") I may have been saved from what Russell Oliver is going through only by the fact that amid the string of platitudes that President Nixon had written ("The president has great power in wartime as Commander in Chief of the armed forces. But he also has enormous power to prevent war and preserve peace"), l couldn't find anything to reveal.

On the other side, writers obviously have

a stake in the vigorous protection of intellectual property. At the time of Navasky's heist, I could sympathize with Harper & Row's claim that The Nation's bootlegged, unpaid-for excerpts had cost its author a newsmagazine serialization fee. Of course, the author Cashman is accused of knocking off didn't own the copyright in the first place. Superman was created by Jerry Siegel and Joe Shusterthe latter a Canadian by birth, The Globe and Mail reminded its readers. Every comic book fan knows that Shuster and Siegel were treated shabbily by DC Comics for years, that they failed in two lawsuits to get a significant cut of the millions their creation had brought in, and that they died embittered. Everybody had been rooting for them, too.

Contributing editor Calvin Trillin is the author of Family Man, recently published in paperback by Farrar, Straus and Giroux. He is also a columnist for Time, a staff writer for The New Yorker, and a contributor to The Nation.



Handmade by a Russian cosmonaut, this meter-long chart ("cyclogram") describes the 96-day space flight of *Salyut 6*. Some 22 parallel time-series show the timing of the 1500 sunrises and 1500 sunsets experienced during the flight, the schedule for space walks and baths, and the visits of resupply ships bringing equipment, fresh fruit, mustard, gingerbread Large poster designed by Edward Tufte, \$16 postpaid

VISUAL EXPLANATIONS Edward Tufte

"If this book were a house, it would have been designed by Frank Lloyd Wright." ONLINE "A truly monumental exploration of information design; not only written but also designed and published by Tufte himself with intelligence, erudition, and grace." PRINT "The da Vinci of data." THE NEW YORK TIMES "Tufte's latest book is a knockout. Straightforward, witty, compelling, packed with vivid examples." WIRED

Winner of 7 book awards. \$45 per copy. We pay shipping and handling. Credit card orders or information call: 800 822-2454 FAX 203 272-8600 Send check to: Graphics Press Box 430 Cheshire, CT 06410

Ask about Presenting Data and Information, Tufte's one-day course in Palo Alto, San Francisco, Austin, Dallas, and Boston.

Now the fastest retriever in cyberspace.

No matter what you're searching for on the Internet, from biographies to body piercing, you'll

lind it faster and easier when you unleash the new Lycos. All you have to do is log on to the Internet and say, "Lycos, go get it!"



m



Promotional Consideration

NBC's new venture with Lou Dobbs tells us plenty about the changing role of news in the era of Media Synergy.

BC and Lou Dobbs, the creator and former anchor of CNN's 'Moneyline News Hour,' today announced that they have entered into an agreement under which they will partner in the production of a syndicated radio show to be hosted by Mr. Dobbs and the publication of a monthly financial newsletter. Both of these NBC and Lou Dobbs-branded products will focus on the financial markets.

"As part of the ongoing publicity and promotion for the newsletter and radio show, it is expected that Mr. Dobbs will be interviewed as an occasional guest on NBC News programs and on programs of other media outlets.... They have also agreed that they will discuss an expansion of their relationship to include anchoring and hosting television programs should he decide to return to broadcasting when his non-compete agreement with CNN expires."

(NBC Corporate Communications, October 4, 1999)

Matt Lauer (left) welcomes Lou Dobbs to the NBC family. What's wrong with this picture? Certainly not the idea that Dobbs, a veteran and well-regarded financial journalist, would hook up with the likes of NBC, which is looking to ramp up its financial coverage. And surely not the notion that NBC and Dobbs have apparently come up with a clever way of getting Dobbs on the air despite a noncompete clause he signed with his former and longtime employer, CNN. (The CNN lawyers, no doubt, are still mulling their options.)

No, the problem can be found in that line in the press release that nonchalantly mentions Dobbs's appearances on NBC news programs—that's *news* programs—as part of the "ongoing publicity and promotion" of Dobbs's and NBC's new products. So that's what news shows are for? Silly us for thinking they were for news.

Okay, we've seen the press release; now let's go to the videotape (well, to excerpts from the transcript, anyway) of NBC's *Today* of October 4, 1999:

Matt Lauer: Our next guest shocked a lot of people last June when he quit his job as anchor of a highly respected daily financial news program on CNN. This morning Lou Dobbs is back with a new gig. Lou, great to see you. Welcome.

Lou Dobbs: Matt, thank you very much.

Lauer: New York Times business section today, right on the front there, it says that Lou Dobbs and NBC sign a deal. Just give me a brief description of what you're doing.

Dobbs: We're, together, going to create a newsletter on markets, finance—the political economy, if you will provide some monthly insight for folks who are watching these somewhat turbulent markets these days.

Lauer: So this is for the average investor, this newsletter?

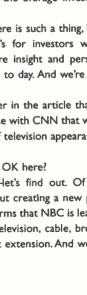
Dobbs: It will—if there is such a thing, Matt, as an average investor—it's for investors who are looking for a little more insight and perspective than they might get day to day. And we're looking forward to it....

Lauer: I read further in the article that there was a no-compete clause with CNN that wouldn't allow you to do a lot of television appearances.

Dobbs: Right.

Lauer: Are—are we OK here?

Dobbs: Well, let's—let's find out. Of course we're OK. This is all about creating a new product to add to the many platforms that NBC is leading in, whether it's interactive television, cable, broadcast. We think it's an important extension. And we'll have terrific reception.





I guess this is what an interview that grows out of a commitment to provide "publicity and promotion"—as opposed to, say, news and information—looks like (and it took place during the seven o'clock hour, which is generally reserved for the show's top news). Although we can assume that future talks with Dobbs will be more substantive, the fact remains that the network has announced that

The big deal is that it isn't a big deal, that media companies no longer feel compelled to be subtle about using their news resources to promote their products.

ter get used to it, or else get better at separating what we're being told because some editor or producer thought it was important from what we're being told because the news provider has a financial interest at stake. In this era of media mergers, which are making big media bigger than ever, news divisions are becoming parts of everexpanding companies with ever-expanding information

> and entertainment product lines. A big part of the financial incentives behind these deals is the promised synergy—that is, the enhanced ability to use existing platforms to launch and promote new offerings.

Most journalists-including,

it will use its news shows to help sell its new Dobbsian newsletter, so we shouldn't be surprised if Dobbs's appearances seem, at least in part, like infomercials.

Of course, news programs, particularly the morning variety, routinely provide airtime to celebrities looking to hype a new movie or show—the celebrity gets the exposure and the network gets the ratings big celebrities can attract. Networks just as routinely give the home team a little boost whenever they can—for instance, bringing in the star of a network miniseries just before it's about to air. Every little bit helps.

We tolerate some of that, we even expect it, and, if we happen to be interested in that miniseries star, we're happy to watch. So what's the big deal with the Lou Dobbs arrangement?

The big deal is that it isn't a big deal, that we've come so far down the slope of news as promotion that media I'm sure, the ones who work at NBC News—define *news* as what we need to know or at least what we would be interested to know. By that standard, would Matt Lauer have opted to interview Dobbs that morning if he had just signed a deal with, say, the Disney-owned ABC? Lauer couldn't be reached for comment, and I know that posing such a question may seem naïve or foolish, because I guess the answer is so obvious. But it's worth asking, if only to remind ourselves that the thing called news has been going through some fairly profound changes.

Dobbs, commenting on his new NBC venture, described the network, accurately, as "one of the world's premier brands." When we watch the TV stars, authors, and, now, financial analysts on the network news, we'll be smarter if we keep that in mind.

Keep those blurry messages coming. E-mail me at eeffron@brillscontent.com.

companies no longer feel compelled to be even a bit subtle about using their journalistic resources in this manner.

And why should they be? From the standpoint of General Electric, which owns NBC, the idea of possessing a news division and not using it to promote your other products probably seems outlandish. And when the numbers were crunched on the Dobbs-NBC deal, it would have been crazy, from GE stockholders' perspective, anyway, not to factor in the value of having the likes of the top-rated Today show as a platform to sell its new financial newsletter, just as it ceaselessly promotes other NBC programs.

But where does all this leave us consumers? We'd bet-





COMMENTARY THAT HITS

BELOW THE BELTWAY



The Internet's informed look at politics and culture. Read it FREE at www.slate.com

© 1999 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft and Slate are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Microsoft Corp. in the U.S. and/or other countries.

[CREATORS]

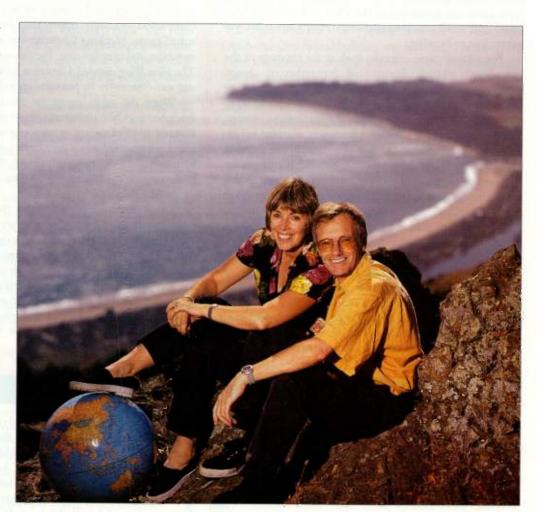
Trailblazers For Travelers

For 25 years, Tony and Maureen Wheeler's Lonely Planet guidebooks have led explorers and globe-trotters to every corner of the world. • BY MATTHEW REED BAKER



fornia guidebook is finished, but the Marin County town of Larkspur has been forgotten by the author, who is now in Thailand on his next assignment. Each writer must now spend the next three hours in bucolic Larkspur, where the pastry is fresh and the caffe lattés come with a piney atmosphere. In this verdant town that ascends into the hills, the poor, pressured scribes must fact-check a map, take photographs, and catalog the best places to sightsee, eat, sleep, and shop. A 2,000word review is due from each writer first thing in the morning, in time for the editors to edit the work before adding it to the final manuscript.

Actually, it's not really an emergency, and these writers are not even Lonely Planet staff. They should be so lucky. Wheeler is addressing a guidebook-writing workshop at a four-day travel writers' and photographers' conference hosted by Book Passage, an independent bookstore in nearby Corte Madera. Other conference headliners include veteran travel essayists Jan Morris and Tim Cahill, as well as top editors from Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel, Islands, and the Travelers' Tales book series. But these attendees and aspiring guidebook writers-ranging from the undergraduate to the retired-have gathered today to learn about the trade from Lonely Planet owners and founders Tony and



While in Northern California for a travel conference in August, Tony and Maureen Wheeler explore the shores of Marin County. Maureen Wheeler and their staff.

Over the past 25 years, readers have turned to Lonely Planet books for detailed, often offbeat information about almost any country in the world—cuisine in Cameroon, temples in Thailand, breweries in Bulgaria. Such unusual coverage has helped Lonely Planet—headquartered in Melbourne, Australia—blossom from a homegrown operation beloved by hippie backpackers into a multimedia travel information provider with annual revenues of \$30 million and offices in Oakland, London, and Paris (the Wheelers declined to reveal their profit).

American travel-book powerhouses Fodor's and Frommer's have long provided basic information to mainstream attractions, but as more tourists seek to explore rather than sightsee, they increasingly choose Lonely Planet, which has become synonymous with copious maps, frank opinions, and highlights of even the tiniest hamlets. Unlike those other brands, Lonely Planet is still independently owned and publishes its own books, giving credence to the Wheelers' stature as the patron saints of "independent" travelers who seek territory uncharted by package tours.

In the workshop, the Wheelers are affable and approachable, but the tension created by the students' desire to impress them is only heightened by the knowledge that the student with the best write-up will win a trip to Lonely Planet's Melbourne office in November to attend the company's annual Authors' Week, where new and old authors meet to share stories and swap techniques. So when a Lonely Planet minivan lets the students loose in downtown Larkspur on this sun-drenched August Saturday, they rush off like a pack of cub reporters to document the town with notepads and disposable cameras.

Tony Wheeler, 52, absorbs the town with his eyes. He wears a rumpled cap decorated with maps of Australia and Africa, and after watching his students scurry around, practicing what he has done for more than 25 years, he wears a hearty grin as well.

> E USED THAT GRIN TO good effect back on October 7, 1970. That day, Tony found himself sharing a bench in London's Regent's

Park with an attractive young woman named Maureen. The son of a British Airways airport manager, Tony had grown up in such disparate places as Pakistan, the West Indies, and Detroit. A graduate student at the London Business School with a bachelor's degree in engineering, he was on a track toward a job in the auto industry. She was a secretary at a wine company and had been in London for only a few days, having spent all her life in Belfast. That day in the park, he had been reading a car magazine but fidgeted and tried to get up the nerve to talk to her. She was intent on reading Leo Tolstoy's Childhood, Boyhood and Youth and didn't want to be bothered.

"I just thought, *If he tries* to smile at me, I'll just ice him off the bench," says Maureen, 49. "Then he started to chat me up. And he had such a nice smile that I just liked him instantly." A year later to the day, they became Mr. and Mrs. Wheeler.

Six months after the wedding, the couple went on a long journey that launched Lonely Planet. They planned to take six months to travel to Australia, where they would work and save money to return to England. After driving across Europe and Central Asia to Afghanistan, where they sold their car, they traveled through India, Nepal, and Southeast Asia (by train, bus, yacht, and hitchhiking) until they reached Sydney, on the day after Christmas, in possession of only 27 cents.

"We had such a good time," says Tony. "So much of your life, you look back to the last year and say, 'What did I do in April?' You can't sort of pinpoint things from day to day, but we'd had this sixmonth period where just about every day was etched in our memory....So we decided we'll work for a year and then travel for another year."

During the work year, friends and acquaintances asked them about their trip, and they knew from experience how little Asian travel information was available. So they decided to publish their own guidebook, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. They collated and stapled the 96-page book in their kitchen

and sold the 8,500 copies themselves, bookshop by bookshop, in Australia and New Zealand. In 1974, the Wheelers embarked on another tour of Southeast Asia, which was still largely unknown to tourists due to the Vietnam War and the overthrow of Sukarno in Indonesia.

"The whole area was almost untouched," Tony says. "We could see it was happening because we'd met people going down through there, and we'd seen the surfers coming to Bali. We thought, Okay, we'll do a guide just for Southeast Asia. We'll do the best guide ever done to Southeast Asia.

Malawi, Mozambique & Zambia

shoestring

Lonely Planet

reliability, both

guidebooks

emphasize

information

about faraway

locales and in

construction.

Each book is

special binding

to withstand the

rigors of travel.

made with

their sturdy

in their

Which was really easy to do, since it was the first guide for Southeast Asia."

They put that book together in a room at the Palace Hotel in Singapore and called it *South east Asia on a shoestring*. The book spurred

young travelers to explore this neglected part of the world and unwittingly launched Tony and Maureen as the gurus of backpacking. "I think that they really are icons," says Don George, Salon.com's travel editor. "They represent the first wave of people who hit the great Asian overland trail in the middle seventies....They're icons for a new way of discovering the planet, and that status has just been maintained and even grown through the years."

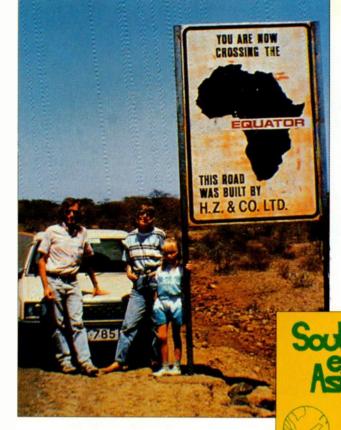
Thanks to its original, lemony cover and its long-lasting popularity, Lonely Planet's signature book earned the moniker the "Yellow Bible," and it paved the way for the growth of the company and more books. When the first edition of

the "Yellow Bible" appeared in 1975, 15,000 copies were printed at 144 pages apiece. This May, 25 years later, Lonely Planet published its tenth edition. It's 936 pages long and one of more than 400 titles.

AS THE STUDENTS AT THE TRAVEL conference discover, publishing a Lonely Planet guidebook isn't easy. After tromping all over Larkspur, pinpointing every location on the Lonely Planet map (which included

a few deliberate errors for the writers to catch), they stay up late writing reviews with the bluntly honest style preferred by Lonely Planet. "If you say that everything's great, then you're talking about tourist brochures, not a guidebook," Maureen says.

According to company policy, Lonely Planet accepts neither advertising nor discounts for positive coverage, and this philosophy has inspired occasional wrath from locals. For example, when Britain's third edition came out, in April, several politicians, writers, and residents decried the book's criti-



The Wheelers often travel with their children during the kids' school vacations. In 1989, they went to Africa with daughter Tashi (pictured above with her parents in Kenya) and son Kieran. Due to its long-lasting popularity and bright cover, South east Asia on a shoestring (inset), one of Lonely Planet's first books, became known among veteran travelers as the "Yellow Bible."

cal remarks about their towns (such as the "tacky taste" of the seaside resort Blackpool). And

Africa on a shoestring was once banned by Malawi's president for its detailed description of his dictatorial rule. Sometimes such candor can be prescient, such as this description of Kosovo in the first edition of Eastern Europe on a shoestring: "A visit to Kosovo is a little like visiting the West Bank or Gaza Strip: you feel you've entered an occupied territory....Local Albanians say all they want is republic status like Montenegro or Macedonia, but the central government seems to feel that, given the chance, Kosovo would withdraw from the Yugoslav Federation." These words by author David Stanley were published in 1989.

At that time, Lonely Planet had 30 employees in Melbourne and a half dozen more that shared a shoebox office in Oakland. Today, more than 120 freelance authors spend many months roaming and documenting the regions they know best. Compensation varies according to a product's size and duration, but a Lonely Planet author can earn a flat fee ranging from \$15,000 to \$20,000. Some authors have graduate degrees-such as Thailand traveler Joe Cummings (in the Thai language and Asian art history) and Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay reviewer Wayne

Bernhardson (in geography)-that focus on their countries. The company has more than 200 staffers in Melbourne and about 125 in Oakland-plus 25 in Paris and 30 in London-and keeps growing. The Oakland office is now housed in an expansive two-story affair, with a wing for cartographers and a 10,000-square-foot warehouse that can hold up to 1 million books.

Though about three quarters of its revenue comes from guidebooks,

on a shoestring

tony whee

Lonely Planet has expanded into other venues: phrasebooks, travel essays, and photography books; newsletters, both printed and e-mailed; a program on the Travel Channel; a digital library of travel photos; and a website (www.lonelyplanet.com) featuring travel advisories and bulletin boards for travelers to share tips. The

site gets 700,000 unique visitors every month, according to its web publishing manager, Virginie Boone. Lonely Planet donates funds to Third World charities each year, and that sum has increased as well, from \$30,000 a year in the early 1980s to \$400,000 this past year. The Wheelers donate to various practical aid programs, such as medical aid, clean-water efforts, and maternal care, as well as to the building of a school in Tibet, Maureen says.

AS THE WHEELERS EAT FAIITAS ON THE terrace outside Book Passage, conference attendees introduce themselves and ask for autographs. Both Wheelers are welcoming and have an easy way of steering adoring fans into normal conversations. Their corps of followers is widespread: In 1994, a notable fan named Bill Gates wanted to buy the electronic rights to Lonely Planet's content for CD-ROMs, but the Wheelers declined, choosing to stay independent.

Though still ready to rough it a bit, Tony laughs as he taints his image of the pure, impoverished adventurer: "The question I get all the time is 'Do you stay in backpacker hostels? Do you still travel on the cheap?' The answer is that this year, Maureen and I have

stayed in a hotel that cost \$1,000 a night, but two weeks before that I did stay in a hostel-and I parked my Ferrari outside." The Wheelers especially like to travel with their children, daughter Tashi, 18, and son Kieran, 16, and Maureen relishes telling a story about a trip to Egypt during which Tashi and Kieran, then 7 and 5, had rented donkeys without asking permission. "Don't worry, Mom," Kieran had explained. "We bargained him down."

On the last day of the conference, the Wheelers step aside as the Oakland office's editors, cartographers, and designers work one on one with the students, correcting their maps and critiquing their writing and photographs. The staff is young and energetic, and they are teaching the Lonely Planet standards-honest and comprehensive assessments but also accurate maps and phone numbers-which have been honed since the first book was stapled in that kitchen in Sydney.

When the students break for lunch, the Wheelers join the Oakland staff to decide their fates, and the judges place emphasis on mapping accuracy and authorial spark. At the conference's closing ceremonies, the winner is announced. Jennifer Corley, a 24-year-old playwright from Charleston, South Carolina, becomes the new celebrity, and she receives congratulations for her work and for her upcoming trip to Australia in November.

As for Tony Wheeler, he has many miles to travel before he's back in Melbourne for Authors' Week. He will fly from San Francisco to Bangkok and then to Bangladesh, where he'll research a photography book about rice. He'll catch up with Maureen in Bali, and then it's off to China to continue work on the book. And he'll go to Europe in October, where he'll give a talk at his alma mater, the London Business School, which sits across the street from that fateful park bench where he first smiled at his future wife and partner.

"I've hardly been anywhere when I think about it," Tony says with deadpan candor when asked to estimate the number of countries he's visitedabout 100. "I've really got to start traveling someday."

COURTESY LONELY PLANET PUBLICATIONS

Background Music.

Romantic Whispers.

Flirtatious Laughter.

Machine Gun Fire.



Listen to National Public Radio's[®] All Things Considered and let us take you from the everyday to the unreal. From the politically astute to the criminally insane. Stay tuned to NPR and discover news that intrigues, music that enchants and talk that challenges. Go to where the sound shapes the story. And change the way you experience everything.

To find All Things Considered on your local NPR member station, call 1-877-NPR-FIND or visit http://find.npr.org.

Craig Cutler 199

The Dutch Follies

The fictional liberties taken by Edmund Morris weren't the only thing setting the literati atwitter over the new Ronald Reagan biography this fall.

> UTCH: A MEMOIR OF RONALD REAGAN was the literary firebomb of the fall. Reviewers and commentators harrumphed and pontificated about Edmund Morris's biographical technique of creating fictional characters. But, separate from the spirited debate over Morris's methods that erupted

once *The New York Times* got hold of an off-limits copy of *Dutch*, there was such a frenzy of behind-the-scenes contretemps in the literary world that you'd think national security was at issue and not a presidential biography.

Random House, the publisher of the book, embarked on a

misguided hunt for the leaker after its attempts at secrecy failed. Members of the literati wrongly assumed that Random House had handed the scoop to the Times. Time, shut out from even getting an early review copy, managed to obtain Dutch and critiqued it the same week that Newsweek ran exclusive excerpts, for which it had paid tens of thousands of dollars. Some publications gave away the ending, despite a plea to protect the fictional denouement. The Washington Post's book critic, Jonathan Yardley, castigated New York Times columnist Maureen Dowd and The New Republic's literary editor, Leon Wieseltier, for having pronounced judgment before even reading the book. And literary kremlinologists

were on the case, deciphering exactly what message the *Times* was sending by running chief book critic Michiko Kakutani's evisceration of Morris's book two days after her colleague Christopher Lehmann-Haupt gave it a positive review.

The imbroglio began on September 18, the day that *Times* reporter Doreen Carvajal conclusively revealed that Morris had invented a fictional narrator—himself—as a contemporary of Reagan's. Random House had gone to great lengths to guard that controversial postmodern literary device by trying to require that reviewers not reveal the book's contents until the September 30 official publication date. Now, embargoes are not a rare occurrence. They're usually imposed to protect a magazine's serial rights. But to some, Random House's heavy-handed attempts at secrecy—trying to make

barked on a get one earlier if he signed didn't want to play and b their commeaning compared by the compared by th

Edmund Morris

reviewers sign nondisclosure agreements (NDA) suffused with legalistic language—seemed more at home in the computer software industry than in the genteel world of books.

Richard Reeves, author of *President Kennedy: Profile of Power*, had agreed to review *Dutch* for *The New York Observer* and was slated to receive a copy just three days before its publication. But during an August trip to Long Island, he bumped into *New York Times* editorial writer Steven Weisman, who was writing a review for the paper's Sunday *Book Review* and already had bound galleys. Reeves, miffed that he would have to wait weeks for his copy, was later told by a Random House employee that he could get one earlier if he signed the NDA. Reeves refused: "I just didn't want to play and be put at a disadvantage solely to serve

their commercial interests." Reeves didn't get an early copy and decided not to write a review.

But other outlets Random House was not about to alienate, such as *The New York Times* and the *Chicago Tribune*, still received their galleys without actually returning a contract. "I won't sign them," says Charles McGrath, editor of the *Times Book Review*, though he verbally agreed to respect the embargo.

Tom Perry, Random House's director of publicity, says such NDAs are "standard operating procedure" for embargoed books, in order to protect the news value for the publications excerpting the work. (Random House has used them for Colin Powell's memoirs and a book about O.J. Simpson.) Given the literary license

Morris had taken, Random House also wanted to ensure that the reviews ran as close as possible to the book's release date.

Once Morris's cover was blown, Random House moved onto another pointless task: trying to ferret out who had leaked the book to the *Times*. Perry called the *Times*'s McGrath and inquired if someone there had given a copy to Carvajal. "I said that I didn't know," says McGrath. "He seemed quite upset."

Perry also called Neil Baldwin, executive director of the National Book Foundation, sponsor of the National Book Awards. The five jurors of the nonfiction award had received galleys, and Perry surmised that the leak might have come from one of them. "I said it certainly wasn't one of our people," recalls Baldwin. "He said, 'If you don't mind, speak to



the chairman [Neal Gabler], and have him reiterate [the need for secrecy]. If someone is doing it, maybe they will stop."

Perry says he "was just following the tracks" by calling the people who had galleys. Perry surmised from Carvajal's article that she had access to the book but not possession of it. "If my theory was correct, whoever showed the book could be stopped from showing it in more detail," he says.

Meanwhile, a thousand conspiracy theories bloomed. Random House and the *Times* had to fend off accusations that the two were in cahoots. Robert Bartley, editorial-page editor of *The Wall Street Journal*, wrote that Random House had given the *Times* "a green light to break the embargo." According to Bartley, David Smith, the *Times*'s media editor, called to demand a correction, and Perry denied any Random House involvement. Bartley did not give him a correction, instead writing a column recounting their set-to. Smith declined to comment.

Then there were the articles by two of the *Times*'s daily book reviewers. On September 30, Lehmann-Haupt gave *Dutch* one of its most positive reviews. "[I]n less skilled hands it will doubtless prove a disaster," he wrote about Morris's technique of inventing the narrator. "But it certainly succeeds in this case." Two days later, Michiko Kakutani who outranks Lehmann-Haupt in the *Times*'s book-reviewing pecking order—had a most different take in a "Critic's Notebook," calling *Dutch* "bizarre, irresponsible and monstrously self-absorbed."

John Darnton, the *Times*'s culture editor, insists that the paper was sending no signals about where it stood. "I like the idea of not having a paper's point of view," he says. "If you've got a big paper, there's room for a lot of voices."

Although Lehmann-Haupt had staked his claim to reviewing *Dutch* more than a year earlier, Kakutani had decided to write her article before Lehmann-Haupt's appeared. "She knew it would be an important book," says Darnton. And when she read it, he adds, "she was blown away when she saw the fictitious footnotes." (Kakutani did not return phone calls.) Kakutani has supplemented a review with a commentary of her own before, with Joe McGinniss's *The Last Brother*, in which the author imagined himself inside the head of Edward Kennedy. As with *Dutch*, Kakutani took a strong stand against the blurring of fact and fiction. "It's a hobbyhorse of hers that she's ridden hard," says Lehmann-Haupt, who says he didn't view Kakutani's work as a repudiation of his own.

Suspicious minds also wondered whether *Time*'s running of a review of *Dutch* three days before the official publication date had anything to do with the fact that *Newsweek* was supposed to have excerpts from the book all to itself. "I would say we like to be competitive, yes," says *Time* executive editor Stephen Koepp. "And we sure didn't want to wait a week to join the debate." But *Time* didn't break the embargo. The magazine was not allowed to see an early review copy. A *Time* reporter just strolled into a Manhattan bookstore and bought *Dutch* a week before the "official" on-sale date.

So when it came to revealing the "shocking" conclusion something Random House had beseeched reviewers to refrain from doing—debate at *Time* was nonexistent. John Stacks's review deemed Morris's ending "cloying," and that's being generous. It turns out, you see, that Reagan the youthful lifeguard had rescued the "fake" Morris from drowning 70 years earlier.

Over at the *Times Book Review*, Steven Weisman had originally mentioned the "surprise ending," but editor McGrath took it out. Movie reviewers don't give away the ending, he said, and neither should book reviewers. That logic was lost on Hendrik Hertzberg, who wrote the review for *The New Yorker*. "[T]his was not a magical moment of resolution," he says. "It casts a new look on what's gone before, but only in the sense of 'Oh, my God. What has [Morris] done?'"

In the end—the real end—the early release of *Dutch*'s key plot points and surprise conclusion hasn't harmed the book. Not even a cavalcade of harsh reviews could prevent it from debuting on the *New York Times* best-seller list at No. 2. And as of the middle of October, *Dutch* was in its fourth printing and had 425,000 copies in print.

APC Symmetra^m ensures the Web hits you want ... and prevents those you don't

Unique Power Array[™] architecture is perfect for E-businesses requiring 100% availability



Your systems host E-commerce and your datacenter is expanding rapidly. Your customer's decision to buy is based on your system's availability.

Proper power protection is a key to high availability systems. Without power, the

door to your products and services is closed to all existing and potential customers.

APC products can protect your E-business when the unexpected occurs. APC's Symmetra[™] Power Array[™] is the single most highly available UPS in the marketplace. Consider how Symmetra protects your business:

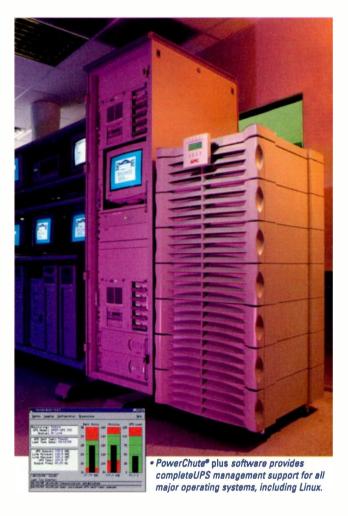
- N + 1 redundancy design assures continuous availability If a module fails, the others instantly begin supporting the full load.
- Serviceable while load is up and running Additional battery modules increase runtime and the modules are hot swappable, meaning no downtime.
- Scalable power Additional 4 kVA modules can be added to expand to 16 kVA of power capacity.

Protect your E-business with other APC products:

- APC Smart-UPS[®] protect servers from surge, irregular voltage, and blackouts.
- APC Silcon® DP300E 3-phase UPSs keep
 your entire facility up and running.







APC is a leader in the field of power availability. We can easily grow with your E-business and help ensure your continued success. Contact APC today and let APC's Legendary Reliability[™] work for you.





FREE Power Availability Kit - Get Legendary Reliability for your network.

To order: Visit http://promo.apcc.com Key Code o684z • Call 888-289-APCC x7754 • Fax 401-788-2797

@1999 American Power Conversion. All Trademarks are the property of their owners. SY3A9EF-US • PowerFax: (800)347-FAXX • E-mail: apcinfo@apcc.com • 132 Fairgrounds Road, West Kingston, RI 02892 USA

Kiss Up Or Die

Presidential candidates have learned how to coddle New Hampshire's famously spoiled voters. Now, if they could only figure out the state's press.

EOPLE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE TAKE A CERtain pleasure in tweaking out-of-staters about the legendary access they enjoy every four years when the presidential candidates come calling.

I make this discovery talking to Ev and Bobbie Chambers, who own the greasy spoon in the northern New of Livieron On this reiny and cold October

Hampshire town of Littleton. On this rainy and cold October morning, their diner is hosting Republican Steve Forbes. Ev trots out a well-worn joke for the occasion. It's the one about the New Hampshire resident who is asked how he intends to vote in the state's first-in-the-nation primary. "I don't know," says the voter. "I've only seen each candidate three times."

Ev lets out a hearty laugh after delivering the punch line. I suspect that the joke is on me, the journalist, for having presumed that I and "my ilk" (who, Ev makes a point of mentioning, climbed all over his booths when Dan Quayle made an appearance in 1992) actually have a role in the primary.

I don't have the heart to tell Ev that, in reality, only 2.5 percent of New Hampshire voters had three contacts with any one candidate during the 1996 primary season, according to a new study by political scientists at Dartmouth College; fewer than 20 percent met a single candidate even once or attended a campaign rally. That's more contact than one would get elsewhere—the national average was about 6 percent—but it's a far cry from one-on-one politics. Most New Hampshire voters experience their primary campaign the way the rest of us do: by reading the paper or watching TV.

Which explains my presence at the Littleton Diner. I am here to meet not Steve Forbes, but rather Rebecca Brown, a reporter for Littleton's weekly newspaper, *The Courier*. Brown is not just a reporter for the paper; she's *the* reporter, if you don't count the guy who covers mainly sports.

Brown churns out an array of local stories. This week her subjects include a zoning ordinance on a local road and plans for a new school building. Though the candidates she typically interviews are hoping to become president of the school board rather than of the United States, Brown is clearly not cowed by meeting Forbes. When I mention that he has arrived, she doesn't even turn her head to look.

Forbes, by contrast, pays attention to her. While he spends about 10 minutes pressing the flesh with supporters,

PAGE/AP

OEL



he spends 15 minutes in the corner booth with Brown. Forbes tries to break the ice by dropping the names of local merchants, but she politely brushes him aside and asks his view on a proposal, unpopular with the locals, to turn the White Mountains National Forest into a national park. Brown presses him for a position until it is clear Forbes doesn't have one. "What do you think about it?" he finally asks.

In most states, a paper of this size would be hardpressed to land a private audience with a presidential candidate. But things are different up here. Neither Brown nor her editor even requested this interview. The Forbes campaign called *them* two weeks in advance. The *Courier* reaches a mere 7,000 people, but every one of them is a potential New Hampshire voter. Even the smallest media outlet in New Hampshire knows the score: The politician makes the time to talk if the reporter is willing to listen.

THE MANCHESTER TWO-STEP

Over the years, small-town newspapers in the rural north country have helped candidates reach a few thousand people at a time. But if politicians wanted statewide exposure, the Manchester *Union Leader* was the only news outlet that could provide it in one shot. When the state's primary rose to prominence during the sixties and seventies, *Union Leader* publishOne-on-one politics: Steve Forbes meets New Hampshire voters at the Littleton Diner. er William Loeb gained national attention for his editorials championing conservative causes and eviscerating Democrats who campaigned in the Republican-dominated state.

But times change. Loeb died in 1981; Democrats control New Hampshire's governorship and its state senate. And a once sleepy Manchester channel called WMUR-TV muscled onto the paper's turf, building a formidable news operation in the late eighties that was able to reach the entire state by 1995.



Taking potshots: After the Union Leader endorsed Pat Buchanan in 1996, WMUR's coverage was so tough that his campaign barred the station from his events. The candidates went wobbly over WMUR, participating in station-sponsored debates, bending over backward for oneon-ones, and flooding the tiny station with campaign advertisements. When WMUR opened its plush new headquarters, in December 1995, the locals dubbed it The House That Forbes Built, in tribute to one of its political-ad benefactors.

Now the paper and the TV station jostle for their share of the money and status that come from dominating the state's political scene. Both appear

willing to use their muscle to help or hurt particular candidates with an eye toward undercutting the strength of each other. "Every statewide campaign always has to make that decision," explains one New Hampshire political consultant, "whether they are going to cozy up to the *Union Leader* or WMUR." While the newspaper beats its chest primarily through editorials and endorsements, WMUR, which does not endorse candidates, appears to express its view through editorial decisions about how and when to cover a candidate.

Take the 1996 Republican primary battle. Candidate Pat Buchanan successfully courted the *Union Leader*'s endorsement. Sure enough, *Union Leader* editorials praised Buchanan and denigrated his opponents. By contrast, the Buchanan campaign, which did not advertise much on WMUR, found the station's coverage so biased that it took the extraordinary step of barring WMUR from attending Buchanan's campaign events during the primary's crucial final days.

I was willing to dismiss that as sour grapes until I talked to Carl Cameron, who was WMUR's chief political reporter during the 1996 primary season and now works for Fox News Channel. He defends his reporting on the Buchanan campaign, calling it tough but no tougher than any candidate should expect. But he acknowledges the larger point. "Every public official knows that how they navigate that rivalry is of utmost importance," says Cameron. "Have candidates and people and policies become the Ping-Pong ball? Yeah."

Other WMUR alumni agree that outside considerations influence its news coverage. Two former reporters say personal connections or advertising considerations at times affected campaign coverage. Two other former reporters say that nonpolitical advertisers regularly received preferential treatment. If WMUR did a story on car dealerships, says one producer, she was expected to consult the sales department about which dealerships to mention. It was "not something I enjoyed doing," she says, "but I didn't really have a choice."

Jack Heath, WMUR's vice-president of news at the time, denies any editorial bias against Buchanan in the '96 race, but acknowledges that the GOP candidates appeared compelled to choose sides between the paper and the TV station that year. The *Union Leader* was "all over Buchanan, and it seemed the other candidates were coming to us," says Heath. "It may have been a coincidental outcome in the appearance of the coverage that somehow WMUR was ignoring Buchanan." Buchanan ended up winning the Republican vote in 1996 and credited the support of the *Union Leader*. Heath (who called the Buchanan victory "a big win" for the paper) left WMUR and is now building a news operation at another TV station.

WMUR's current program director, Julie Campasano, strenuously denies any link between advertising and editorial content—in political or nonpolitical coverage—asserting that there is a strict separation between the news and sales staff. Moreover, she dismisses the notion that WMUR directly competes with the *Union Leader*.

WE'RE READY FOR YOUR CLOSE-UP, MR. BUSH

So what'll happen this year? Only Republican candidates need to worry about getting caught between the Union Leader and WMUR, since the newspaper's conservative reputation means it has much less sway with Democratic readers. The Union Leader editorial page has offered hints of a Forbes endorsement this time around, raising an interesting potential quandary: Would WMUR trash the candidate whose ad dollars are credited with paying for its building?

Meanwhile, the paper and the TV station are in the unusual position of being united in their irritation with Republican George W. Bush. Not only has he ruined their fun by dominating the early polls, he has yet to campaign extensively in the state or spend many of his ad dollars here. In early October, Bush delivered another slight when he announced that he would skip a town meeting cosponsored by WMUR. The Union Leader responded with a biting editorial that asked, "Is it [Bush's] hope that his bankroll, his good looks and his daddy's name will carry him straight through to the nomination without ever having to get his hands dirty?"

WMUR aired a news segment about the governor's decision that consisted largely of nasty broadsides from other Republicans, with no comments from the Bush camp. Ray Brewer, who reported the piece, did not return my phone calls. But Scott Spradling, who has taken over as WMUR's chief political correspondent (though he wasn't involved with the piece) defends the segment. "That's nothing more than just trying to force these guys into a forum," he says, claiming that he has seen other stations use similar tactics. (WMUR has since announced that Bush will participate in a new WMUR-sponsored forum in December.)

ticipate in a new WMUR-sponsored forum in December.) Spradling says the media pressure is just a reflection of the voters' pique. "There are some people who are getting fed up with the fact that he's not around," says Spradling. "New Hampshire people get cranky."

66



BEFORE YOU INVEST, INVESTIGATE.



At Morningstar, our mission has always been to provide investors with the independent and unbiased information they need to invest smarter. That's why we spend our time analyzing investments instead of selling them. So when we evaluate more than

15,000 stocks and funds, we can tell it like it is. And now you can access our reports and evaluations for free. Introducing Morningstar.com. After clicking through the Register now for a free copy of our exclusive Fund and Stock newsitetters.



thousands of financial websites out there, you'll find our independent perspective more valuable than ever.



YOUR FIRST SECOND OPINION

SportsLine's Bogey

I was the editor of GolfWeb, an award-winning Internet site, until my employer, CBS SportsLine, traded away its editorial integrity.



OULD THE NEW YORK TIMES MAKE a deal with George Steinbrenner to coproduce a website that would cover the Yankees and then give Steinbrenner final editorial say on all content?

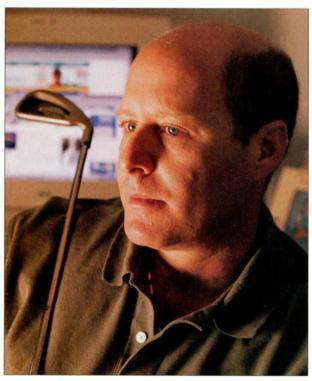
That, in essence, is what my former employer, SportsLine USA, Inc., did by agreeing to a deal with the PGA Tour earlier this year. Until late September of 1999, I was the executive editor of GolfWeb, an award-winning Internet site devoted to golf that had begun as a Silicon Valley start-up in 1995. SportsLine USA, the parent company of CBS SportsLine, a general sports Internet site locked in a struggle with ESPN.com for Web supremacy, bought GolfWeb in January 1998 to beef up its golf coverage.

That SportsLine was able to stay within shouting distance of ESPN.com, ESPN's heavily promoted website, was a true testament to its high standards of journalism. In addition to wire service coverage of myriad professional and amateur sports, SportsLine and GolfWeb featured a strong group of staff and freelance writers and columnists who wrote biting commentary. GolfWeb columnist James Achenbach even won an award from the Golf Writers Association of America.

But when SportsLine surrendered editorial control of GolfWeb to the tour as part of the partnership agreement announced in April of this year, I wondered just how GolfWeb could survive. How could we cover the PGA Tour, golf's most powerful organization, if the tour would be making all editorial decisions?

SportsLine's deal with the tour, based in Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida, was not structured like a "league deal," which is common on the Internet. ESPN has agreements with the National Football League, National Basketball Association, and National Hockey League, among others, to produce separate "official" sites, but it still provides inde-

Schneider, the founding editor of GolfWeb, is currently the director of golf operations for Rivals.com., a sports Internet site based in Seattle.



Stu Schneider quit his job as executive editor of SportsLine's GolfWeb after editorial control of the site was handed over to the PGA Tour.

pendent coverage of those sports on its flagship site.

Under the terms of the SportsLine–PGA Tour alliance, however, there would not be two sites but only one, "official" PGA Tour site. GolfWeb's content (coverage of non–PGA Tour events, commentary, features, a golf course directory, and more) would be integrated into a new, combined site. Our editorial staff would still be employed to produce and post material, but only after it was all approved by the tour. As a result, some commentary wouldn't end up on the site, but the tour's representatives maintained that they would not stand in the way of reporting facts.

y would not stand in the way of reporting facts. So, in theory, if PGA Tour player Joe Smith were caught smuggling drugs in his golf bag, we would be able to post a news story stating the facts. But if a columnist wrote that tour personnel had known that Joe Smith was actively dealing drugs and should have taken action prior to the arrest, such an article was off-limits.

I told both SportsLine and tour personnel that this was not an acceptable situation. We would immediately lose all our freelance writers, who to my mind gave GolfWeb its credibility. Merely the appearance of a possible conflict would leave the door open to our competitors and others to claim that the site was merely a marketing vehicle.

The response from Ross Levinsohn, then SportsLine's vice-president of programming and my immediate superior, was short and succinct: This is the way our business development department structured the deal. Get over it. (Levinsohn left SportsLine shortly thereafter.)

The new site debuted on August 31, and it took only a few hours for the first editorial disagreement to surface. A seemingly innocent Associated Press story was posted on the homepage, detailing how Tiger Woods's recent great play had made most people forget just how well another golfer, David Duval, had played in early 1999.

The text link to this story was the innocuous "Tiger outshines Duval." Given the subject of the piece, I thought that was fine. But the tour didn't. We were told to change the link to "Tiger on a roll." Why? Because the first link made it seem like we were pitting one player against another. But isn't that the whole point of golf tournaments? Why have a money list or a points-ranking list to determine who the best players are? Nonetheless, the change was made.

In the following weeks, the interference continued. A column written by Senior PGA Tour player Tom Weiskopf about the upcoming Ryder Cup was killed after it was deemed "too controversial" because of critical comments Weiskopf had made about current PGA Tour players. And when handicapped golfer Casey Martin was leading a Nike tour event, the tour ordered us to alter our homepage text. We had written that he was close to playing his way onto the big tour next year. But since the tour is embroiled in a lawsuit with Martin over his use of a golf cart when playing in tournaments, the homepage reference had to go.

In trying to protect its best interests—as any organization should—the PGA Tour was affecting our coverage of golf, something that was quite obvious to our readers and other media. The September 27, 1999, issue of *Sports Illustrated* noted that the new combined PGATOUR.com and GolfWeb site "read more like a press release from the Tour than a journalistic enterprise." And a number of readers' letters stated flat out that it would be difficult to believe anything read on GolfWeb now that it was associated with the official site of the PGA Tour. Wrote one correspondent, "GolfWeb was objective, and it could be a bit irreverent when the situation called for it. PGATOUR.com, with its silly allcapital-letter logo, is a cheesy marketing tool. The merger trades journalism for marketing communications, and therefore, as of today, I've removed it from my bookmarks."

Callaway Golf Company's firing of John Daly as an

endorser of its equipment was yet another example of just how sticky the situation had become. This was a big story, since Daly, who has had drinking and gambling problems, had admitted to a relapse and ignored Callaway's insistence that he enter a substance-abuse program. We were able to post the story in our headlines section of the homepage, but we felt it deserved to be played much bigger, as our "cover story" for the day, as it no doubt would be on all our competitors' sites. The tour wouldn't agree—until its commissioner, Tim Finchem, was reached by phone and was asked to "approve" it.

So it wasn't a big surprise when I was told a few days later that my job was being eliminated. What need was there for a person in charge of making all editorial decisions when there were no decisions to make?

In the *Sports Illustrated* piece, Mark Mariani, SportsLine's president of sales and marketing, insisted that the new site's journalistic integrity had not been compromised. "Have we been restricted in what we do and say? No," he said.

But it was Mariani himself who called me to question the placement of the Daly story and told me later that the commissioner had indeed given his okay.

Shortly after I left, two of our top freelancers, Michael Mayo of the *Sun-Sentinel* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and Lorne Rubenstein, who has been writing a golf column since 1980 for *The Globe and Mail*, a Canadian national newspaper, resigned as well. "Now I know what it's like to work for *Pravda*," Mayo joked.

But is the tour's control a serious hindrance to the quality of the site? Should the tour be expected to post stories on its official website that cast its players, events, or sponsors in a bad light? And is this editorial trade-off just a small price to pay so that SportsLine users could gain access to real-time scores, statistics, and video and audio highlights? Though we did get some letters of protest, it's possible that the vast majority of regular GolfWeb readers either didn't care about the possible conflict or didn't notice. A cynic could argue that given the preponderance of such partnerships, especially on the Web, conflicts of interest are the price for doing business in journalism today.

But in the end, I believe that the real losers in all this are the readers of both GolfWeb and PGATOUR.com. Whether they know it or not, they are missing the essential ingredient in any relationship between readers and publications: the belief that the information and commentary they are reading are coming from editors and writers who are free to write what they know and believe.

SportsLine USA executives were offered an opportunity to respond to Schneider's "Talk Back" article but declined. PGA Tour officials would give only the following statement: "PGATOUR.com/GolfWeb is the number one golf destination on the Internet. In the interactive industry, the consumer determines value and success. It's clear that golf fans are choosing in steadily increasing numbers that the content and entertainment value of PGATOUR.com/GolfWeb is what they are seeking."

Connecting The Dotcoms

Internet commercials on television are trying to change the dreamscape and, not incidentally, the buzz on Wall Street.

OMETIMES I THINK that if I see one more TV spot for a dotcom, I'll go dotty—or, given the feverish venture capitalism driving it all, commie.

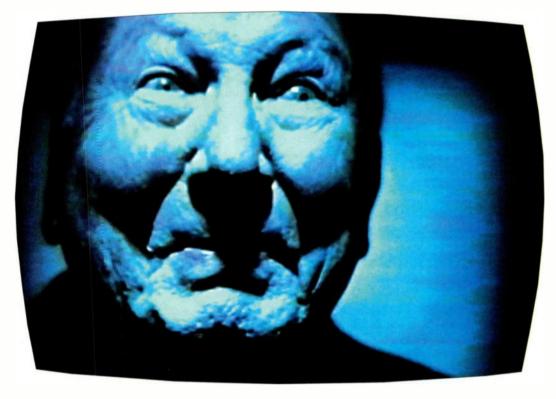
But I can already imagine someone flaming me: Get used to it! As Internet companies realize that the best way to develop an identifiable brand is not through online banner ads but oldfashioned advertising—i.e., TV, radio, and print ads—all those Silicon Valley start-ups, as well as industry seniors, are rushing ads onto "old media."

Dotcom advertisers increased their ad spending in traditional media by 228 percent in the first half of 1999 compared to the same period in 1998, to a total of \$755 million, according to Competitive Media Reporting. (Meanwhile, spending for all other categories of advertisers rose by only 5.5 percent.) The numbers for the second half of 1999 are expected to pile even higher. The apotheosis of dotcom spots may well be the 2000 Super Bowl, during which, according to ABC, nearly one in four commercials will be for something "e."

Due to the dots, buying TV and radio ad time has practically become a contact sport itself. "The media marketplace is in sellout mode on TV and radio," says Sarah King, account director at Swirl, the ad agency for the recently launched Petopia.com. "Advertising rates have gone up dramatically. It's mostly because of the dotcom companies."

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

Most online ventures believe that



PSINet mocks the competition as old and decrepit. Choose them, the message implies, and you will be, too.

their prime shot at success is getting what marketers call "share of mind" of consumers and, more stealthily, of Wall Street. Share of mind, as one marketer told me, still needs "the telling of a story" and "establishing the emotional connection," skills in which old media beats new media hands down.

That's why on TV, Internet ads are more likely than most to go for a surreal—or some sort of twist-youreyeballs—aesthetic: strange lighting, jacked-up colors, and dreamscape images that can make mainstream car commercials look sloppy by comparison. A certain Dada-adism makes sense: It reinforces the reputation of the Net as the anti-mainstream (however untrue that has become) as it dares the viewer to plunge into an avantgarde future.

PSINet, an Internet service provider geared to businesses, uses morphing, black and blue lighting, and a rather nasty dare: If you choose the competition, you'll get a bunch of palsystricken old folks.

"Who's going to lead business onto the Net? Not us!" an angry corporate honcho bellows at his board. With every sentence, his face sags into

Leslie Savan, longtime advertising columnist for The Village Voice, is the author of The Sponsored Life: Ads, TV, and American Culture (Temple University Press).

old age, until he's as decrepit as he is out of touch. "We'll let PSINet be the innovators with their global private network, their multicurrency e-commerce....We've been in business for 80 years. We give our customers what we want when we're ready!" The voiceover slams it in: "With the Internet, business either innovates or vegetates. You make the call."

The spot is meant to operate on a couple of levels. "Like a lot of technological, corporate advertising, there's the sort of literal audience, which are companies you're targeting as prospects," says Steve Feinberg, chief creative officer at PSINet's ad agency, Trone. "And then there's the secret audience, which is actually the more important audience. The Wall Street community is looking at all these players emerging and seeing...who they're going to back."

Even more out-there is a spot for Qwest, a telecommunications company now selling bandwidth in addition to long distance service. A Matrix-like curtain of binary i's and o's scrolls by until it forms a sign for "Roy's Motel," a desolate dive in a windswept desert. A sleepless businessman asks the sullen, Liv Tyler-ish clerk if there's any entertainment in the rooms. With utter boredom, she responds: "All rooms have every movie ever made in every language any time day or night." Zoom to a shock of light on a highway sign as a voiceover asks, "Could your business use the bandwidth to change everything? Ride the light."

Qwest's \$50 million ad quest is to inform people that its new voice and data fiber-optic network "is something that will change your life, just like the Internet has," says George Parker, creative director at Qwest ad agency J. Walter Thompson. Hence, he says, that "touch of David Lynch."

What kind of viewer needs a David Lynching? Businesses that need more bandwidth are an obvious target but by no means the only one. "Qwest is directing maybe 25 percent of its message toward Wall Street," Parker says.

By Internet standards, Lycos, a search engine company, is a veteran of





TV advertising, having introduced its black Labrador mascot more than a year ago. The story is typical ad exaggeration—the dog instantly retrieves every typed-in request, from dinosaur bones to Claudia Schiffer. But the look is hyperreal, as colorized film turns the sky Kool-Aid blue and the lawn greener than fake.

"Since the background was nondescript, we wanted to give it a vivid, surreal look to better highlight the dog," says Jan Horsfall, a former vicepresident of marketing at Lycos. The retriever's schtick "has been just incredibly successful," he adds. "We're number two in the category of online services behind Yahoo in terms of awareness."

Also dog-driven but more deeply Dada are the commercials for Petopia.com, a pet supply site (in partnership with "bricks and mortar" superstore Petco) that launched in July. In the spots, dogs clamber to reach the top of a five-foot dog food bowl and a garage-sized toilet bowl. Cats rub up against a forest of mannequin legs with no torsos. "Discover paradise at Petopia.com," the voiceover says, "the Internet pet paradise."

"It wasn't our intention to be surreal," says Roland Jacobs, v.p. of marketing for Petopia. "We just wanted to dimensionalize the idea that you're Petopia.com directly plays off of the Internet's utopian appeal. never going to run out of anything at Petopia. We thought the most compelling way to express that would be to show what a pet would think is a fantasyland."

It's a marketer's fantasy, too. Jacobs won't give numbers, but he says, "Since the advertising launched, we've seen traffic on our site take off so much that [the line on the graph] looks like a hockey stick."

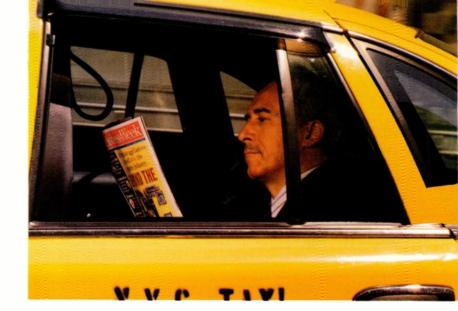
Maybe its numbers are rising partly because the paradise portrayed is a vivid subset of a much larger idea: that the Internet is the utopia mankind has always dreamed of, the global "hive" of neohumans that digital gurus have extolled. Like most other e-ads, Petopia's imply that all needs shall be satisfied by the universe behind the screen.

E-ness is so good that it may even end the culture wars. Ameritrade, one of the many new online brokerages, is spending \$200 million on advertising to try to win 1 million new accounts. You probably first met the campaign's multi-colored-haired punkster, Stuart, photocopying his face on the office copier and chiding his boss for making a measly 100-share order. In new spots, Stu woos his girlfriend's country club family by convincing them that his deepest passion is to beat—nay, to rip the bowels out of—the market.

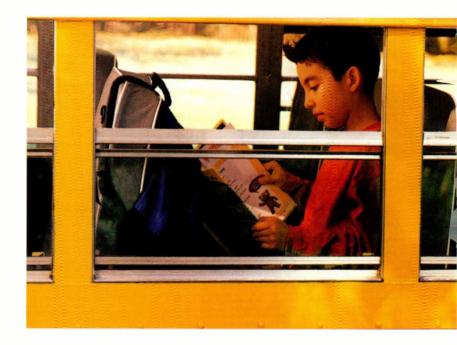
Stuart proves that mohawked freaks and Top-Sider Republicans can finally be united—by greed. He goes further, signaling that youth no longer needs that tiresome rebel sell that has become so familiar over the past decade. Sprite, Nike, and herds of other advertisers have prospered by telling audiences they are butt-kickin' individualists who gotta break the rules (something they can best do by buying the same product as millions of others).

No, today simply going online makes you, de facto, a "maverick." Once you're on the cool side of the wired divide, you can just jive with the hive and—sharing the dream of the dotcoms—roll in the honey.

71



Who depends on us for information? Perhaps you should ask who doesn't?



You could be a CEO or an elementary school student. Or anyone in between. Chances are you rely on The McGraw-Hill Companies for information to help you make the most out of your life.



The McGraw·Hill Companies

Keeping the world up to speed.[®]

www.mcgraw-hill.com

IGH-TV • Standard & Poor's • Aviation Week • Business Week • McGraw-Hill OnLine Learning • Platt's • Architectural Re

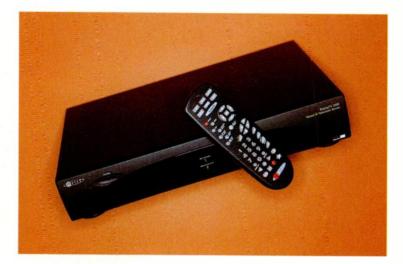
next» the top

content tools

BY JOHN R. QUAIN ALL PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES WORRELL

f, as Marshall McLuhan suggested, the medium is the message, then the message is undergoing a radical change. Content is now being fed to us from a welter of gadgets and technological marvels. You can get e-mailed news clippings using a cell phone, beam messages from a handheld computer, and even surf the Web while traipsing around the house. So, in choosing the top content tools of the year, we kept one eye on how these devices can or could—affect the content we read, see, and hear in the next millennium. Consequently, although most of the Top 10 Content Tools are not immediate must-buys, they all promise to change the content we create and consume.

Contributing editor John R. Quain also writes for Fast Company magazine and PC Magazine, and he appears regularly on CBS News and MSNBC.



1. ReplayTV

Next to the remote control, perhaps no device has the power to change the way people watch television as radically as the digital video recorder (DVR). The \$699 ReplayTV Personal Television Server (www.replaytv.com) is one of two DVRs that were introduced this year (the other was the \$499 Philips Personal TV Receiver with TiVO Personal TV Service). DVRs are basically computers with fast hard disk drives that continually record an incoming television signal. Like a VCR, the ReplayTV box performs the standard time-shifting recording functions, and it contains a modem that updates an on-screen program guide. But it can do so much more.

By simultaneously recording while it plays back video, ReplayTV lets you stop and restart a "live" broadcast at

any time. You can rewind to see the footage of a rescue team pulling a child from a collapsed building, punch up your own instant replays during a football game, even stop a live show so that you can put out the garbage. Then, at the push of a button, you can continue watching the show right where you left off and fast-forward through commercials to catch up with the live program.

The ability to pause live television is exactly what the makers of setup boxes like WebTV, which gives viewers access to the Internet, have been looking for. As things stand, if you see a link to a website on a television program, you have to miss part of the show to go surf the Web (or to buy a product). Once DVR capabilities are built into cable boxes, however, you will be able to pause the six o'clock news, read related, more in-depth stories from the Web on your TV screen, and then return to the broadcast without missing a sound bite.

The convenience of a DVR doesn't come cheap, especially since the ReplayTV boxes have limited recording times due to the finite storage capacity of the hard drive. A model with 28 hours of recording time, for example, is \$1,499 (the \$699 model allows for 10 recording hours). Still, while we're waiting for a new generation of high-definition TV/Internet appliances to arrive, ReplayTV is the next best thing.

2. Rocket eBook

In the few hundred years since the book was invented, no one has had the temerity to try to invent, well, a better book. But the turn of this century seems to have emboldened some with the hubris to try to replace paper and bring the book into the twenty-first century. The answer for the Information Age is an electronic book with digital pages. So far, though, only the Rocket eBook from NuvoMedia, Inc. (www.rocketebook.com) seems like a possible successor.

The \$349 Rocket eBook is about the size of a trade paperback, but it can hold the equivalent of a dozen books. You read the digital tomes on a monochrome 5.5-inch liquid crystal display (LCD) screen and flip the pages by pushing a button. Although this may seem too antiseptic for many bookworms, the eBook offers such attractive features as the ability to look up a word in its built-in dictionary or search for references to a character name throughout a story. The eBook comes with a rechargeable battery that operates for 20 to 40 hours (depending on how much you use the backlight), and with a power adapter and a cradle that connects to your computer's serial port so you can use your PC to download more electronic books from the Internet.

In addition to its ability to grab the latest Stephen King epic off the Internet in seconds, the eBook has another promising feature: software that captures any article online for later perusal and also lets you publish your own electronic texts. Although the offerings are limited (about 1,400 titles are available), several budding novelists already have posted their literary efforts online, with more sure to come.

The reality here is that the electronic book isn't going to replace trade paperbacks any time soon. But the Rocket eBook may be the perfect electronic gadget if you travel extensively and want to hold a small library in the palm of your hand.



3. Diamond Rio 500

Perhaps no area of the media and entertainment business has undergone more turmoil in the waning days of this century than the music business. It's all due to a file format called MP3 (Motion Picture Experts Group-Layer 3). Initially, MP3 files were used by college students to compress and copy tracks from CDs in order to trade them online and play them on their computers. But the Diamond Rio (www.diamondmm.com) digital audio player, a portable MP3 player in the style of the Walkman, changed all that.

The \$269.95 Diamond Rio 500 is the second-generation model, and it portends several competing products hitting the stores for the holiday shopping season. Smaller than a deck of cards and weighing a mere 3 ounces, the Rio 500 can pack up to two hours of music into its 64 megabytes of builtin memory and can run for more than two hours on a single AA battery. Furthermore, Diamond Multimedia Systems, Inc., has done everything to minimize the chore of copying (or "ripping," in MP3 argot) songs from your CDs and downloading tracks to the MP3 player. To connect the tiny player to your computer (Windows or Macintosh), all you have to do is plug it in to a Universal Serial Bus (USB) port. There's no wrestling with parallel or serial cables, and the faster connection means that an hour's worth of music can be downloaded from your PC to the Rio 500 in a matter of seconds—although it can take up to 15 minutes to download a three-minute song from the Internet.

Still, the huge advantage that MP3 players enjoy over portable CD players is this ability to download music off the Internet. Plus, there are no skipping CDs. That's because all the compressed music is stored on tiny solid-state memory cards. Such cards are expensive, however, with some costing as much as \$150 for an hour's worth of recording time. So don't expect them to replace cassette tapes soon. But as with all digital technology, prices will fall rapidly.

The question for music fans is, When will the recording industry introduce its own copyrightprotected digital file format? As of this writing, work is behind schedule on the Secure Digital Music Initiative (SDMI) launched by record companies, a move that may replace (they hope) non-copyright-protected MP3s. But why wait? You can jog along now listening to your favorite MP3 tunes without missing a beat.



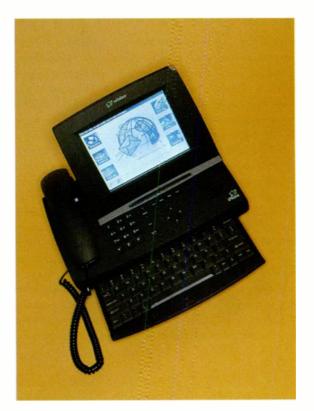
4. InfoGear iPhone

Eventually, the Internet will permeate everything. At least that's what some titans of the Information Age think. But so far only one so-called information appliance seems poised to make the jump: the iPhone from InfoGear Technology Corporation (www.infogear.com). It's a \$399 desktop phone with a large, 7.4-inch liquid crystal display (LCD) screen and a popout keyboard that allows you to log on and surf the Web.

The combination phone and Web browser uses two telephone lines, which let you talk to a friend while simultaneously buying books at barnesandnoble.com. You can even look up a phone number in iPhone's online white pages. All of this is accomplished through the use of a builtin 56 kilobits-per-second (Kbps) modem, a bright, backlit touch screen, and a \$9.95 monthly Internet subscription to InfoGear.

The iPhone includes caller ID, speed dialing, an alphabetized personal phone book, and a digital answering machine that stores about 15 minutes' worth of messages. And a flashing red light alerts you to any new voice or e-mail messages.

If you want access to the Web but don't want a PC, the iPhone is an appealing option. You can get to all the major Web sources of information and news. But it doesn't yet play fancy embellishments like streaming sound or video, and there is no color screen. On the other hand, who needs those features when all you want to do is buy a book or check who has dropped out of the presidential race?



next >> top10 content tools of 1999



5. Palm VII

For several years, intrepid gadgeteers have been loading addresses and phone numbers into pocket-sized electronic organizers. Then the PalmPilot came along, enabling users to easily coordinate address listings on their computers with those on their handheld devices. In the meantime, the Web became a daily part of many people's lives. So, naturally, the next step was wireless Net access.

Enter the \$499 Palm VII Organizer from 3Com Corporation (www.3com.com), the first integrated personal digital assistant (PDA) that lets you wirelessly send and receive e-mail and surf selected websites from your electronic organizer. Now if someone at dinner says, "Let's go to a movie," you can check your Palm VII's calendar, access online reviews, and even order tickets without leaving the table.

Wireless connections to the world of digital information aren't without their drawbacks, however. The Palm VII, for example, is a little too bulky to fit in a jacket pocket, and the flip-up antenna and two-way radio that connects to the Palm.Net network draw significant power.The two AAA disposable batteries will last about three weeks, compared to a couple of months for the batteries in the original Pilots. Further, you can't surf every website, only those that have customized their information (like ABCNEWS.com and ESPN.com) for the device's small, monochrome screen.

So, as with all first-generation devices, you'll have to pay a steep price and endure a few inconveniences. In addition to the hefty \$499 for the Palm VII gadget, the e-mail and wireless news service will cost you \$9.99 a month, plus additional fees should you start sending more than a handful of e-mail messages a day. Of course, fans of the Palm VII think it's still better than the alternative: no portable, handheld Web access at all.

6. pdQ smartphone

Taking things one step beyond the Palm VII, cell phones were bound to converge with electronic organizers. And now it has happened. Rather than reinventing the personal digital assistant, Qualcomm, Inc. (www.qualcomm.com) has decided to go with what works-the PalmPilot-and has integrated a cell phone into it. The result is the 800-megahertz (MHz) pdQ smartphone, with a large dial pad that flips down to expose a Pilot-sized screen. Tap on the screen and you'll find all the usual Pilot offerings: an address book, a calendar, and a note taker, all of which can be synchronized with your desktop computer's programs. And the pdQ will run more than 1,000 programs, such as games and maps, that originally were created for the PalmPilot.

The pdQ also does what no Palm organizer can: It allows you to make a phone call just by tapping on an entry in your contact list. Or, if voice mail is not your style, you can jot down a message with the stylus and tap on a person's e-mail address to send an electronic missive. The pdQ hooks up to the Internet but is limited by slow surfing and text viewing only (similar limitations to those of the Palm VII). Generally, everything works as advertised here. But like most other marriages, this one isn't perfect. The backlit liquid crystal display (LCD) screen can severely cut into battery life (it's rated to last for up to 2 1/2 hours of talk time), and the design is reminiscent of early cell phones: It's big, boxy, and brawny, tipping the scales at about 10 ounces and stretching to more than 6 inches in length. If that's too big—and if the \$800 price gives you sticker shock-then wait. Dozens of similarly outfitted cell phones will be introduced in the coming months as telephone companies roll out such services across the country.



7. Apple iBook With AirPort

Notebook computers are a commodity these days, so it takes something special for one to stand out. The Apple iBook's colorful, translucent design may look like it qualifies for top-ten tools status, but the really groundbreaking feature of this portable computer is what's inside.

The iBook (www.apple.com) is the first model to come with built-in antenna enabling a wireless connection to the Internet. The idea is that you can wander around your house, sit down anywhere you like, and jump online to check out a TV schedule or peruse the news.

Drawing on a 300-megahertz (MHz) PowerPC G3 processor with 32 megabytes of random access memory (RAM) and a 3.2-gigabyte hard drive, the \$1,599 iBook isn't a portable powerhouse, but it does make the Web more accessible. If, that is, you buy the AirPort Base Station, a \$299 Frisbee-shaped router that offers quick (11 megabits-per-second) network communications. It's five times faster than most wireless home networking packages and contains a 56 kilobits-per-second (Kbps) modem and an Ethernet port. The Ethernet port is for even faster connections to the Web via an external digital subscriber line (DSL, a.k.a. ADSL, for asymmetric digital subscriber line) or a cable modem, if such service is available in your area. Up to ten iBooks can communicate wirelessly with the Base Station from up to 150 feet away via their built-in antennae, but a \$99 AirPort Card is required for each laptop.

So even though the design of the latest Apple iBooks is causing something of a stir among marketers, other notebook manufacturers will start incorporating wireless networking capabilities into more models next year.





8. DSL Modem

For most Internet users, WWW stands for the World Wide Wait. But the digital dream of high-speed, so-called broadband Internet got a lot closer recently with the introduction of digital subscriber line (DSL) modems, such as the 3Com HomeConnect ADSL Modem PCI card (www.3com.com).

The DSL broadband approach uses the old telephone lines already installed throughout the country. By turning the analog signals on standard phone lines into digital pulses, DSL technology increases the speed of the data flowing down to your computer to as much as 8.4 megabits-per-second (Mbps), and from your PC up to the Internet to 1.5 Mbps (a similar scheme called symmetric DSL can boost the speed to 2.048 Mbps). What that translates to is the possibility of watching video online without the jerky motion and grainy picture.

3Com's HomeConnect DSL modem requires installation in a free slot inside a computer, and you can buy one only by signing up for DSL service from your local phone company. However, 3Com, together with Bell Atlantic, is the first company seriously pushing the service to general consumers. An Asynchronous DSL Home Connection Kit containing the HomeConnect modem is available in the Northeast at a few retail outlets. It costs \$229 (a \$130 rebate is available) and includes the DSL modem, software for connecting to Bell Atlantic's Internet service (www.bellatlantic.com/infospeed), and several adapters (called filters) that let you talk on the phone and access the Internet via a single line.

Unfortunately, high-speed Internet access still is expensive. Bell Atlantic's monthly fee is \$49.95 for 640 kilobits-per-second (Kbps) downstream and 90Kbps upstream DSL access. If you want full-bore cyber surfing, a 7.1Mbps downstream and 680Kbps upstream feed will cost you \$189.95 a month.

Not everyone lives in an area where DSL service is available. If your home is too far away from the phone company's switching station, for example, DSL may not be an option. Further, the 3Com DSL modems from Bell Atlantic don't yet work with Macs or laptop computers.

Eventually, though, DSL service might charge ahead of broadband alternatives such as cable modems. Cable, unlike DSL, faces a slowdown when all the customers on a particular service access the Web at the same time. And as more carriers offer DSL, the competition should drive down prices. So if you don't already have the service in your area, look for it in the coming months.



9. Handspring Visor

Handheld computers have the potential to serve, chameleonlike, as just about any type of gadget you'd want: electronic organizer, pager, phone, even music player. But adapting any of the small personal digital assistants into other devices has been a clumsy—and costly—affair. The original designers of the PalmPilot realized this, so they split from 3Com (makers of the PalmPilot) and introduced a more adaptable personal digital assistant (PDA), the Handspring Visor (www.handspring.com).

Starting at a reasonable \$149, the Visor looks and acts like a Palm computer. In fact, it uses essentially the same software for creating contact lists, tracking your schedule, compiling to-do lists, and coordinating all this with your desktop computer. It also has some new conveniences, like a Universal Serial Bus port (USB) connection for faster and easier hook-ups to your computer.

But what's truly revolutionary about the Visor is the hole in the back. Called the Springboard, it is designed to accommodate various modules that will turn the Visor into an MP3 player, a two-way pager, a Game Boy, or a cell phone. As of this writing the only Springboard commercial module available for the Visor is a rather tepid Tiger Woods golf game, but the company promises more. That potential and the price make the Visor a good bet for anyone buying an electronic organizer. The Visor doesn't quite match the hype of being the next step in the evolution of handheld computers, but it's a good start.

10. Sony VAIO Picture Book

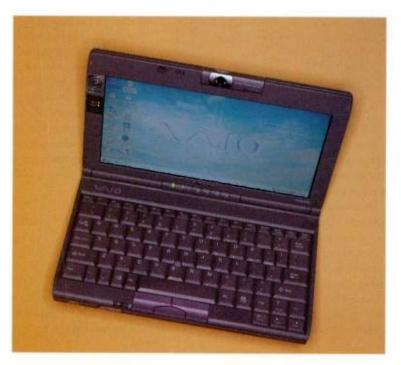
For most of us, notebook computers are still too big, too clumsy, and don't have enough features to warrant lugging them from place to place. The Sony VAIO PCG-CIX PictureBook (www.sony.com) is the exception.

This ultralight mini-notebook weighs a mere 2½ pounds and is small enough to fit into a large purse or a glove compartment. Yet it packs all the computing power of a modest desktop PC into a gadget that's only 1½ inches thick. The PictureBook

is a full-powered Windows 98 computer with a 266-megahertz (MHz) Pentium MMX processor, a 4.3 gigabyte hard drive, 64 megabytes (MB) of memory, and a 56 kilobits-per-second (Kbps) modern. It also boasts a nifty feature that's not found on any other mainstream notebook computer: a built-in digital video camera.

Called the Motion Eye, this remarkably acute camera sits inside the lid above the PictureBook's screen. The camera swivels so that you can use the computer screen as a viewfinder for taking pictures or recording a few seconds' worth of video. It can even be used for crude videoconferencing over the Internet or video vérité shots that you can upload to the World Wide Web in minutes.

The integration of what is in effect a digital camera into a \$1.700 miniature notebook computer is yet another step in the march toward the portable device that does everything. Now, if they could just build a cell phone into it and invent a battery that lasts for more than a couple of hours. Well, maybe next year.

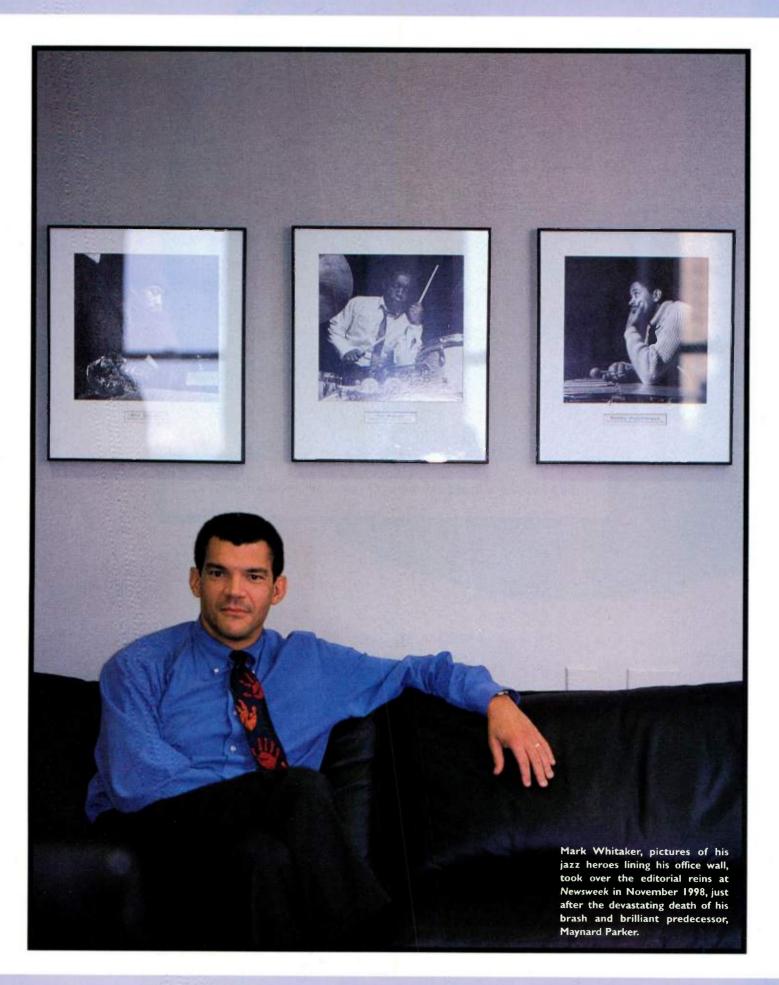


Check stock quotes. Research companies. Get up-to-the-minute financial news. Then go to the kitchen and make an omelette. www.yahoo.com

The world's hottest new financial headquarters.

Yahoo! Finance





By Gay Jervey

Inheriting the job of his legendary mentor, Newsweek editor Mark Whitaker tries to shed his reserve and keep his magazine relevant in an intensely competitive media world.



S NEWSWEEK EDITOR MARK Whitaker strides down Broadway on his way to work on the morning of Friday, October 1, one question keeps swirling through his mind: Will the previous day's nuclear accident in Japan force him to jettison the next issue's cover story about precocious

preteens, a zeitgeist feature that is quintessentially *Newsweek*? Will he have to rip the magazine up at the eleventh hour? Will he, in the military phrase often invoked at *Newsweek*, be forced to "scramble the jets"?

During the past 24 hours, uranium, radiation, and human error in Japan have dominated the headlines and Whitaker's mind. So, at about 9:45 A.M., having arrived at his office, which overlooks Central Park and Columbus Circle, he quickly checks his e-mail and convenes an impromptu meeting with a group of his top editors. Topic One: nuclear meltdown in Japan, the worst in that country's history. On Thursday, when the magazine learned of the accident, a *Newsweek* reporter flew from Taiwan to Japan, while the Tokyo bureau chief scurried to Tokaimura, the site of the leak. *Newsweek* was on top of the story. But, Whitaker wonders, does the event merit a cover?

Michael Elliott, the editor of *Newsweek's* international editions, informs Whitaker that the incident appears to have been contained. Though a horrifying story, in the cold calculus of news value, the meltdown is losing momentum.

Whitaker leans toward staying with the planned cover, a long-in-the-works package on "Tweens," those increasingly brand-conscious, shopaholic, and obsessive 8- to 14-yearolds. But he holds off on making his decision, waiting to hear his staff's thoughts at the regular 10 A.M. Friday meeting.

It's a subtle managerial move but emblematic of how *Newsweek* has changed since Whitaker took over in November 1998, after the devastating death of his mentor, Maynard Parker. Brash and brilliant, Parker acted on gut instinct. Decision making for Parker was a churning, combustible, and often reversible process that frequently went on behind closed doors. Whitaker, at times so reserved and efficient that he has been called "Iceman," tacks in a different direction. He tends to be more formal and deliberate, and holds the debates in public forums. "The key thing about Mark is that he is a good listener," stresses Elliott. And today he wants more input. He wants to be sure.

Taking his seat at the ten o'clock meeting, surrounded by about 40 members of the staff, Whitaker gets straight to the point. "Good morning," he says. "We want to talk about Japan. How bad is this? Does anybody feel this is a cover?"

"Well, it appears to be human error," says Deidre Depke, a senior editor for the international section. "So it raises real questions about safety."

"Can it happen here?" Whitaker asks. "And it was clearly a mistake as opposed to something else? Again, does anybody think this is a cover?"

The consensus is no. The Japanese incident did not

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNE KATRINE SENSTAD

reach the tragic proportions of, say, Three Mile Island or Chernobyl. It will lead the international section but not the entire issue. "Well, I think we obviously need to tell the reader what happened and how bad it was," concludes Whitaker.

Senior editor John Leland pipes up. "Do we want to go with Jesse this week?" The discussion jackknifes to Minnesota governor Jesse Ventura and the brouhaha the former professional wrestler caused with his *Playboy* interview. (Among his choice comments: Organized religion is a "sham and a crutch for weak-minded people," prostitution should be legalized, and he would like to be reincarnated as a bra, size 38DD.)

"Ventura as a cover?" muses Ann McDaniel, Washington bureau chief and a managing editor. "The reportorial prob-

lems are pretty serious for coming up with a cover at this point." Ventura had promised *Newsweek* considerable access but not until the week after next.

"I am nervous about waiting," Whitaker responds. "But the trade-off for waiting is access....In addition to Jesse being hot, politics is hot." Is this the time to take on celebrity thirdparty politics? he asks the group.

"Can I dissent?" interjects Sarah Pettit, the senior editor for arts and entertainment. "I just feel that [Ventura] is completely bogus and his whole shtick is bogus and it gives him power...."

"To put him on the cover of Newsweek, you mean?" Whitaker replies. Pettit nods.

"In 1996, we did covers on Steve Forbes and Pat Buchanan," senior editor Jonathan Alter reminds the

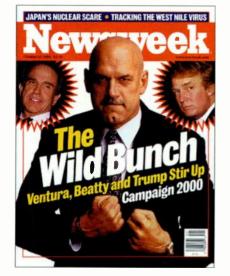
room. "We don't just put future presidents on the cover. We would have to do something about celebrity politics and how people are reacting against conventional, mainstream politics."

Whitaker likes the idea. He still regrets not having put Ventura on the cover in late 1998, after "The Body" pulled off his upset win, in favor of leading with the resignation of Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich. Since then, Whitaker has watched Ventura's popularity grow—fueled by the governor's growling charisma and gift for sound bites—and wants to save him from the cutting-room floor.

But Whitaker faces a dilemma. Should he wait for Newsweek's promised one-on-one with Ventura and risk getting scooped? Not only does the historic and very much ongoing rivalry between Newsweek and Time loom, but Whitaker knows that The New York Times Magazine is working on a profile and commands much of the current access to the governor. "If other people are on to it and the Times magazine is working on a Ventura piece, a week is a long time for us to wait," says Whitaker. "If we do it this week, we should team it with a Howard Fineman piece on celebrity politics." That way, the odd couple of Warren Beatty and Donald Trump, the latest nonpoliticians to float their presidential aspirations, could be added to the mix.

As the conversation continues, McDaniel ducks out and dials the cell phone of Fineman, *Newsweek*'s chief political correspondent. Whitaker seems keen on a celebrity-politics package, McDaniel tells him. What does he think? Fineman, standing outside Washington Hospital Center in the District of Columbia, where he's covering Vice President Al Gore's stump speech about the Patients' Bill of Rights, is willing to give it a try. After all, it seems that each day another celebrity thinks about testing the political waters.

Fineman hurries back to *Newsweek*'s Washington bureau and works on setting up interviews with Trump, Pat Buchanan, and Ross Perot. Meanwhile, back in New



Whitaker tore up the magazine just 36 hours before deadline so *Newsweek* could run a cover package about celebrity politics.

York, Whitaker repairs to his office with his senior staff. "This is a tradeoff question," Whitaker reiterates. "I think it is a very smart story. A very strong way for us to get back in terms of our coverage of the political game....*Time* won't do it. They just had a political cover [featuring Bill Bradley]."

"The larger point here, which we have to bring to the party," stresses Jon Meacham, another managing editor, "is [the notion] that Ventura is where a lot of the country is. Pro-choice. Antigun. People want sensible solutions."

"I think we can do a really good job this week," offers Elliott. "This is not just a political cover. This is a *Newsweek* political cover. What we do is we spot things."

"It's hard to see next week as being as good," agrees Whitaker. "Again, the

larger story is celebrity politics, and it is hard to see a greater confluence of news on that front. Let's talk to the reporters, the art people, and then we can reconvene before lunch."

Later that morning, Whitaker, McDaniel, Meacham, Fineman, and Matt Bai, the *Newsweek* national correspondent who has been covering Ventura and is slated to interview him in several weeks, gather for a conference call. Bai is worried that jumping the gun on his promised interview would jeopardize the relationships he has assiduously cultivated with Ventura and his associates. But Whitaker keeps stressing that "the news cycle has gotten away from us." Whitaker grills Fineman and Bai on whether the story would stay fresh throughout the upcoming week.

"Howard," Whitaker says, "talk this piece out to me.... Is this going to be a smart cover?" Fineman believes that it would be. And since Fineman knows that during the following week Trump is planning to announce the formation of an exploratory campaign committee, Whitaker is assured that the topic of celebrity politics will continue to percolate. The decision is made. Whitaker instructs Bai to write a story on the governor, with or without an interview, and reassigns the Gore story that Fineman has been working on.

"Guys, I think that we should try to do this," he con-

cludes. "This is the moment to do it. The fact is that we have been talking about this, the antipolitics of 2000— Ventura, Beatty, Trump. I think we should go for it.

"We've got 36 hours here," he says, leaning toward the squawk box. "And that is a long time for us."

HE 42-YEAR-OLD WHITAKER HAS SPENT HIS entire professional life at Newsweek, so the roller-coaster ride of running a newsweekly is nothing new to him. With some 300 editorial staffers around the world at his disposal, Whitaker knows he can tear up a nearly completed magazine only a day and half before it goes to the printer and conjure a trend story that is Newsweek's hallmark. After all, he learned his craft from one of the best, Maynard Parker. "One of the things that Maynard taught me," Whitaker says, "was that sometimes it was better to go with 75 percent, 80 percent, of the story right now rather than than 100 percent if the moment is wrong. And I think this is the right moment for celebrity politics. The trick is to anticipate what will be on people's minds next Wednesday."

Parker confessed that he had known all along that his writer Joe Klein had penned *Primary Colors*, even though *Newsweek* had published Klein's denials. Nonetheless, Parker survived, in no small part because of his legendary instincts.

Whitaker is in many ways the antithesis of Parker. A cool, cerebral customer who can exude a withdrawn stoniness, Whitaker reveals his emotions one small step at a time. Whitaker acknowledges that he is reserved, but those who





Parker, who died a little more than a year ago, at 58, of complications from leukemia, casts a giant shadow at *Newsweek*. An irrepressible, electric, and controversial character who inspired intense loyalty, Parker loved nothing more than to scramble the jets—the later the better. "If Maynard could wait until Saturday morning, he would," says Elliott, laughing. "Believe me! Maynard just loved to crash a story. He was a tiger. He just loved to dispatch reporters all over the place....And Maynard would risk being wrong because he was so often right."

Inside *Newsweek*, Parker's evisceration of stories, layouts, covers, and, at times, egos both inspired and infuriated. More publicly, he was prone to the mega-gaffe. Back in 1983, he pressed the magazine into publishing the "Hitler Diaries," which turned out to have been fabricated. And in 1996,

know him well stress how engaged and charming he can be. All agree that his steely intellect allows him to deconstruct complex situations quickly. "Not one of Maynard's greatest friends would accuse him of strategic thinking," says Elliott. "He was not known to think far ahead, whereas Mark is very, very strategic and very much a forward thinker."

The magazine operates on a different rhythm under Whitaker's watch, one more modulated than Parker's raucous rendition. But

Whitaker exhibits traits essential for a newsmagazine editor, ones Parker possessed: He's smart, frighteningly competitive, and willing to tear up the magazine at the last moment if the story is right.

WHITAKER'S INDEPENDENCE AND IMPERTURBability were instilled at an early age, the result of a broken home and constant relocations. His mother, who is white, met his African-American father when he was a student of hers at Swarthmore College, where she taught French in the mid-fifties. But Whitaker's parents split up when he was 5, and he spent much of his youth moving from campus to campus—a "faculty brat," as he puts it. Just after his 16th birthday, Whitaker decided that he was bored with high school; he arranged on his own to take the SATs so he could fast-forward into college. Whitaker entered Swarthmore At the regular Friday afternoon "run-through" meeting, Whitaker (in blue shirt) approves the final layouts for the next week's issue. than with each other, but that changed over the course of the year that he was sick and we dealt with the Monica story. With Monica we had a live grenade that could have blown up in our face at any moment and damaged the reputation of the magazine for a generation. So we were very careful with what we did. And we talked and debated all the time. For example, we knew about the cigar but did not run it. Everything about this story involved the equation between salaciousness and relevance, and the cigar was salacious, but was it relevant? But the key thing was that we consulted each other constantly."

McDaniel oversaw the reporters, Jon Meacham the packaging, and Whitaker the combined effort, all in regular dialogue with Smith. "The important thing is that when Maynard got sick we were all so devastated emotionally that we had to pull together and work," says Ann McDaniel, who constantly debriefed Isikoff and his fellow reporter Daniel Klaidman. "It was the only way to get things done."

Last April, Newsweek won a National Magazine Award

for its Lewinsky coverage. At a celebratory party, Whitaker thanked the staff, then handed the award over to McDaniel, saying that there was no one who deserved it more. It belonged, he believed, on her desk in Washington.

Parker returned to *Newsweek* in June 1998, after several rounds of chemotherapy and a bone marrow transplant. "He was back, and we all really thought he had beaten it," says Donald Graham, chairman and chief executive of The Washington Post Company, which owns *Newsweek*. But Parker developed pneumonia in September 1998 and died in October. The following month, Whitaker was named editor. "It was a wildly emotional place at the time that Mark took

over," says Graham. "There was just this huge sense of sadness and loss. The place was numb. Absolutely numb."

"Maynard's funeral was mobbed," says a friend of Parker's who attended. "Tom Brokaw was standing. I remember thinking what it must be like for Mark to see this, and know that these were the shoes that he had to fill."

None of this was lost on Whitaker. "Both when Maynard was sick, and then when he died, there was much more going on than just getting the magazine out," Whitaker says. "Part of what I had to do was try to do my best to help keep people emotionally under control, to try to get the place on something of an even keel."

Those who have watched Whitaker say that he has grown in the job. Among other things, by his own admission, he has made a conscious effort to continue to step outside himself and encourage interaction and dialogue. Although some wonder whether Whitaker can re-create the energy and verve inspired by Parker, which at times could border on controlled chaos, these days *Newsweek* appears to be a stabler, saner, and more participatory place to work.

"The change that I saw in Mark during the Monica

story," suggests Rick Smith, "was his ability to seek opinions and arguments from others. Over the year that Maynard was sick, Mark and I had many talks about leadership, how one goes about building a team, and show people how much you value their input and creativity. We talked about how he needed to reach out, and he has done so."

Whitaker has other challenges to meet. He has ascended to his position at a time when newsweeklies must navigate a media environment of 24-hour cable news networks and continuously updated websites. Whitaker echoes others when he maintains that the proliferation of media and the blizzard of sound bites create a need for efficient, thoughtful magazines that readers can depend upon. *Newsweek's* competitor in the Time & Life Building, just a few blocks away, agrees. "The newsweeklies have made a good comeback over the last several years," says Walter Isaacson, the managing editor of *Time*, whose circulation of 4 million tops *Newsweek's* 3.1 million. "It's important that they all be strong."

"I wanted to cut off Time's oxygen supply," Whitaker says of his hunt for The Blair Witch Project exclusive.

In addition to the obvious breaking news, Whitaker is clearly compelled by stories that spring from the "back of the book" sections on arts, entertainment, and society; he has also been pushing for more narrative pieces. And although, on the surface, he may be more low-key than his predecessor, Whitaker shares the competitive zeal for which Parker was famous. Arts editor Sarah Pettit, who joined the magazine last winter, recalls having pitched a cover story on The Blair Witch Project on a Wednesday morning in early August. "Mark was very clear," she recalls. "He wanted to do it, but he said that we needed to have the actors on the cover as an exclusive."

Newsweek got that shoot. Then, armed with the knowledge that *Time* was also working on a story, Whitaker outbid his rival for the only other pictures of the actors. "I wanted to cut off their oxygen supply so that they could not do it," he says. "But *Time* ran it anyway, using a shot of the directors for the cover."

Over the last year, Whitaker and design director Lynn Staley have worked to improve the look of the magazine. The "Millennium" page was dropped and an extra page was added to the "Periscope" section at the front of the magazine, a collection of short news breaks and trend stories, many of them having an irreverent tone. "We thought *Time* was doing a lot of smart visual stuff in the front, and that we were looking a little tired," says Staley. "We wanted to be more clever."

In addition to making cosmetic tweaks, *Newsweek* has added a "Science & Technology" section and has commissioned two new columnists, Susan Faludi and Anna Quindlen. "I want the magazine to have as many individual voices as possible," Whitaker stresses.

In the coming months, Whitaker says, readers can

expect more interaction between the website and the magazine, including new polling techniques to take the pulse of the voters during the upcoming political campaigns. *Newsweek* has also been working with The Discovery Channel on a poll concerning Americans' attitudes toward health issues. And Whitaker talks up a long-range, four-part series he has planned on key demographic groups: aging baby boomers, teens, minorities, and women.

In terms of circulation, Whitaker's record is mixed. According to the Audit Bureau of Circulations, for the first six months of this year, subscription figures for both *Time* and *Newsweek* remained relatively consistent. But *Newsweek*'s newsstand sales dropped more than *Time*'s, even though both raised their newsstand price and faced life without Monica. (*Newsweek*'s single-copy sales dropped more than 5 percent, from an average of 172,244 for the first half of 1998 compared to 163,083 in the same time period this year; *Time*'s numbers dipped less than 1 percent, from 170,041 to 169,063.)

(IDS 8 to 14

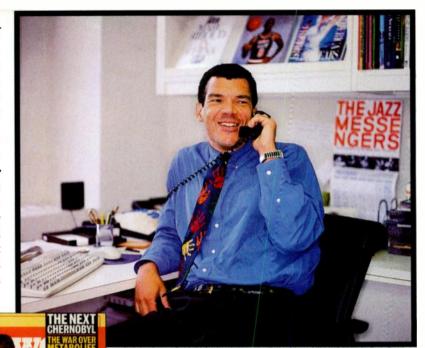
T'S LATE IN THE DAY ON October 1, and the jets are still scrambling. Since he walked through the door, some seven hours ago, Whitaker has started a maelstrom that will result in the changing of 60 percent to 70 percent of the magazine's content by the time it closes Saturday night. "To me, 'scrambling the jets' is not just about news but about capturing a big idea," he explains.

Earlier, Whitaker had spent a half hour or so with Bruce Ramsay, the magazine's cover director, watching and commenting as Ramsay played on the computer with photo images and typefaces. They decided that the cover

would feature a central shot of Ventura, with smaller head shots of Trump and Beatty off to the side. The cover line: "The Wild Bunch."

At about 6 P.M., after attending the regular Friday afternoon meeting during which Whitaker approves finished layouts, he, Smith, and other editors confer with Staley and Ramsay. They noodle over the cover's subhead, which is "Ventura, Beatty and Trump Shake Up Campaign 2000." Is "shake" too strong, they wonder? What about other verbs—perhaps "spice" or "stir." After receiving input from McDaniel (who has returned to Washington), Howard Fineman, and Matt Bai, Whitaker opts for "stir."

At about 7 P.M., Whitaker meets with editors from the back-of-the-book sections to discuss stories in the works for the week after next. Talk quickly turns to the long-planned cover package on "Tweens," which had been scheduled to run the weekend that John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane went down and was bumped again today. "Make sure you deal with peer pressure. Much of it is implied, like with my kid," advises Whitaker, referring to his 13-year-old daughter. "She feels kind of oppressed about the fact that in her old school



kids made fun of other kids who shopped at the Gap. So even for kids who don't get sucked into it, they feel the pressure."

Whitaker and Gelber also have a 9-year-old son. "Having kids helps you as a manager," Whitaker suggests. "When you have kids you can see how much pleasure you can get by watching other people's accomplishments. It gives me a thrill to see our people do well."

Whitaker turns his head to the wall, settling his eyes on several photographs of late, great jazz musicians, including the drummer Art Blakey

and saxophonist Eric Dolphy. "Some people like to have pictures of themselves with heads of state in their office, but I like these," says Whitaker, who took up the saxophone several years back.

He then reminisces about a program he attended in 1996 at the Aspen Institute think tank, just after he had been named managing editor. "When you go there, all you do is read Plato, Aristotle, and other great works of philosophy and talk about them as they pertain to work," he says. "At the time I was wrestling with the fact that I had confidence that I could be a manager and editor but did not know if I could be a leader, having for so long been the manager to Maynard's leader."

After many conversations on leadership, Whitaker arrived at the conclusion that there is no one-size-fits-all style. "Some people are yellers; others are aloof," he says. "But what they have in common is that they are great at getting good work out of people. I derived a great deal of comfort from that, because I realized that I could become a leader on my own terms."

He pauses. "I could do it my own way."

Whitaker, shown at his desk, used the experiences of his own two children to help shape Newsweek's cover package on 8- to-14year-old "Tweens" (inset).

A TV station in Fresno, California, is showing that local crime stories don't have to be shallow and sensationalistic. It's great journalism and a model for others. The only question: Will anybody watch?

Deep

KSEE reporter Michael Golden



F YOU HAD BEEN WATCHING THE 6 P.M. LOCAL NEWSCAST ON FRESNO, California's, KSEE-24 on February 9, this is what you would have seen: 28 seconds devoted to a story about a police officer who had committed suicide; 1 minute, 40 seconds for a woman who is on trial for killing her two children; 30 seconds for a segment about local pay phones; and a whopping 2 minutes dedicated to the violent rainstorm brewing outside.

All in all, it was standard local fare, typical of a form in which stories average 35 seconds and only 16 percent run longer than two minutes. But had you watched this NBC affiliate's 6:30 newscast, you would have been treated to something entirely different. That broadcast opened with a probing eight-minute

segment about the inmates inside Fresno County's Elkhorn Correctional Facility, which seeks to reform nonviolent juvenile offenders through rigorous training and education.

This wasn't your routine, top-of-the-local-news crime story. There were no images of sheet-draped corpses, flashing police lights, or wailing relatives of crime victims. Moreover, there was no screaming reporter or overheated language. Instead, the feature provided a multifaceted look at a complex issue.

The segment constituted an experiment in covering local crime—and the fruition of one reporter's quest. After years of lamenting the way local news stations report on violence and tragedy, KSEE reporter Michael Golden made it his mission to implement change. Golden wheedled and cajoled the station's brass, persuading them to try a type of coverage that eschews the glib, shallow clichés of fast-paced crime stories in favor of a more thoughtful approach.

It's too early to pronounce this new initiative a market success—especially since Golden plans to leave KSEE—and way too early even to suggest that it will take hold elsewhere. Though the first indications seem favorable, KSEE has not aired enough of its in-depth segments to gather the ratings data that would let it conclude that viewers are attracted to this new tack. Moreover, viewers haven't immediately flocked to the handful of stations that have attempted similar experiments. But in an era in which audiences are increasingly dissatisfied with traditional media approaches, KSEE president and general manager Mark Benscheidt thinks the time may be right to try something new. He says TV news producers are too quick to assume that viewers have a short attention span. "Give them credit," he says. "They are human beings who love a well-told story like anyone else.....We're selling our viewers short. Viewers do have an interest if you deliver a good product."

THE WORD VISIONARY DOESN'T EXACTLY LEAP TO MIND WHEN YOU MEET MICHAEL Golden. A six-year TV news veteran and the winner of a 1998 Associated Press award for TV reporting in the California/Nevada area, the 32-year-old Golden seems like a reporter through and through. He projects an air of calm professionalism on camera and is graced with a well-scrubbed earnestness and baby face that make him look closer to 25. Off camera, though, Golden's tone is entirely different. A fearless talker—one wonders whether Golden's interviewees ever have an opportunity to answer his questions—he seems supercharged with intensity.

Golden began in broadcasting in his native Chicago, holding a series of radio and TV jobs in which he reported mainly on sports. He went on to work for two years at





Not just a baby face: Golden lobbied fiercely for a more serious approach. WHBF, the CBS TV affiliate in Rock Island, Illinois, before joining KSEE. During his Rock Island stint, he hosted a public affairs program and reported a series on community policing efforts. Golden also covered crime for a total of 5 1/2 years at WHBF and KSEE. Even today, as a general assignment reporter who occasionally handles breaking crime stories, Golden knows what it's like to be hanging around the TV station when the police scanner crackles with news of a murder—and to race into the night, trying to arrive in time to capture images of a family's grief as it flashes in time with the police lights.

"I don't remember one particular moment when there was an epiphany," he says. But over time, Golden became troubled by the violent stories that dominate local news. He says he was bothered most by the lack of context and excessive use of sensationalized images and stories. "I'm guilty of it, too," Golden acknowledges.

He began to consider alternatives. Golden was inspired by one man who attempted to institute a new kind of crime and news coverage in Orlando, Florida. Two years ago, Bill Bauman made changes at WESH, where he was hired as the general manager and charged with taking the station from the No. 2 spot in the market to No. 1. Ignoring the TV-news dictum "If it bleeds, it leads," Bauman became more selective about the crimes the station covered and had reporters beef up their segments, offering more context and analysis.

It may have been good journalism—but it wasn't necessarily good business. WESH's ratings languished as viewers opted for the competition, which didn't shrink from showing bite-sized footage of mayhem and its aftermath.

Golden wasn't deterred. And when he discovered that he might be able to get financial assistance to test a new kind of reporting, Golden spotted his opening.

He began lobbying news director Chris Long and general manager Benscheidt, passionately arguing that viewers need something more than nutrition-free news nuggets. With their blessing, in October 1998 Golden applied to the Center on Crime, Communities & Culture for a \$15,000 grant, which he was awarded in early 1999, to report lengthy segments about local crime issues. (The center is a project of the Open Society Institute, which is funded by hedge-fund manager and philanthropist George Soros, an investor in this magazine.) Although Golden was animated by his desire to tell deeper, more profound stories, his bosses seemed to have at least one eye on other, more worldly considerations. Says Benscheidt: "Chris and I had numerous conversations about how to differentiate ourselves in the market." Golden's project was one way of doing so.

Still, Benscheidt and Long were cautious. They were aware that they risked losing viewers. KSEE had been No. 2 in its market for three years; Benscheidt certainly didn't want to lose ground. Then a solution presented itself. The station had just added a 6:30 evening newscast to its daily lineup. Without any other competing local newscasts at that hour, the station was willing to experiment with its new 30minute show.

With Long's help, Golden began planning a series of stories that the station would dub *Behind the Crime*. Before starting, though, Golden surveyed a panel of 21 community members he had organized, including a local pastor, educators, a police chief, and even a former gang member. He asked them which changes they would like to see in local TV news and which subjects should be analyzed in detail. The panel gave him broad topics—such as juvenile-justice reform and jail overcrowding—which Golden ended up using as starting points for his series. Golden then went to work. Over the next six months, he produced six 4- to 8minute segments about local crime-related issues.

HE FIRST SEGMENT OF BEHIND THE CRIME AIRED ON January 22, 1999, with a report about Dustin Haaland, a 4-year-old boy murdered by his father, who had been on parole after serving time for having beaten another of his sons. Golden analyzed how such crimes could be avoided. The other segments included reports that focused on crime victims and how their families could find support, Fresno's juvenile boot camp and its planned reform, and the use of paramilitary teams by local police departments—all issues in which the panel members had expressed interest.

The station supported the series with 30-second promos that appeared several times a day for one week prior to each story's airdate. And Golden's final project, a compilation of all the *Behind the Crime* segments, was deemed important enough to air in prime time in August. The station preempted *Dateline NBC* with an hourlong package that featured comments from the community panel both before and after it viewed all of the segments this past June.

"Boot Camp," Golden's most compelling segment, illustrates his approach. The eight-minute piece, which aired on February 9, was narrated by Golden and Frank Lopez, a graduate of the Elkhorn Correctional Facility. Using Lopez in that role, Golden argues, humanized the inmate experience. The segment followed them from arrival through their rigorous daily routine, to graduation. And though it could easily have become a treacly story of redemption—especially with Lopez telling the story of his turnaround—Golden didn't focus just on the successes. He pointed out that more inmates had failed the program than had passed it and that a handful had become repeat offenders.

Golden's pieces allow viewers to form their own conclusions. He does not preach; instead, he delivers situations, facts, and a voice from each side of every issue. Consider the fourth *Behind the Crime* segment, which focused on the nearby Dinuba Police Department's Special Enforcement Team, a paramilitary force similar to a SWAT team. In July 1997, two of its members shot Ramon Gallardo 13 times, killing him. A civil jury later found that the two officers had entered Gallardo's house unlawfully and used excessive force.

Golden not only provided viewers with a detailed report on the incident and the resulting suit filed by the Gallardo family but also examined how police departments across Fresno County are dealing with SWAT teams. He interviewed various law enforcement officials, victims of SWAT team actions, and the Gallardo family's lawyer.

Fresno's deputy police chief, Jerry Dyer—the panelist whose reputation was most at risk—had only good things to say about the SWAT team segment. "I just thought overall it was outstanding coverage," said Dyer. "[Golden] didn't focus on the death. He didn't place blame on law enforcement," he added. "[It was] an in-depth look at how you can prevent these incidents from occurring."

As with the other segments, the community panel was generally enthusiastic about the SWAT team story and challenged the station to do more features like it. The question was, Did the reaction of this handpicked panel square with the response of KSEE's viewers as a whole?

It's hard to say. Because ratings are calculated only four times a year in many local markets, including Fresno, KSEE has few numbers to go by. On the two nights in May when *Behind the Crime* aired, according to Nielsen Media Research, the station earned a 4 rating, compared to its average 5 rating. But "Boot Camp" easily beat the average with an 8. (Nielsen

spokesman Vincent Nasso says the ratings service could provide daily ratings for KSEE only if the station and its competitors agreed to foot a bill that would be, in KSEE's case, eight times as large as its current \$50,000 per year.)

There hasn't been enough ratings input, Benscheidt says, to draw any conclusions. Certainly, he acknowledges, the numbers will

have to add up in the long run: "In order to be a station that is capable of underwriting projects like Michael's, we need to have good ratings that convert in the marketplace to money."

For now, Benscheidt says, the extra newscast—with no competition—at 6:30 allows the station to continue trying out the longer stories. (And, in fact, the station ran two of Golden's longer pieces on the 11 P.M. newscast.) But, Benscheidt adds, "the challenge becomes trying to free up the reporters on our staff to do in-depth stories." He says the station's first priority is to provide a newscast that covers the important stories of the day. After allowing time for advertisements, there are approximately 22 minutes in a 30-minute newscast into which the weather, sports, lottery numbers, and international, national, and local news must be squeezed. That doesn't leave much room for longer segments.

Still, the station has tiptoed forward. It now runs four- to eight-minute segments—often prepared by reporters other than Golden—on a variety of topics approximately once every two weeks. And Long hopes to form a special-projects team by the end of the year to regularly assign in-depth stories on a variety of subjects. ANY STATIONS SEEM RESISTANT TO THE IDEA OF longer features. "You do have an obligation to cover other news of the day," says Kevin Keeshan, news director at KSEE's rival, KFSN. Keeshan, who says he has not seen *Behind the Crime*, says he isn't threatened by this format. "Just because it's long doesn't mean it's in depth," he asserts.

But Golden's approach has attracted some attention. Marty Haag, a senior vice-president for news at Belo Corporation, which owns 16 CBS, ABC, NBC, and Fox affiliates around the country, sent tapes of *Behind the Crime* to each Belo station. "I did it to make all of the news directors aware of this, to promote the idea that there are ways to cover crime that are certainly more inventive than yellow tape." Haag doesn't expect that the stations will leap to adopt Golden's format, but he wants to stress the importance of covering crime responsibly.

Still, while the reaction has been favorable, stations don't seem to be racing to change their tune. Steve Hammel, executive news director at KMOV-TV, the Belo-owned CBS affiliate in St. Louis, thought Golden's "Boot Camp" episode was "great." But he says his station "wouldn't be doing this on a regular basis." He explains that "[I]f you ran an eight-minute segment on one topic, there are many stories you leave out."

Golden's KSEE colleagues think his project has been worth it. They've taken the baton from Golden, who announced in mid-October that he was leaving KSEE to travel to Israel. "I've done everything I wanted to do at that station," he says. "I wanted to make a statement and I think the program did that." Golden says he's confident that his colleagues and bosses will continue to support the initiative, a view confirmed by Long: "Just because Michael is leaving

Many stations resist longer stories. "Just because it's long doesn't mean it's in depth," scoffs one news director.

doesn't mean my goals will change at all."

Other reporters, notes Long, have already been inspired to produce Golden-style segments. Says reporter Zara Arboleda: "Before [Michael's] project, normally all I could do was give the viewer the nuts and bolts and nothing more." Now, she says, "we've all started to do more followup stories. It's opened my eyes." Long says the project has "made me, as a news director, more sensitive to the people we're talking to and the stories we're telling, and I think it has heightened everyone's awareness."

It should encourage Long to know that the station that inspired Golden, WESH, is now earning higher ratings for its meaty reports on health, education, and the environment. "I think the business is going through some amount of self-examination," says WESH's Bauman, optimistic that Golden's effort could catch on elsewhere. "There is a greater focus on content." Bauman knows there will always be a market for tabloid journalism but is convinced that local viewers are looking for something more serious in their news. "In the end it's about telling stories," says Bauman. "If you tell interesting, good stories, people will watch." YOUR SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR THE BIG MEDIA AGE

Is This What's Ahead?

DISNEY

NEWS CORP.

World Radio History

ATET



The Experts

Leading media figures explain how conglomeration affects what they do and, in turn, what you read, watch, and hear. A report from the front lines.



The Big Media Roadmap

Our map helps you keep track of the mindboggling tangle of assets, joint ventures, and cross-ownerships the media conglomerates have woven.

Page **99**

Mind Control?

Does an alarming share of an average person's media diet come from different outposts of a handful of big companies? Ten ordinary people kept track of the media each consumed for one day to help us find out.



Plus ... Play our Media Monopoly game and match wits with the most acquisitive media moguls. Page 110

Why Media Mergers Matter

Having a few huge corporations control our outlets of expression could lead to less aggressive news coverage and a more muted marketplace of ideas.

By Rifka Rosenwein

HEN VIACOM INC. AGREED TO BUY CBS THIS SUMMER, THE STORY MADE BIG headlines—but mostly as a business event. The deal was heralded as the biggest media merger ever; the \$37 billion price tag elicited a collective gasp. For many of us, however, the story seemed less eye-popping than eyeglazing: another takeover of one huge corporation by another huge corporation. Just a few weeks later, the deal was easily eclipsed by the \$115 billion takeover of Sprint Corporation by MCI WorldCom, Inc.

And yet the mergers in the media business matter in ways that other takeovers don't. Having five or six major widget companies may be enough to safeguard the price and product competition with which traditional economic theory and antitrust law have been concerned. But concentrating much of the power to create and distribute news and ideas in five or six media conglomerates with a vast array of interests raises all kinds of other issues. There is, after all, a virtue to diversity, lots of it, when it comes to expression that transcends widget economic theory.

"The whole notion of a marketplace of ideas assumes a range of voices," asserts Burt Neuborne, legal director of the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law. "The fewer the sources of information, the less possible it is to think of it as a real market."

The situation is even more complicated than one big company's just buying up smaller ones. Yes, there is a lot of "vertical integration," in which those who make the content also control the distribution channels. The Walt Disney Company, for example, owns film and television production companies (Touchstone Pictures, ABC Entertainment Television Group), which supply its television network (ABC) with programming, which in turn helps promote its several partially owned cable channels (ESPN, Lifetime Television, E! Entertainment Television, The History Channel), which in turn have tie-ins with the Disney book publishing unit (Hyperion).

This kind of potential "synergy," as the buzzword goes, allows for all sorts of media peccadilloes, from the silly to the indefensible. Thus, as highlighted in the "Synergy Snapshots" sprinkled throughout this report, it's one thing for NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw to promote his book relentlessly on NBC News programs. It's another thing for the public to discover later that NBC owns nearly 25 percent of the book's profits.

Beyond this kind of integration, however, there are also innumerable "horizontal" business relationships across media giants. General Electric Company, for instance, doesn't just own NBC, which in turn runs CNBC and MSNBC. General Electric is now tied to Dow Jones & Company through a complex relationship between CNBC and the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*. It is also linked to Microsoft Corporation, which co-owns MSNBC. In another era, these media outlets would be engaged in healthy competition against one another. Now they are partners.

These kinds of partnerships could ultimately stifle aggressive coverage. "The more they own, the harder it is to attack them because they own so much," says Neuborne.

It's hard "proving a negative," says Andrew Jay Schwartzman, president of the Media Access Project, a public interest law firm. What has changed in journalism as a result of consolidation, he says, "is not a question of misreporting. It's not a question of false reporting. It's a question of not reporting."

Take, for example, the coverage of an issue several years ago that was near and dear to 93



the hearts of broadcasters. One component of the sweeping Telecommunications Act of 1996 set aside a huge, valuable segment of the nation's airwaves for new digital television services. Rather than auction off this part of the spectrum which was valued at up to \$70 billion and allow the government to use that money for all kinds of social good, broadcasters lobbied long and hard to get the new frequencies free of charge, promising that they would use the bands serve the public interest justified the giveaway, according to E. Joshua Rosenkranz, president of NYU's Brennan Center. "No sooner had [they gotten the spectrum] than they fight tooth and nail against that obligation," he says. The broadcasters went on to defeat a provision in the telecommunications bill that would have called for some free airtime for political candidates. Again, there was scant coverage of the issue on television.

And if you think the print media

Concentrating much of the power to create and distribute news and ideas in five or six media conglomerates raises all kinds of issues. There is, after all, a virtue to diversity, lots of it, when it comes to expression that transcends widget economic theory.

to broadcast higher-definition programs with digital signals.

With all the makings of a great news story about corporations depriving ordinary taxpayers of this bonanza, why were so few Americans even aware of this issue? Republican John McCain put it bluntly on the floor of the Senate: "You will not see this story on any television or hear it on any radio broadcast because it directly affects them."

McCain was on to something. During the nine-month period from when the bill was introduced, in May 1995, to its passage, on February 1, 1996, news shows on the three major networks spent a total of 19 1/2 minutes on the Telecommunications Act, according to a study conducted by Dean Alger for his 1998 book, *Megamedia*. Virtually none of that time dealt with the spectrum issue.

One of the arguments made by the broadcasters to win the rights to the spectrum was that their commitment to would have risen to the occasion, think again. Many of them either own television stations—The New York Times Company owns eight, for example—or are part of a corporation with broadcasting interests. A study cited in Alger's book found that "among newspapers that editorialized on the subject, every one whose owners got little TV revenue editorialized against the spectrum giveaway, whereas every one with high TV revenues editorialized in favor...." (The *Times*, it should be noted, editorialized against.)

Then again, network television would not likely have covered itself aggressively no matter who owned it. As media analyst Andrew Tyndall points out, "there is no such thing as a golden age" when it comes to control of the news media. There were either the press barons of the early part of this century or the network oligarchy of 20 and 30 years ago.

"When you talk to people at the networks," says Tyndall, "they'll just look

SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

Citing its "stale, misfired gags" and "its brand of shtick, which...seems as ancient as vaudeville," *Entertainment Weekly* film critic Owen Gleiberman gave the heavily hyped *Wild Wild West* a D+ in the magazine's July 9 issue. Never mind that Warner Bros., the hit-starved studio behind the film, and *Entertainment Weekly* are both owned by Time Warner Inc. The magazine even devoted the cover of that issue to all the bad buzz about the film. The magazine's assessment was dead-on: *Wild Wild West* ended up as perhaps the summer's biggest belly flop.

Verdict: Not a big deal by itself, but this honest cross-corporate pan is significant and praiseworthy, because it seems typical of EW. at you funny" if you suggest to them that too much of the media is controlled by too few. "As far as they're concerned, they've gone from being an oligarchy to being just one part of a much more competitive atmosphere. [They feel the] consolidation on the corporate side is more than compensated for by the rise of 24-hour cable news channels and the Internet."

Norman Pearlstine, editor in chief of Time Inc., a unit of Time Warner, agrees. "The real story of the last 20 years is the proliferation of media," he says. Even among the powerful broadcast networks, which seemed to rule forever as the Big Three, there are now at least four—News Corporation's Fox has made its mark as a strong alternative.

And within media companies, he says, there is much diversity and room for many voices. "There is a presumption [by the critics] that to be successful, [companies] have to impose a uniform mind-set on all the editorial products," says Pearlstine. This is simply not true, he asserts. Go to a newsstand and try to pick out the three dozen or so magazines published by Time Inc. out of the hundreds of selections, he suggests. "I defy you to do that," he says, because each is so different.

But there is something else at work here in this era of conglomeration that distinguishes this media age from that of its predecessors. Pearlstine himself believes that there is nothing more important to maintaining journalistic integrity within a conglomerate than the mind-set of the CEO and others running the company. They set the tone.

Thus, when Michael Eisner, chairman of Disney, opines about news coverage, it's worth paying attention. In an interview last year on National Public Radio, he said: "I would prefer ABC not to cover Disney....I think it's inappropriate for Disney to be covered by Disney....[B]y and large, the way you avoid conflict of interest is to, as best you can, not cover yourself." These comments were made only days before ABC News killed a story about Disney's having unwittingly employed convicted pedophiles at its theme parks.

More recently, Sumner Redstone, chairman of Viacom and soon to be leader of CBS, spoke at a business forum in China in September sponsored by Time Inc.'s *Fortune* magazine. At a news conference there, Redstone told reporters that as media companies expand globally, they must be sensitive to the needs of local governments.

"Journalistic integrity must prevail in the final analysis," Redstone said. "But that doesn't mean that journalistic integrity should be exercised in a way that is unnecessarily offensive to the countries in which you operate." Through a spokesperson, Redstone's soon-to-be employee Dan Rather declined to comment on this.

Pearlstine was nearby when Redstone made his remarks and notes that the Viacom chief emphasized that he had not yet mulled over these kinds of issues. But Pearlstine is confident that Redstone, like other media CEOs, will come to respect the tenets of journalism. "As he gets to understand the workings of CBS News, he'll find it counterproductive to rein them in in any way," he says.

"As an editor," says Pearlstine forcefully, "I would argue we're out of business the day that anybody—advertiser, reader, government official, or source—feels that we curb or manipulate our coverage to promote corporate interests."

Still, corporate chieftains, who made it to the top by knowing how to make profits and maximize shareholder value, are cultural strangers when it comes to the traditions and standards of journalism. Arguably, the company that brought you MTV and Nickelodeon (Viacom) comes to the table with a different set of values than the company raised on Edward R. Murrow and Walter Cronkite (CBS).

Future leaders of these media companies will be trained under their corporate bosses, who will likely teach them that their responsibility is to the shareholders, not necessarily to the citizenry.

The conglomeration of the media, of course, has implications far beyond the scope of news reporting. *Brill's Content* set out to talk to leading figures in many walks of media life to find out how this trend affects what they do and, in turn, what we read, watch, and hear.

Reports from the front lines vary. Peter Bart, editor in chief of *Variety* and a former executive at Paramount Pictures, believes that conglomerates, due to the stifling of creativity brought on by profitdriven risk aversion, are unlikely to make SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

The 20-page "Fall Health Plus" section of the September 27 *New York Post* was packed with health news. It seemed only fair that cable's Health Network, which "prepared most of the articles for this special section," was featured in a boxed story that described the network, listed the cable systems that carry it, gave its web address, and mentioned that it is "owned in part by Fox." Not mentioned was sprawling News Corporation, which happens to own both Fox and the *Post*—but not the competing Discovery Health TV (which is owned by Liberty Media).

Verdict: Unhealthy cross-promotion

good movies by committee. But Phil Zacheretti, senior vice-president for Regal Cinemas, Inc., the world's largest theater chain, says ticket buyers are still flocking to the theaters. Therefore, he reasons, the quality of movies is high.

Richard Howorth, owner of an independent bookstore in Oxford, Mississippi, bemoans the corporate emphasis on short-term profits; that's why, he believes, only the surefire "big" books get published. As a "big" author, Scott Turow notes that so far, at least, his books have not become mere cogs in a big corporate machine.

This experience is in marked contrast to that of actor David Duchovny and producer Steven Bochco, both of whom have sued Twentieth Century Fox for selling reruns of their respective hit And while the Internet is touted as the last great hope for independent voices, James Cramer, a cofounder of the financial news website TheStreet.com, is here to tell you that even websites need a media conglomerate's support to survive. Bowing to this reality, TheStreet.com is itself now partly owned by The New York Times Company and News Corporation.

Where you sit, of course, often determines where you stand on certain issues. These individuals are no exception to that rule. But together, they help us all become smarter watchers, readers, and listeners, and more concerned citizens. Take a look at the people we've profiled in our "Mind Control?" section—ordinary consumers who get their news and entertainment from myriad sources, not always realizing

"Synergy," as the buzzword goes, allows for all sorts of media peccadilloes, from the silly to the indefensible. It's one thing for NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw to promote his book relentlessly on NBC News programs. It's another thing for the public to discover later that NBC owns nearly 25 percent of the book's profits.

series, *The X-Files* and *NYPD Blue*, to the Fox-owned cable network FX at allegedly cut-rate prices. Separately, Bochco has also claimed that ABC is moving *NYPD Blue* out of its coveted Tuesday night slot to make room for a new series, *Once and Again*, which is partially owned by Disney, ABC's parent.

At the same time, Brian Bedol, founder of Classic Sports Network, which was bought by Disney's ESPN, believes that scale is key in the media industry. But Tom Rogers, CEO of magazine publisher Primedia Inc. and formerly president of NBC Cable, says that bigger doesn't necessarily mean better. that many of those outlets are owned by a handful of companies. And match wits with acquisitive media moguls in our Media Monopoly game. To help you sort it all out, turn to "The Big Media Roadmap," which graphically portrays the mind-boggling tangle of assets, joint ventures, and cross-ownerships the media conglomerates have created.

As we head into a new millennium, with our media landscape in transition, it's worthwhile to keep in mind words from the granddaddy of all consumer advocates. "The most important thing for the consumer," says Ralph Nader, "is to be savvy."

BIGMEDIAEXPERTS



DAVID HALBERSTAM on serving only one god

The object of these mergers is never to improve the service. The person [conglomerates are] interested in is not the person who buys the newspaper, not the person who gets the broadcast in his home. The person they're interested in is the person who buys the stock

[Conglomeration means] there is less and less real commitment to the reader of news. Disney is not a company that's interested in excellence in journalism. They just squeeze, squeeze, squeeze, It's been a disaster. The stock price becomes the only part of the report card that matters....

Synergy is one of the great bullshit words of all time. The CNN-Time [collaboration] on Tailwind----that's the best example of what happens with synergy....When I was a young reporter in the Congo and Vietnam, The New York Times asked me to carry a camera. I found I couldn't see the story as a reporter. You can serve only one god You can only do one thing, and if you're lucky, you do it well. I don't think there's anybody at the head of one of these large corporations that cares very much about journalism.

Halberstam is a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author.

RALPH NADER on why there is no citizen-action channel

(Conglomerates) usually have a policy of

what sells and what doesn't, and they don't veer away from that. I've never seen a conglomerate go the other way; they always downgrade [the material]. Sex. violence. scandal, celebrity---that's the criteria....Just look at the qualities] of the CEOs. [Viacom CEO] Sumner Redstone: What's he interested in? Raising stock and making money. [CBS CEO] Mel Karmazin-the classic monetized mind. He's profited off Howard Stern. This is the replacement for ICBS founderl William Paley! Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw-they know their news is mostly a crock of dung.

Ninety percent of all broadcasting is devoted to entertainment and advertising Even on the 24-hour news channel(s), there's a huge amount of lifestyle. fluff, weather, sports, and stocks. With all these channels on cable, do they have a citizen-action channel? Do they have a labor channel? Do they have a consumer channel? Of course not. Because [the corporate chieftains] control it so completely, [I try telling people: You own the airwayes. Do you realize that? Legally, [we] own it and radio and TV are tenants. They don't pay rent and [yet] they dictate what goes on the air.

Nader is a consumer advocate.

NORMAN PEARLSTINE on why he's editing People reviews of HBO movies

I try to read [before publication] everything having to do with Time Warner and its set of competitors. That's a lot. So I'll read a review of an HBO movie in People magazine, but I've never changed one. I read everything, often doing my own reporting.

[The CNN-Time Tailwind story] had nothing to do with synergy. That raises a



On the October 4 Today show, host Matt Lauer "interviewed" former CNN newsman Lou Dobbs about a business venture Dobbs and NBC News had formed. "We are, together, going to create a newsletter on markets, finance-the political economy...," explained Dobbs, who is prevented by a contract with his former employer from appearing on NBC as a financial commentator but is apparently free to appear on NBC as often as he wants to promote and publicize their jointly owned newsletter (see "The Big Blur," page 51).

Verdict: Shameless synergy sin

different issue for journalism-whether you should let anything into your magazine. including book excerpts, that you didn't report and fact-check yourself. There was zero pressure [to publish the CNN report].

I don't think the size or diversity of the media company matters so much as the mind-set of the CEO and board running the company....My commitment from Time Inc.'s management and Time Warner's management not only includes editorial independence but also aggressive coverage of Time Warner.

As an editor, I would argue we're out of business the day that anybody...feels that we curb or manipulate our coverage to promote corporate interests.

Clearly, we are a very large division of a very large public company. Clearly, there is a premium on profitability. [But] because of our large resources, we can pursue some stories more aggressively. Time's Asian edition was just sued for \$27 billion by [deposed Indonesian leader] Suharto, I don't know how many independent publications would have taken that on.

Pearlstine is editor in chief of Time Inc., a unit of Time Warner Inc.

MICHAEL KINSLEY on loving his conglomerate

[I]n the three years plus we've been publishing Slate, [Bill Gates and]...Microsoft... ha[ve] never interfered with or even complained about any aspect of our editorial product...even though we have frequently published both mockery and serious criticism of the company and the chairman.

Why? I can only speculate. (I'm not about to ask!) But one reason, I suspect, is probably that Microsoft is NOT a media conglomerate. That means two things. First, unlike established media companies, Microsoft must prove to a doubting world that it understands the importance of editorial independence....Second, a publication owned by a software company-even Microsoftsimply has fewer conflicts of interest than one owned by a media conglomerate. Almost any topic Time magazine writes about touches on some other division of Time Warner. By contrast Slate writes very little about software or even about antitrust.

owned by Microsoft Corporation.

Kinsley is editor of Slate, an online magazine

JOHN BLECK

9



PETER BART on why conglomerates can't make good movies

When I was at Paramount, in 1971, if an actor asked for an exorbitant amount of money, I could say, 'I can't afford you'.... [When studios were independent entities,] they were undercapitalized. It was the industry's dirty little secret until the Viacoms and Rupert Murdochs came and Hollywood became a corporate state. And that was what kept the economics of Hollywood somewhat in line.

[Now] a movie studio is part of this huge corporate cocoon, and therefore, theoretically, a studio should be willing to take bigger risks because one bad movie or even one bad summer in all likelihood won't erode the value of the [parent company's] shares. But the way it works out, the studios are if anything more risk averse. They are desperate to hedge their bets. It's the nature of bureaucratic self-protection. Every unit of a multinational corporation has to meet its numbers. That pressure is reflected in the kind of pictures that get made. The prototype is Runaway Bride. It has that sort of prechewed quality to it, the sort of pablum that studios chewed on for ten years, that's gone through endless rewrites, has been

pretested by endless focus groups, and is successful—if insipid.

The old-time studio bosses followed their hunches. Today, these greenlight decisions are very much a question of committees, focus groups, rule by consensus. Not exactly a recipe for art.

Bart, the editor in chief of Variety, was once an executive at Paramount Pictures.

PHIL ZACHERETTI on why movies have never been better

With their ownership structure changing, we've heard studios talking about cutting the number of films being distributed, but that's not really come to light. Moviemaking is an inexact science....It's total hit or miss. There is no problem with sequels....Sequels have always been a little guarantee—not a home run, but you know the audience is there.

It shows by the attendance that studios are cranking out still—overall—good movies. On the whole, the studios are not going to fool the audience into paying \$5 to \$9.50 a ticket unless they have some good movies. [1999] will set a record for the number of people to see a movie [since the fifties]. That's not dollar value [of tickets sold]. That's physical admissions. Nationwide, that's over 1.5 billion tickets.

Zacheretti is senior vice-president of marketing and advertising for Regal Cinemas, Inc., the largest theater chain in the world.

HARRY SHEARER on giving up

The studios have elevated salespeople

to the top decision-making ranks. Agents are salesmen. Salesmen don't like rejection. As a matter of fact, agents hate rejection even more than actors do. So there's been pressure to make the sale as easy as

SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

At the end of September, Columbia Pictures ran an ad on CNN for its movie *Random Hearts*. But the ad itself seemed like a CNN promo, plugging an upcoming CNN interview with Harrison Ford, the movie's star. The ad also directed viewers to CNN's website and to its corporate cousin, *Entertainment Weekly*, where they would find more details about a sweepstakes to win a trip to a cabin like the one in the movie. A CNN spokesman says the promo and sweepstakes were "value added" provided for a big advertiser.

Verdict: A synergy mess, muddled by the fact that Columbia is a competitor of Time Warner's Warner Bros. studio possible, all the way along the line from the pitch to the cineplex. This puts a premium on doing things that, one way or another, have been done before, since they're easier to explain....[W]hen it doesn't work, they've got history (hey, the first two worked) and numbers (but the focus groups loved it) to justify their choices.

I see so few movies—I got tired of walking out after half an hour and decided to eliminate the middleman and stay home—that I'm a poor judge of their general quality. Myself, I experience no interference from these corporate/studio types, because aside from the occasional acting job, I don't get involved with them.

Shearer is an actor, director, and writer (This Is Spinal Tap, The Simpsons) whose media/political commentary program, Le Show, airs on public radio stations.

on not giving up

At the moment, I'm not as despairing

about the quality of Hollywood movies as I usually am, and that may have something to do with conglomeration. These big public companies demand a certain profitability, and if they're not getting it, it forces them to impose business practices on the movie division. That could lead to cancellation of a lot of deadwood....Many films with overpriced budgets are too big a risk. Being canceled are big action films built around Schwarzenegger, Stallone, these aging male stars whose movies are simply not making their costs back. Too many have failed; not enough made a profit to satisfy the conglomerates. It could lead to a downward pressure on budgets that might result in fewer big turkeys.

It could also result in better movies getting made, particularly with the success of some movies made within the studios that have the feel of independent films, like *Rushmore, Election, Go, [The] Sixth Sense,* and *American Beauty.* These films were not made with big stars or big directors. If conglomeration means that smaller-budget movies get made, then conglomerate control is partially redeemed.

I hope we're in a transitional period here, in which the old guard is dying off. It's the audience doing it; they're not going to these movies....

Denby is a movie critic for The New Yorker.

BIGMEDIA



BRIAN BEDOL on why just having a good idea for a new cable channel isn't always enough

[In the media business,] scale is important...because you're able to crosspromote and cross-market. For every new channel, getting [a] critical mass of carriage as quickly as possible is very important....

[When Bedol tried to get cable systems to carry his Classic Sports cable channel, he was competing against deep-pocketed media conglomerates launching their own networks] who were willing to pay for carriage, to pay for distribution, and it makes it a challenge...

I think it probably would be unfair to characterize our experience with Cablevision [Bedol filed an FCC complaint against the cable company in 1997, alleging that it demanded an ownership stake in Classic Sports in exchange for carriage] as our experience with the rest of the industry....[But there were] a lot of times when we felt that the advantage went to the big media companies....

I don't mean to sound like the anti-entrepreneur, but there's a reason that you read about successful

SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

Of the 58 national channels on Time Warner's Manhattan cable system, 15, or more than 25 percent, are fully or partially owned by the parent company. News Corp.'s FX—home of the only cable reruns of *The X-Files* and *NYPD Blue* and the 26th-highest-rated channel in the country—didn't make the cut. Meanwhile, on the Cablevision system in the Bronx, 16 percent of the channels are owned by Time Warner, while 9 percent are owned by a Cablevision affiliate.

Verdict: If you don't like it, get a satellite dish

entrepreneurs making lots of money. It's because they're taking risks, and it's not easy. They're going up against odds.

Bedol founded Classic Sports Network, which was sold to ESPN in 1997 after Classic Sports accused Cablevision of demanding an ownership stake in return for carriage.

DAVID CRANE on the subtle effects of consolidation

Look, you have to be blind not to be aware that the networks are more invested in the shows they create and that they have a full or partial ownership in. I think *Will & Grace* is a terrific TV show, but it doesn't hurt them also, in terms of the amount of promotion that they get, that NBC owns it...And in no way does that take away from how good the show is.

[W]hen you're in the business of fighting for promos, and NBC can only air so many promos...you have to believe that to some extent the fact that they own it plays a part [in the promotion NBC gives NBC Studios' shows].

So far in my experience, [networks' favoring their own shows] hasn't been to the exclusion of quality. Most of the people we work with I think are really smart, and the networks are not stupid enough to put on a piece of crap that they own at the expense of something good that they don't—because they also have to attract viewers. So I don't think it's cut

SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

In October 1998, just two years after The Walt Disney Company acquired ABC amid assurances that the network's news division would continue to report on Disney as it would on any other company, ABC News president David Westin killed an ABC News report about the employment of convicted pedophiles at Disney's Magic Kingdom in Florida. Just a few days before Westin killed the story, Disney chairman Michael Eisner had told an NPR interviewer that "I would prefer ABC not to cover Disney... I think it's inappropriate for Disney to be covered by Disney." He got his wish.

Verdict: A big blow to ABC News's editorial integrity

and dried. I think conglomeration and these cross-corporate relationships informs things in subtle ways....From a personal standpoint, it has not affected me at all....*Friends* has been on the air for...now we're in our sixth season, [and]....NBC has been incredibly supportive....The fact that they don't own [our shows] doesn't really inform things very much; [NBC has] certainly supported all three shows. The fact that all three are back this season is a testament to that.

Crane is a cofounder of the independent Bright/Kauffman/Crane Productions, which created Friends, Veronica's Closet, and Jesse for NBC.

DAVID DUCHOVNY on getting screwed

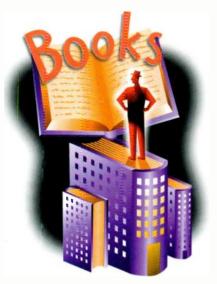
[X-Files star Duchovny recently filed a suit alleging that News Corporation's Fox had deprived him of his share of the show's profits by selling at a below-market price the show's rerun rights to News Corp.'s FX cable network and News Corp. broadcast properties. The show was originally broadcast on the FOX Network.This is an excerpt of his suit.]

Fox has always licensed the rights to [The X-Files] to its own affiliated entities wherever possible, rather than seeking the most competitive and beneficial deal in a free and open market....Because Fox must share the profits derived from [The X-Files] with its profit participants such as Duchovny, Fox has intentionally caused the revenues payable for the distribution rights of [The X-Files] to be reduced through self-dealing with its affiliated entities....In essence, Fox sits on both sides of the bargaining table in any negotiation for the distribution rights to [The X-Files], thereby enabling it to manipulate negotiations in any way that serves its corporate interests....

This cynical manipulation by Fox constitutes a material breach of its obligations to Duchovny....

OHN BLECK

2000



on the end of the gentleman's profession

It's a complicated story. Take a look at the [recent] Harper[Collins] takeover of Morrow. [Seventy-four] people lost their jobs; [nine] imprints are being eliminated. There are fewer slots for eager authors to sell their wares. It has become more and more difficult for non-large-selling authors to get published. By that I mean authors who sell 20,000 to 30,000 books, the more literary novelists or poets. Therefore, you're depriving readers of the ability to discover new or special writers.

When I started Farrar, Straus, in 1946, publishers were mostly family- and individually owned. Now they're corporate. If you're working for a huge corporation, I think you're going to find that owners are telling employees to be more careful of what they buy....It used to be a gentleman's profession.

Straus cofounded the publishing house Farrar, Straus and Giroux in 1946. It is now part of Von Holtzbrinck, the German media giant.

RICHARD HOWORTH on why fewer books get read

All corporate consolidations are

invariably bad in the book business. There is a limiting in the amount of books put out there. The new executives are short-term, bottom-line driven. That goes against the grain of what's traditionally been fruitful in the book business. It takes books time to find a market....

Unit sales have declined, but dollar sales have gone up. The average American family purchases 18 percent fewer books [compared to] 1987....That means more

JOHN BLECK

big books and fewer small books.

In the book industry, we used to have to rely on the print media for critical reviews and reliable dissemination of news. But if you have a book company that has a business affiliation with a large bookseller and then with a [news] organization, the lines get blurred all over the place. One of the things that alarms me is that so many journalists, especially prominent journalists, are writing books. And they are therefore very reluctant to say anything negative about publishers because they're afraid of ruining their chances either at the retail level or at the publishing houses.

Howorth is the owner of Square Books, an independent bookstore in Oxford, Mississippi.

on conglomerates, not being as powerful as you'd think

Time Warner publishes my paperbacks. A reasonable person might suspect that once you're there, you become part of the conglomerate-the Book-of-the-Month Club would make it a main selection, Warner Bros. would make the movie, Time would give you a great review. But with The Laws of Our Fathers [his previous book], it was [Bertelsmann's] Literary Guild that made it a selection, the movie rights were bought by Universal, and the book didn't have such a hot review in *Time*....The audiotape was done by [Viacom's] Simon & Schuster. A book has not turned into a corporate asset across the waterfront. People so far think the conglomerate is a lot more integrated than it is.

There is a constant narrowing of taste with the bottom-line mentality. The tried and true becomes much preferable to the new and untested. The mainstream becomes narrower and narrower. It's a sick cycle. Publishers and filmmakers are dumbing down.

Turow is a best-selling author whose most recent book is Personal Injuries.

ROBERT MILLER on selective synergy

There is a kind of synergy that generates a product because something is being created in some other part of the company. This product has no other reason to exist. It's seen as a form of marketing. That's the bad kind of synergy. The trick is to be selective in enforcing synergy. You have to make sure each product has a valid life of its own.

For example, Tim Allen was developing Home Improvement for Touchstone (another unit of Disney). We sign[ed] him [not] because he was doing the show but because we thought it would work in book torm. On the other hand, we didn't sign Margaret Cho, who also did a show for Touchstone, because we didn't think [the material] would have a life of its own as a book. We're not forced to use it....The best synergy is an entrée to content that you wouldn't otherwise have It's synergy by sheer proximity as opposed to synergy by decree....[W]e've published around 900 books since we opened in 1991; one third of those [Disney properties]

[W]hen we do something with the company, [the project has] credibility. It means we're choosing the book, not just publishing because [we're] Disney books and that's what we were created to do. We published Drew Carey because he's funny, not because we're part of ABC.

Miller is senior vice-president of Hyperion, a unit of The Walt Disney Company.

SYNERGY SNAPSHOT

It's no surprise that *The Rugrats Movie*, produced by Paramount Pictures and Nickelodeon Movies, was the first non-Disney animated film to break the \$100 million box-office mark domestically. The studios were able to avail themselves of parent company Viacom Inc.'s other resources. *Rugrats*, spun off from the popular Nickelodeon series and released in November 1998, was plugged on Nickelodeon, MTV, VH1, and Showtime, as well as on Paramount Television's *Entertainment Tonight* and *Leeza*. Blockbuster featured in-store promotions, Simon & Schuster published Rugrats books, and Paramount Home Video distributed savings packets, which offered discounts for other Viacom/Rugrats products.

Verdict: Synergy working well and harmlessly; a good time was had by all

BIGMEDIA



JAMES CRAMER on how the little guy doesn't have a chance As a creator of content, if you're not

affiliated with Time Warner or Disney or CBS...or News Corp./Fox or GE, NBC, or CNBC, I think you're finished. I just don't think you can make it, which is amazing, because one of the great things about this medium that everybody says is 'Anybody can have a website; anybody can have a website.' That is perhaps the most incorrect statement....It's getting read that matters, and you can't be read unless you're connected with one of these big media outfits....

[I]f you want to get any publicity or you want to get your name around, you can forget about it I was booted off of CNBC because GE felt that TheStreet.com was competition to GE and CNBC.com....Lou Dobbs, when that gentleman was running [CNN]fn, would not let us run advertising on his site, on CNN.

[T]here's this incredible Microsoft/ GE/Dow Jones nexus that basically just

precludes anybody from doing anything [T]hese organizations are put together to block you [from succeeding in the marketplace]....They're put together to frustrate the competition, and I can tell you that, having been frustrated by them

Cramer is a cofounder of TheStreet.com. a financial news website now owned partly by News Corporation and The New York Times Company.

the virtues of not owning everything

[L]ook at Disney, you look at Time Warner...(Nlone of those combinations have created any phenomenal synergies....Disney owns a ITVI studio combined with a network; NBC doesn't, but look at the difference [in their] success in prime time over the last few years [I]t's very hard to look at Time Warner and say that anything significant has come about by virtue of all those assets being owned under one roof

The strongest combinations are those that have a traditional media base [coupled with a new-media venture. They must be integrated so that] the new media business actually strength(ens) and is able to flourish by virtue of its connection to a traditional media business....

For instance, MSNBC.com shares its assignment desk with NBC News. That was an important integration ... which assured that it was truly tied in to a worldclass news organization...I don't think those companies that approach Internet development by having them as separate outposts, disconnected from the traditional media core, are likely to be all that successful over time.

Rogers is CEO of Primedia, which publishes New York, Seventeen, and Modern Bride. He was president of NBC Cable.

SYNERGY (SNAPSHOT SNAPSHOT

Is it news, or is it just another of NBC's vigorous cross-show promotions? On the July 9 Today, Katie Couric introduced Dateline NBC correspondent Lea Thompson's "investigative report" on age discrimination. Thompson spent more than three minutes on two women's quest for the same job. "[O]Ider people should not be treated more critically in an interview because of their age. So would the older, Eleanor, be treated the same as [the younger] Gwen?" Thompson asked. Today-a division of NBC News-made its viewers get 14 hours older waiting for the answer. "[Y]ou can see more of Lea Thompson's report on Dateline NBC tonight," Couric promised.

Verdict: Synergy silliness

STEWART ALSOP on why media conglomerates can't keep up on the Web

Trying to get a synergistic event at Time Warner is infamously difficult, whether you're trying to partner with them or whether you're a business unit manager within Time Warner trying to get cooperation from other business units. It's extraordinarily difficult to get them to act in concert, and as a result they've been behind the curve at every major stage of the Internet....

There have been a few examples, CNN.com, CNNfn.com...have been successful in their own right, but it is mainly despite their corporate ownership rather than because of it

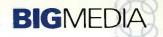
The Internet requires businesses to adopt new approaches, both to the customer and to how they conduct business, and those new approaches have been a real challenge for existing companies to adopt. The whole idea of consolidation is to centralize and make things more efficient in the management of the company, but if you centralize a group of people that are not aware of what the issues are, it's not useful

Alsop, a technology venture capitalist, is also a columnist for Time Warner's Fortune.

HALSEY MINOR on the future

By 2005, five of the top ten media companies in the world, by valuation, will have grown up on the Internet and will, over time, start acquiring traditional media assets, not unlike the way [Ted] Turner started out as a cable TV programmer but ultimately had a movie studio and a bunch of sports teams and other assets. It's not atypical-CBS started out as a radio company....So I think the natural evolution of a lot of the Internet companies will be to evolve into full-on media companies, and in fact challenge some of today's larger existing media companies. In fact, you can already look at AOL. They're already the largest media company in the world now by market cap[italization], and Yahoo's not too far behind Disney.

Minor is chairman of CNET: the computer network, which is partially owned by NBC. **NHO BLECK**

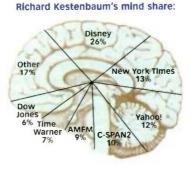


MIND To discover just how concentrated an average person's media diet has become in the age of Big Media, we asked ten people to share their media day with us. So, does an alarming portion of their media diet consist of content produced by different divisions of the same sprawling media giant? Well, not yet, anyway. Somewhat surprisingly, the company with the biggest mind share of any one person was the hardly fearsome Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which commanded 37 percent of one woman's media diet. Meanwhile, mighty Disney didn't even claim a minute of half our subjects' media day. BY LESLIE HEILBRUNN

Richard Kestenbaum

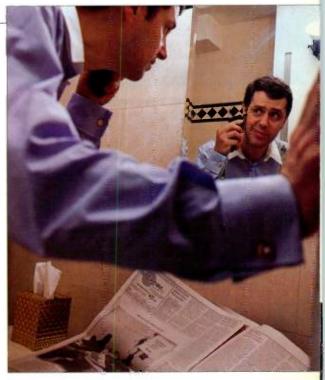
43, New York City, Managing director, Financo, Inc. MEDIA DIET FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6

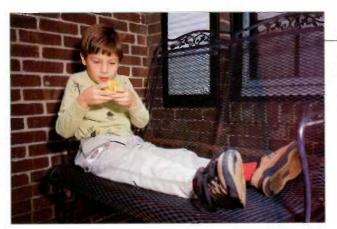
Richard Kestenbaum started his day at 5:45 A.M., with a five-minute read of *The New York Times*. After quickly checking Time Warner's CNN Headline News, he skimmed the entire *Wall Street Journal* during a tenminute shave. "I [once] would not [have] dare[d] show up at work without having read" Dow Jones's *Journal*. "[I]t's not as important anymore. If I miss something, it will appear on my desk, on Yahoo!, or something else at some point during the day." At 7, Kestenbaum took a 20minute run, listening to a mix of AMFM, Inc.'s WLTW-FM and its WTJM-FM, as well as CBS's WCBS-FM, switching stations each time a commercial played.



At work, Kestenbaum checked his My Yahoo! page, which is packed with top stories, news about the apparel industry, which he follows for work, and stock quotes for the companies he tracks. He checks this page five to seven times a day. He also did something atypical: He comparison-shopped online for *The Godfather Collection* video set and a new cell phone.

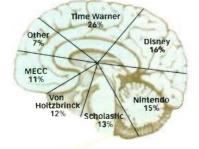
Back at home by 8, Kestenbaum spent 15 minutes reading the rest of the *Times*. At 10 he tuned in to CNN Headline News for 10 minutes and then jumped to C-SPAN2 for 15 minutes. C-SPAN2 "is the greatest thing in the world," he says, because "you can watch the most important people speaking, and no one's interpreting it for you." Kestenbaum ended his media day by spending 40 minutes hopping between Disney's *Nightline* and the New York Mets game on Disney's ESPN.





Seth Tinkle's mind share:

SUZANNE OPTON (KESTENBAUM); ANGELA CAPPETTA (TINKLE)



Seth Tinkle

8, Portland, Maine, Third-grader MEDIA DIET FOR SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2

Saturdays are great for most kids: There's no school, and there are lots of cartoons on TV. Seth Tinkle began his day at 8 A.M., with Disney's *Pepper Ann* and *Doug*. After his fill of TV, Seth listened to Time Warner's Barenaked Ladies' *Rock Spectacle*, and he played Mattel, Inc.'s Mega Munchers on his personal computer.

The middle of the day was spent with books. Seth sat with his older brother and sister as Dad read aloud from Scholastic Inc.'s *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*. Afterward, Seth read Von Holtzbrinck's The Wizard of Oz by himself. At 3, he watched an hour of *Scooby Doo* on Time Warner's Cartoon Network. From 4 until 4:23, he played Mega Man 2 on Nintendo's Game Boy. At a sleepover at his friend's house, Seth had two 20-minute Nintendo sessions.

Although the Tinkles control their children's media consumption, Seth has been exposed to more media than his 13-year-old brother and 11-year-old sister were at his age. "I started out being more in control," says his mother, Amy, "and as each kid has come along it's been a little harder."

The family doesn't pay as much attention to media conglomeration as it does to big business interests in other areas. "We try to support local growers, we go to the farmer's market, so we definitely are biased on the side of small and not the large, multinational [business]," Amy Tinkle says. "But as far as our media consumption, we pick what we want to get out of the media."

(Editor's Note: In most cases, companies with a mind share of less than 5 percent are grouped as "other.")

and the second second

At 34, Patrick Naughton was on the rise to a top spot at Disney. To him, technology was everything.

rictid#)

Patrick Naughton was a prince of new media. Smart, rich, and arrogant, he could have had it all. But an FBI sting operation revealed a secret side to Naughton—one that has put an end to his climb to power. By Katherine Rosman

rs.getString(d World Radio History a mell)

10

Patrick Naughton cowered in the corner of U.S. district criminal courtroom 1439 in downtown Los Angeles. Dressed in a smart black suit, a crisp white shirt, and stylish tortoise-shell glasses, Naughton watched with rapt attention as the arraignment proceedings unfolded before him—an endless parade of handcuffed and chained men and women accused of charges ranging from conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine to bank fraud. Seven reporters, who had come to the Edward R. Roybal Federal Building and Courthouse just to see Naughton, sat scattered around the wood-paneled courtroom. He ignored their glances.

Naughton, 34, had once gloried in media attention, which came after he helped create the Internet as we know it. He spawned the team that invented Java, which was originally seen as an ideal way of adding interactivity to web pages but has since become even more valuable as a popular programming language. The press gave him much of the credit for that development, and Naughton reveled in the spotlight. Two years ago, he penned a story for *Forbes ASAP* called "Mr. Famous Comes Home," in which he wrote, "I'm glad I'm at the top of the food chain." And for a June 1997 feature in *Wired* magazine, he and two colleagues even posed shirtless—the very picture of buff bravado.

By the time of the October 12 hearing, though, Naughton's puffery had been deflated. He was present to enter not-guilty pleas to a three-count federal felony indictment that alleges he knowingly traveled across state lines with the intent of having sex with a minor he had solicited over the Internet and that he "knowingly possessed one laptop computer that contained more than one image of child pornography."

After his arraignment, the former software big shot, who used to brag about hanging out with Disney chairman and CEO Michael Eisner and the rock star Sting, quickly left the courthouse with his harem of lawyers and his brother. Though Naughton sported a wedding band, his wife was conspicuously absent. It was, to be sure, a low moment for Naughton, whose lawyer said Naughton would not comment for this story.

Former colleagues paint a portrait of a brilliant technologist who, with every triumph and upward step, grew increasingly arrogant. He parlayed his coding and programming skills into a succession of leaps toward the upper echelons of the new media world.

Yes, Naughton helped create the Web. Then he got caught in it.

N THE EAST SIDE OF SEATTLE, ONCE YOU'VE crossed over the I-90 bridge and under Mercer Island, you reach Bellevue, Washington, one of the technology meccas of the world. On a small hill sits the five-story building that houses the Seattle annex of Infoseek Corporation, the public company that owns the search engine of the same name.

REX RYSTED1

On March 8, 1999, nestled in a bright window office on

the fifth floor, Infoseek executive vice-president Patrick Naughton pounded away at his computer. This is not unusual behavior for an executive of a technology company. But, according to an FBI agent's affidavit, Naughton was not attending to company business. Rather, he was talking to young girls in an Internet chat room called "#0!!!!!!!dad&daughtersex.log." Naughton sent a private message to a user with a "female screen name."

The person to whom Naughton wrote identified herself as a 13-year-old girl from Los Angeles. Using the screen name hotseattle, Naughton told his correspondent that he was a 33-year-old man from Seattle who frequently traveled to Los Angeles for business.

The affidavit charges that hotseattle propositioned his target this way: "During the conversation, hotseattle said that he was interested in meeting in Los Angeles 'sometime' to 'kiss, make out, and play, and stuff.'" Hotseattle also said that he would "'lick and suck you all over.' He said that he was 'totally' for real and that he was not just engaging in fantasy behavior....Hotseattle said 'I don't do this for fantasy.'"

Two months later, on May 14, 1999, the correspondent with a "female screen name" received another private message from hotseattle while in a chat room.

"Hotseattle asked how old I was, and I told him I was 13, to which he responded 'kewl.' "To show his correspondent what he looked like, Naughton directed her to the website for *Forbes* magazine; he "had been 'in' the magazine," he bragged to the young girl.

In the same conversation, according to the affidavit, "Hotseattle said that there was 'no pressure' to do 'anything' when we met. He said we could 'play it by ear' to determine what we wanted to do. He said that if I liked him he would love to 'kiss' me." In August, the correspondence between Naughton and the 13-year-old girl grew more frequent and detailed. "Hotseattle said that if we met he would do 'anything' from going to the beach to having sex. Hotseattle also asked if I had seen a picture of his 'naked c--k' yet. He provided a World Wide Web address for me to use, and I located a picture of an erect penis," says the affidavit. "Hotseattle also said that he had other pictures on his laptop that he would show me in his hotel room [in Los Angeles]. He said the pictures were of himself and another girl he 'met on here.' Hotseattle said the girl on the photographs was 17."

Then Naughton's pen pal raised a red flag to which the

World Radio History

<image><text>

technologist no doubt wishes he had paid more attention. "I joked with hotseattle that I had told the LAPD, FBI, and CIA about the pictures he had shown me," claims Naughton's correspondent in the affidavit. "I then told hotseattle I was kidding and I pointed out if I did tell those agencies he would be arrested." At which point Naughton responded, "[t]rue."

ONFIDENT, ATHLETIC, and handsome-he can almost pass as a Kennedy-Patrick Joseph Naughton was born to Irish parents in 1965. His parents, who run a steak and seafood restaurant in Rochester, New York, had high expectations for him. In the fourth grade, Naughton wrote in the 1997 Forbes ASAP article, he brought home a report card with straight A's, "but it had an A- in religion or handwriting or something minor." When his dad saw his report card, he wrote a note to young Naughton's teacher: "I think Patrick can do better."

Microsystems, Inc. After about 2 1/2 years as a programmer, he shook up the company. While having a few beers with Sun's chairman and CEO, Scott McNealy, after a hockey practice-the two men played on the same team-Naughton gave McNealy some bad news, according to a 1995 feature in Wired magazine. Naughton informed McNealy of his plan to leave Sun to join NeXT Computer, Inc., the company Steve Jobs founded after he was ousted by Apple Computer, Inc. Naughton told McNealy that he was going there because NeXT was "doing it right" by working on codes to make software accessible not just to engineers but to laypeople with personal computers. McNealy reportedly asked Naughton to detail what he thought Sun should be doing that it wasn't already. "Tell me what you would do if you were God," McNealy told Naughton, according to Wired. (McNealy declined to comment for this article.)

Naughton seized the opportunity. He sent McNealy an e-mail nearly 12 pages long arguing what he believed Sun's focus should be: making easy-to-use programming that would be accessible to everyday consumers. Naughton even suggested that McNealy fire many of the existing technologists, according to *Wired*. After receiving the missive, McNealy permitted the creation of a small engineering team, of which Naughton was a member. That team developed many technologies, one of which eventually became known as Java.

"Patrick was a great engineer who blew his brains out to produce some key code," says a member of the original

Naughton leaped toward the upper echelons of the new media world. Yes, he helped create the Web. Then he got caught in it.

Naked ambition: Naughton posed shirtless for a 1997 Wired story that examined the boys club environment at Starwave. At Clarkson University in Potsdam, New York—a small school known for its ice hockey team and engineering programs—Naughton was seen even by passing acquaintances as a techie who could often be found with his college roommate pecking away at computers and writing codes, says Eric Heitmann, a friend of Naughton's roommate.

Naughton showed himself to be exceptionally bright and supremely driven early on in his college career. Unchallenged by the work assigned to college freshmen in the computer science department, he appeared at the office of David Bray, a professor in the electrical- and computer-engineering department. Naughton told the professor that he was bored with his entry-level computer classes. Bray says he immediately sensed that Naughton had a gift for computer technology, so he paired the teenager with a graduate student. The two worked together on graduate-school-level programming for his ensuing college years. After taking a year off to work as a programmer for a Rochester software company, Naughton graduated in 1988 with a bachelor's degree in math and computer science.

Not surprisingly, Naughton headed to Silicon Valley after graduation, where he landed a job with Sun team. But in respect to the language that became known as Java, Naughton was not instrumental in the actual technological codes, say two members of the original team. His greatest contribution to Java, they say, was his devotion to seeking interest in the concept from companies in the United States and abroad.

Office politics began to spoil his ride at Sun. He fought bitterly with his manager, according to Naughton's two former colleagues. Naughton detailed his frustration over the handling of Java's marketing in *Forbes ASAP*. Sun CEO McNealy "had given most of the operating control of the company over to an executive team," Naughton wrote. "There was sort of this gang of six or seven people who were the leaders of the company who all had different agendas and different visions. Nobody was telling anybody no. That drove me crazy."

So he fled the company, and Silicon Valley, for a job with Starwave Corporation, a Seattle company then owned by Microsoft cofounder Paul Allen.

At the time, Starwave focused primarily on CD-ROM development. Shortly after Naughton's arrival, though, the company dove heavily into producing online content for

what became the ESPN SportsZone, Mr. Showbiz, Outside Online, and Family Planet sites. Naughton's role was to supply the technology to support the online products. At Sun, Naughton had helped launch Java. Now, at Starwave, he had the opportunity to apply it. Using Java, engineers created some of the revolutionary programming that has become a staple of websites across cyberspace, such as collecting live-wire feeds from the news outlets and instantly transmitting them to websites. ESPN's site, for example, was the first place sports junkies could get up-to-the-minute scores and customized statistics.

The jock culture at Starwave suited Naughton, who spent hours at the foosball table, situated next to the recepa 757 crew waiting, according to someone who was present. Naughton's tardiness brought no apparent repercussions.

Such hubris earned Naughton the ire of some colleagues, but not all. "He certainly had his friends," says the former Starwave executive. "He was well liked by engineers. They respected him....Engineers don't usually end up running companies. They do a lot of the work, but it is usually...marketing types who end up running the company, and I think there was a certain amount of pride that 'one of them' had broken through the ceiling that engineers usually have to face," he explains. "'One of them' had broken into the halls of power."

As much as Naughton benefited from his advancement,

"He was well liked by engineers," says a former Starwave executive. "They respected him....I think there was a certain amount of pride that 'one of them' had...broken into the halls of power."

tion desk. Testosterone ran thick at Starwave, according to the 1997 *Wired* feature. Sporting events were frequently held at a nearby park, and male employees had the use of an onsite, full-service locker room. Naughton's athleticism and self-assurance amused his colleagues. "Modesty doesn't seem to be part of Naughton's current playbook," *Wired* reported, saying that Naughton's boss called him "a predator—an epithet pretty close to the ultimate SportsZone compliment."

As Starwave's sites took off, so did Naughton's display of self-importance. "He definitely had a superstar self-image," says a former Starwave executive. In November 1995, for example, Starwave released a CD-ROM featuring Sting, a musician to whom Naughton frequently listened. To promote the product, Starwave planned an online live chat to coincide with the release. "The way those work," explains the former Starwave executive, "is that the talent is talking, and somebody is typing. Normally, you hire someone who types a hundred words a minute. But Patrick insisted he could type as fast as anyone and that he'd be the one to go to Sting's house" in New York City. Naughton returned to work about four days later, says the source, bragging that he had been "partying" with Sting in Manhattan. (On a voicemail message, Sting's representative said, "Sting did not know Patrick Naughton." However, two sources and a November 21, 1995, story in USA Today say Naughton was indeed the typist for Sting's online chat.)

Naughton fancied himself pals not only with rock stars but with his billionaire boss, Paul Allen. Allen would fly various Starwave executives on his Boeing 757 to Portland Trail Blazer basketball games, and Naughton was often included. (Allen owns the NBA team.) On one such junket, employees and Allen sat on the runway for nearly 15 minutes past the scheduled departure time because one executive hadn't arrived. The latecomer was Naughton, and he drove up to the runway and hopped into the plane seemingly oblivious to the slight of having kept his boss, his boss's guests, and so, too, did Starwave, argues Jonathan Payne, an engineer who worked with Naughton at Sun and Starwave. "People like Patrick don't work well unless they're close to running the show," he says. "When smart people can't make decisions, it's extremely frustrating for them."

Smart he is, says Adam Fritz, a close friend of Naughton's who is currently the principal engineer at Infoseek. Fritz describes Naughton as emotionally reserved, brilliant, and a logical thinker who will "take chaotic situations and linearize them." His initial instinct for how to solve a problem—technological or otherwise is "right more often than not," explains Fritz.

Not everyone viewed Naughton as a natural leader, though. In April 1997, Starwave held a companywide meeting to announce that Allen had sold nearly a third of Starwave to The Walt Disney Company in April 1997. The gathering commenced with a video presentation by Paul Allen, followed by a videotaped speech from Michael Eisner. Short speeches were then made by Jake Winebaum, the chairman of Disney's Buena Vista Internet Group, which oversees all of Disney's online ventures, and Tom Phillips, president of Starwave's joint ventures with Disney. Next Naughton took the stage, delivering a talk that was long and rambling, according to someone who was present. To one former Starwave executive, the fact that Naughton had been called to speak at the same meeting in which superstar businessmen Allen and Eisner had spoken underscored Naughton's increased power. His lack of preparation, however, illustrated his immaturity and ineptitude at leading a staff, adds the executive.

Still, Naughton's star continued to rise. He was, after all, the chief technology officer of a company that Disney clearly believed in and had enlisted to oversee the technological applications for such web properties as ABCNEWS.com and ESPN.com. In April 1998, Disney exercised its option to purchase the remaining two thirds of Starwave (except for the 6 percent that was employee owned). Then, on June 18, 1998,

World Radio History

Naughton's reputation for arrogance followed him to Infoseek. He was known to brag around the office about his friendship with Eisner, telling stories of palling around at games of the Mighty Ducks of Anaheim, Disney's National Hockey League franchise. Rebecca Anderson, vice-president for corporate communications for the Buena Vista Internet Group, confirms that Naughton

owned ESPN before doing a stint as president of ABC, Inc. "Patrick was definitely soliciting that job," says Fritz, who adds, "I'm not sure what level of expectation he had."

That Bornstein-who showed savvy with brand development at ESPN-landed the top spot at go.com, Fritz argues, illustrates Disney's plans for its much hyped portal. Infoseek's top engineers, led by Naughton, believe that the success of the company depends on continued technological innovations. Disney brass see the network mainly as a means of promoting the Disney brand. Bornstein's ascendancy reveals who has won that struggle, Fritz says. It was a blow to Naughton's career and his vision for the company. As

Adam Fritz, a close friend of Naughton's, says he has never noticed Naughton's having a particular obsession with pornography."Has he seen Playboy magazine? Sure," Fritz allows. "Is there a fixation? No."

> attended one game as a part of a group that Eisner had invited. It's a perk, she says, that has been extended to countless Disney executives. Still, in discussing Disney's online strategy in his 1998 autobiography, Eisner mentioned Naughton when commenting on the importance of Disney's Starwave purchase: "Most significant of all are the people behind Starwave, led by Mike Slade and Patrick Naughton." The true nature of Eisner's relationship with Naughton-how close they really were-is unclear.

> The perception of Naughton as insolent is a misplaced by-product of his intellect and abilities, reasons Fritz. Naughton is not only brilliant but headstrong, articulate, and unafraid to express his opinion when certain his way is better, he explains. When someone repeatedly tells you that he has a better solution to a problem and clearly and persuasively articulates his views, Fritz says, "well, that can be viewed as arrogant when you're on the receiving end of it [Naughton is] either an arrogant bastard or you're a clueless idiot," and most people, Fritz argues, will opt to believe the former.

> And why wouldn't Naughton be self-assured? By the age of 33, he was the No. 2 executive at a publicly owned company with heavy ties to the Disney empire and by 34 was potentially in line for a top position at Disney's huge Internet venture. And it wasn't just power that Naughton had. The deals with Disney and Infoseek made him a wealthy man. Last year, he earned \$183,617 and owned \$311,802 in stock. Infoseek's 1998 annual report said Naughton also held stock options then potentially worth \$10.7 million.

> Then, in July of this year, Eisner announced Disney's intention to fold Infoseek and the Buena Vista Internet Group together to form go.com, an Internet portal that will bring together all of Disney's Internet holdings and news and entertainment properties. (At press time, the deal had not yet been approved by Disney shareholders.)

> That's when Naughton's climb stalled. Late this summer, Eisner passed him over for the top job at go.com, giving the post to Steve Bornstein, who had been the CEO of Disney

Naughton wrote in Forbes ASAP, he believes that "[t]echnology is all that matters."

ISSING OUT ON A PROMOTION, IT turned out, would be the least of Naughton's problems. According to the FBI affidavit, at about 9 P.M. on September 16, 1999-a week after the announcement of Bornstein's new role as head of go.com-Naughton arrived at the Santa Monica pier, on the coast of Los Angeles. He noticed what appeared to be a girl with a green backpack. He approached her.

Meet me down on the beach, Naughton told the female, whom he thought was his electronic pen pal of several months. Moments later, Naughton was confronted by the person who had actually been his correspondent in the "dad&daughtersex" chat room. It wasn't a 13-year-old, and it wasn't even a woman. Rather, the person from whom Naughton had allegedly solicited sex over the Internet was FBI special agent Bruce Applin, a former commissioned officer with the United States Marine Corps who had specialized in electronic warfare.

There, on the Santa Monica pier, with roller coasters and arcade games in the background and the Pacific in the distance, Naughton was arrested by members of the FBI's Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement Team. He allegedly waived his Miranda rights and turned over his laptop computer to the authorities. "[M]ore than one image of child pornography" was on the computer's hard drive, according to the federal grand jury indictment.

Naughton's attorney, Donald Marks, says that Naughton is "feeling confident and his defense team is feeling confident as well" that Naughton will be exonerated. "He believes he is not guilty of these charges," says Marks, who also defended Hollywood madam Heidi Fleiss, making him the man to turn to when law-enforcement authorities seize your little black (Power)book.

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/IANUARY 2000

Entrapment is a likely defense, says someone familiar with the defense. The source also points out that because there was no 13-year-old girl for Naughton to cross state lines to have sex with, the entire allegation of a crime is "a legal impossibility."

The alleged incident came as a complete surprise to Fritz. When the two were in college together, Fritz says, Naughton showed no interest in little girls and was "relatively monogamous" with his two serious college girlfriends (one of whom became his wife). Moreover, Fritz says he has never noticed Naughton's having a particular obsession with pornography. "Has he seen *Playboy* magazine? Sure," Fritz says. "Is there a fixation? No."

Fritz does understand how anyone, including Naughton, could turn to chat rooms for "escapism." Chat rooms, says Fritz, are "a huge emotional outlet....People can go there and meet other people who are sympathetic in a very detached way. It seems plausible to me that Patrick could get engrossed in that environment."

Naughton had few people with whom he could discuss his work stress, says Fritz, because most of his friends, Fritz included, worked with Naughton or at competing companies, making conflicts of interest an issue. Fritz thinks that chat rooms may have filled the void for Naughton. "Three major mergers in 12 months? Trying to communicate technology-versus-brand to people like Eisner? You can get pretty stressed out," says Fritz.

Naughton is now facing three federal felony charges and up to 35 years in prison—and joblessness. After the people who are renegades have impact, but all people who have impact are renegades, by definition. It's a truism."

Slade refused to speak about Naughton, but his insight into e-culture resonates with Naughton's rise and fall. The very risk-taking, renegade qualities that pushed Naughton to scoff at the status quo at Sun, the qualities that may have led a tech guy into the executive suite, may have also led him to believe that he was invincible when in his element the Internet he had helped create.

"There's a lot of hubris out there and [there are a lot of] people who do something and make their hundred million dollars. [Some] think they're the end-all and be-all of everything. And I think that's perhaps going to come back and bite some people," says DuBose Montgomery, the managing director and general partner of Menlo Ventures, a Silicon Valley venture capital firm. Montgomery, who is a former Infoseek board member, hasn't met Naughton but spoke generally about tech superstars.

"There is that potential in a lot of people, in terms of the human soul," Montgomery continues. "When things are going well, and you think you're responsible for all the good things out there and that you've never made a mistake—that is sometimes more prevalent in people who are pretty young and gung-ho....I'm not trying to rain on anybody's parade here about what they've accomplished, but you have to balance it with some sort of *humility*. There are certain people who aren't balanced with that kind of humility. I bet you in a year or two from now, Pat Naughton will have that kind of humility."

Accompanied by his lawyers as he addressed the judge, Naughton firmly stated that he was "not guilty."

"Children's safety is such a core value to us, and so many people have worked so sincerely to get us in that position," says a Disney executive. "To think that the big bad wolf is someone who's lurking at your back door, well, that's very disheartening."

arrest, Infoseek released a statement saying that Naughton was "no longer an employee of Infoseek." Buena Vista's Anderson emphasizes that Naughton had no editorial responsibility over Disney property. Still, the irony that a man affiliated with Disney—a company whose stock-intrade is children's media and whose future Internet success relies on consumer trust that go.com is a safe place for kids to surf—has been accused of using the Internet to solicit sex with a child is not lost on company insiders. "Children's safety is such a core value to us, and so many people have worked so sincerely to get us in that position," says a Disney executive. "To think that the big bad wolf is lurking at your back door, well, that's very disheartening."

T STANDS TO REASON THAT IN EMERGING cultures like this," says Mike Slade, Starwave's former chairman and CEO and now an Internet consultant, "things happen quickly, they happen unpredictably, and the renegade...tends to have the most impact....Not all



Selective Disclosure

What are companies not telling the average investor? A lot, to judge from a controversial recent story in TheStreet.com. • BY ROBERT SCHMIDT

HE STREET.COM'S Adam Lashinsky knew he wasn't supposed to be eavesdropping on the October 5 conference call between online grocer Webvan Group, Inc. and an assemblage of institutional investors. Neither journalists nor individual investors had been invited to the meeting, which was part of Webvan's final marketing push before an initial public stock offering planned for later in the week. But Lashinsky, who often tries to talk his way into meetings held by the companies he covers, was playing by the rules as far as he and his editors were concerned. After obtaining the phone number for the conference call from a source, he truthfully answered the only questions asked of him-his name and his company-identifying himself as Adam Lashinsky from TheStreet.com. Lashinsky didn't volunteer that he was a reporter. The investment bank employee setting up the call, apparently neither recognizing Lashinsky's name nor that of the online financial publication, let him on the line.

That bit of luck, coupled with aggressive reporting, earned Lashinsky a big scoop on one of the hottest Internet IPOs of the year. As Lashinsky listened, Webvan's top executives offered the big potential investors (mainly mutual-fund and other money managers) information that was not publicly on file with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, a potential violation of securities law. But almost as important—especially to Lashinsky's readers—was the fact



Crashing Wall Street's party: TheStreet.com that Webvan was giving the professional investors a clearer picture of its business plan than any average investor would ever see. "The bottom line," says Lashinsky, "is that the professional investors are getting a much fuller version of the story."

ASHINSKY'S OCTOBER 6 "A column, Special Delivery Direct From Webvan's Roadshow," effectively democratized the IPO process in this instance. Readers of the article learned that, for example, Webvan had announced specific revenue projections, said where it would locate future distribution centers, and talked about exclusive business deals-all information that wasn't available in the company's prospectus. All in all, Lashinsky wrote, Webvan had a great story to tell. "Too bad," he

wrote, "public investors are shielded from hearing the full story until long after the stock is out of the gate."

The article caused a huge stir in the financial and Internet business worlds, and apparently at the SEC as well. The day TheStreet.com published the column, Webvan and the SEC agreed to postpone the company's IPO indefinitely. Days later, Webvan filed revised documents with the SEC explaining the

nonpublic details that had been reported by Lashinsky. Although the company declined to comment and the SEC refused to discuss the Webvan IPO, the timing of the decision suggests that Lashinsky's scoop played a role.

Webvan even discussed Lashinsky's story in its amended filing with the SEC. "The author of the article was not invited to participate in the conference call," the company wrote. "While the factual statements about Webvan in the article are disclosed in this prospectus, the article presented these statements in isolation and did not disclose the related risks and uncertainties described in this prospectus."

Lashinsky's scoop highlights what many critics increasingly see as a problem in the investment world: selective disclosure. Simply put, companies divulge information to big

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

World Radio History

investors that could change the price of their stock but don't make the public aware of the information until later. It happens in IPO roadshows, such as the one Lashinsky reported on, but it also occurs more frequently in the quarterly meetings that companies hold with analysts to discuss earnings. Often the media and individual investors are barred from these gatherings as well.

These meetings are, in a sense, a last vestige of the old Wall Street. In an era of do-it-yourself stock trading, Web-based news services, cable television channels wholly devoted to business reporting, and online brokers that provide research tools, small investors are no longer excluded from the information chain the way they once were. But the IPO roadshows and analyst meetings are an exception. "We're in an age where the individual investor has better access to information than ever before, so you have people behaving like professional traders, whether or not they are," says Lashinsky. "Yet the rules are still skewed against them."

Unfortunately for small-time investors, the meetings regularly move companies' stock prices. Matthew Winkler, editor in chief of Bloomberg News, a financial news service, says that Bloomberg reporters often see a company's stock price fluctuate and, in the process of finding out why, discover that the company held a nonpublic meeting with analysts and money managers.

But readers don't often get to see stories like Lashinsky's Webvan scoop. That's not a good thing, argues Winkler, whose news service has been in the forefront of the movement to open analyst conference calls to the public and the press. Winkler contends that reporters should make a point of finding out what happens in these meetings—because selective disclosure hurts the individual investor and, ultimately, the entire securities industry. "It is something that we should be

doing every day, and there is something wrong with us if we're not," says Winkler. "I don't understand why a lot of the press hasn't focused on this issue the way we have....There is a lot at stake here."

OR LASHINSKY AND HIS editors, the Webvan story also raised tricky ethical issues that often accompany undercover reporting. Webvan obviously did not want Lashinsky to listen in on what it believed was a private meeting. But it was clear that the meeting was newsworthy—Webvan's IPO had garnered

much press attention and was considered the hottest launch of the fall. Dave Kansas, editor in chief of TheStreet.com, says the company has a simple but strict policy: Don't lie. Kansas told Lashinsky that his article should reveal exactly what he had done to get on the conference call. "If you're embarrassed about how you got that information," Kansas reasons, "maybe it's information you shouldn't have gotten."

Both Kansas and Lashinsky contend that it is not up to reporters to state their profession

and reason for wanting to listen in on a call. "My belief is that if someone wants to have a call where they arbitrarily decide they want to keep the public and the press out of it, the burden is on them to enforce those rules," says Kansas. "The journalist's job, I believe, is to be truthful in the zealous pursuit of the information that he or she believes is important to the public or the readership. Anyone who argues that it's the journalist's job to police the phone call is basically saying that all we should have in the newspaper is the press release that the company gave us."

Other news organizations, including *The Wall Street Journal* and Bloomberg News, have similar policies. "We very strongly believe in not misrepresenting yourself," says Richard Tofel, a *Journal* spokesman. "But if you can get in [to meetings or conference calls] and not misrepresent yourself, I would say there is nothing wrong with that."

There is no law or SEC regulation that bars reporters or the public from sitting in on these meetings. It's just a long-standing tradition to exclude the press. But that may be changing, thanks in part to press coverage of the issue and to insistent individual shareholders who are demanding access.

The problem has been noticed by the regulators. In an October 18

speech, SEC chairman Arthur Levitt said the SEC is formulating new rules to "close the gap" between professional investors and the public. "I appeal to companies," Levitt said, "in the spirit of fair play: Make your quarterly conference calls open to everyone, post them on the Internet, invite the press."

More companies are letting journalists and the public do just that. Websites, such as BestCalls.com and Vcall.com, have sprung up to keep investors informed of

these calls, and some companies even broadcast their meetings online. The list of companies willing to open up their calls to the press is growing rapidly, according to a survey by the National Investor Relations Institute, an association of investor relations professionals: From June 1998 to June 1999, the number of companies that allowed the press to listen in on quarterly earnings meetings rose from 14 to 42 percent. Thirteen percent of the member companies broadcast the meetings online.

TheStreet.com vows that it will press on. "We're trying to provide information to individuals that previously was privy only to institutions, and I think that's an important role for the financial press," says editor in chief Kansas. "We're going to continue doing stuff like this."



TheStreet.com columnist Adam Lashinsky

Silver Smoke Screen

Recent media scholarship has dissected everything from movie stars' lighting up to sexual come-ons in ads. Here, we translate the most relevant findings.

Reality Bites Back

s movie stars light up on screen, their biggest fans-theater-sustaining teens-pay close A attention. Nonsmoking ninth-graders who saw a version of the 1994 hit *Reality Bites* with the smoking edited out were less likely to admire smokers and to express an intent to smoke than were those who saw the original, smoky version. Researchers Cornelia Pechmann and Chuan-Fong Shih of the University of California, Irvine, attribute their findings to the "Forbidden Fruit" thesis: that cigarettes' taboo status makes on-screen smoking alluring to teens. By contrast, an ad that deglamorized smoking-by focusing on premature agingdecreased the teens' cravings for cigarettes.

-Journal of Marketing, July 1999, page 1

Monicaholics Anonymous

We're all well acquainted with newscast standbys such as "Sources say..." and "We have learned ... "; this study reminds us just how well. The paper's author, Steven Esposito of Capital University, in Columbus, Ohio, tallied how often CBS, NBC, and ABC evening news broadcasts, along with CNN's WorldView show, relied on anonymous sources during their coverage of the Lewinsky scandal. More than 70 percent of Monica stories included at least one unnamed source, and a whopping 45 percent of all sources cited were anonymous. The study also found that unattributed comments originating from the Clinton administration outnumbered those from Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's office 5 to 1.

> -Communications and the Law, September 1999, page 1

Popularity Contest

We might not realize it, but Sam Donaldson and his colleagues do help us decide which candidate to back, according to this study of the 1992 and 1996 presidential campaigns. For both elections, coders assigned TV and newspaper stories about campaign events a rating between o and 100 based on their favorability to a candidate. The study's author, Daron Shaw of

the University of Texas at Austin, compared this coverage with poll results-and found strong evidence that television and, to a lesser extent, newspapers influence candidate popularity. For the GOP candidate, favorable coverage of Republican events boosted his poll numbers, while positive press for Democratic events reduced his popularity. On average, Shaw found that a 5-point increase in TV coverage favorability (on the 100-point scale) produced a 2.5 percent jump in a candidate's polls.

> —Political Communication, April-June 1999, page 183

In 2043, They'll All Be Naked

🔍 ex has always sold, of course, but never Dthis much: Professor Tom Reichert of the University of North Texas and colleagues reported that 17 percent of magazine ads containing at least one man and one woman in 1993 depicted or implied intercourse, up from 1 percent ten years earlier. Cheesecake and beefcake were up, too: 40 percent of female models were classified by researchers as "provocatively" dressed, up from 28 percent in 1983. Some 18 percent of the men were in various states of undress, up from 11 percent.

-Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, spring 1999, page 7

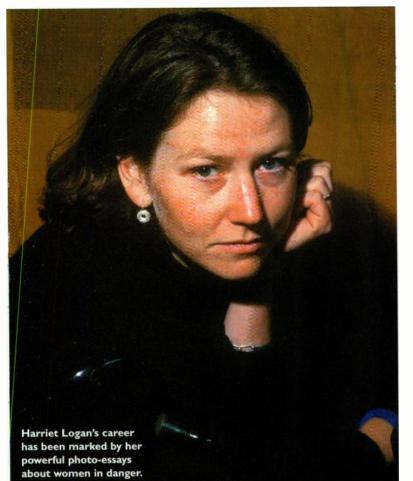


Hard And Soft Copy

The tabloidization of TV news hasn't yet erased the differences between 60 Minutes and Hard Copy. Celebrities are almost eight times more likely to appear as sources on Hard Copy than on its more sober counterpart, according to this study by Indiana University professor Maria Elizabeth Grabe and colleagues. Don Hewitt and his venerable newsmagazine use more sources, air each source longeran average of 52 seconds, more than three times as long as Hard Copy-and devote much more time to on-camera interviews. Then again, 60 Minutes correspondents hogged the camera almost 15 times longer than Hard Copy reporters and were 46 times more likely to interrupt their interview subjects.

> -Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly, summer 1999, page 293





LIFTING THEIR VEILS BY KIMBERLY CONNIFF

British photographer Harriet Logan's heart-stopping images of oppressed women can't be captured from the sidelines. When her subjects' lives are at risk, sometimes hers is, too. T IS THE DEAD OF WINTER IN AFGHANISTAN, and four women ride in a taxi through the outskirts of Kabul. Each is swathed in a long cloth robe, called a burqa, so that not even a flash of ankle is visible, and their faces are hidden behind netted veils. As they approach a checkpoint guarded by members of the country's Taliban regime, one of the women reaches under a pale blue robe to clutch her neighbor's hand, whispering desperately "Don't say anything...please don't say anything." The

ately, "Don't say anything...please don't say anything." The men stop the car, question the trembling women harshly, and eventually wave them on.

By sheer chance, the woman in the pale blue burqa was not addressed. Had she spoken, Harriet Logan could have brought public beatings, or even worse, on the women leading her through this harsh landscape. They are risking their lives so Logan can take pictures of women from their community, who must pass their days in cloistered silence under Taliban rule.

When the Taliban regime wrested control of Afghanistan from the ruling mujahedeen in 1996, women could no longer work or go to school and were forbidden to leave their homes without a male relative. In January 1998, Logan, a British photojournalist, traveled to Afghanistan with writer Stephen Grey to document the rulers' oppression. But the pictures (which ran in London's *Sunday Times Magazine* that February, were republished in nine countries, and can be seen on the Web at www.msnbc.com/modules/ironveil/ironveil_front.asp) also captured the women's defiance: a woman painting on forbidden lipstick under a veil, for example, or a daughter crouching over books in a secret home school. The taking of pictures was itself a statement, since photographing any living thing, much less women flouting Taliban rule, has been outlawed.

This was no doubt one of Harriet Logan's more perilous assignments. But in a career marked by powerful photo-essays that document oppression, this kind of story is more the rule than the exception in her portfolio. Whether she's photographing child rape victims in Pakistan or Soviet women who have turned to prostitution as their only means of income, Logan uses her camera to inform people about injustices—especially those against women.

Logan, 32, fell into her profession while attending the

[CREDENTIALS]

DRAWING ON THE NEWS

Editorial cartoonists on how they've come to picture the world and themselves. • BY AMY DITULLIO

CHIP BOK

Editorial cartoonist, Akron Beacon Journal, 1986–

B.A., English, University of Dayton, 1974

Freelance cartoonist, *The Kettering-Oakwood Times* (Ohio), 1975–81; editorial cartoonist, *Clearwater Sun* (Florida), 1981–82; graphic animator, Viewtron (a defunct online service owned by Knight Ridder), 1983–86; syndicated

cartoonist, Creators Syndicate, 1990–present; contributing cartoonist, *Reason* magazine, 1993–present

What's a favorite cartooning topic?

"Two words: Bill, Monica. You'd think us art types would be more creative."



ETTA HULME

Editorial cartoonist, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, 1972–

B.F.A., University of Texas-Austin, 1944

Assistant, animation department, Walt Disney Productions, 1944–47; teacher, Littlehouse School of Art (San Antonio, Texas), 1948; illustrator, *Red Rabbit* comic book, 1951; freelance editorial cartoonist, *The Texas Observer*, 1955; syndicated cartoonist,

Newspaper Enterprise Association, 1978-present; author, *Ettatorials: The Best Of Etta Hulme* (Pelican Publishing Company, 1998)

Favorite topic:

"Particular topics come and go. Right now, campaign finance is a favorite subject, but the public doesn't seem to be much concerned about it."

PAUL CONRAD

Editorial cartoonist, Los Angeles Times Syndicate, 1967–

B.A., art, University of Iowa, 1950

Editorial cartoonist, *The Daily Iowan* (University of Iowa student newspaper), 1948–50; editorial cartoonist, *The Denver Post*, 1950–64; editorial cartoonist, *Los Angeles Times*, 1964–93; author, *Pro and Conrad* (Netf-Kane, 1979), *CONartist: Paul Conrad, 30 Years With The Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles Times, 1993), and *Drawing the Line: The Collected Works of America's Premier Political Cartoonist* (Los Angeles Times, 1999)



Favorite topic:

"The Nixon affair; you got the entire government involved....It was a marvelous time for cartoons....It was fabulous."



MIKE LUCKOVICH

Editorial cartoonist, The Atlanta Constitution, 1989–

B.A., political science, University of Washington (Seattle), 1982

Editorial cartoonist, *The Greenville News* (South Carolina), 1984–85; editorial cartoonist, *The Times-Picayune* (New Orleans), 1985–89; contributing cartoonist, *Time*, 1997–present; syndicated cartoonist, Creators Syndicate, 1987–present; author, *Lotsa Luckovich* (Pocket Books, 1996)

Favorite topic:

"The {National Rifle Association} and the tobacco industry....I love hitting both because they are, in fact, evil....I'm an optimist. I believe that situations can change and—if you can show people what a group or an organization is really all about—that you can change people's minds."

All illustrations are self-portraits provided to Brill's Content by the artists.

World Radio History

JEFF MACNELLY

Editorial cartoonist, Chicago Tribune, 1982–

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1965-69 (did not graduate)

Cartoonist, *The Daily Tar Heel* (University of North Carolina student newspaper), 1965–69; editorial cartoonist, *Chapel Hill Weekly*, 1968–70; editorial cartoonist, *Richmond News Leader* (Virginia), 1970–81; creator of the syndicated comic strip *Shoe*, 1977; syndicated cartoonist, Tribune Media Services, 1977–present

Favorite topic:

"I really enjoy the presidential politics....That's when it's really fun to be a cartoonist—that's when everyone is paying attention."



Marielle Marielle

DOUG MARLETTE

Editorial cartoonist, Newsday (Melville, New York), 1989–

B.S., philosophy, Florida State University (Tallahassee; degree conferred in 1998); fellow, Nieman Foundation for Journalism, Harvard University, 1980–81

Editorial cartoonist, *Florida Flambeau* (Florida State University student newspaper), 1969–71; editorial

cartoonist, *The Charlotte Observer*, 1971–87; creator of the syndicated comic strip *Kudzu*, 1981; editorial cartoonist, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 1987–89; syndicated cartoonist, Los Angeles Times Syndicate, 1999–present; author of 18 books, including *Faux Bubba: Bill and Hillary Go to Washington* (Times Books, 1993)

Favorite topic:

"The Clinton scandals and Watergate...[any time that] it's bad for the country, it's good for business."

MIKE SMITH

Editorial cartoonist, Las Vegas Sun, 1983-

B.A., humanities, Loyola Marymount University (Los Angeles), 1982

Cartoonist, *Los Angeles Loyolan* (Loyola Marymount University student newspaper), 1980–82; contributing cartoonist, *USA Today*, 1994–present; syndicated cartoonist, United Feature Syndicate, 1997–present

Favorite topic:

"[The] Clinton administration.... [I'd] vote for him again—just for good business."





MIKE PETERS

Editorial cartoonist, Dayton Daily News, 1969–

B.F.A., Washington University in St. Louis, 1965

Editorial cartoonist, *Chicago Daily News*, 1965–66, 1968–69; creator of the syndicated comic strip *Mother Goose & Grimm*, 1984; syndicated cartoonist, Tribune Media Services, 1993–present; author, *The World of Cartooning With Mike Peters: How Caricatures Develop* (Landfall Press, 1985), *Happy Days Are Here Again* (Topper Books, 1992), and 15 *Mother Goose & Grimm* books

Favorite topic:

"[President] Clinton and Monica; [it was] the most fun I've had. [And] George W. [Bush]....l find him just fascinating.... I'm going to have a ball in the next four years [if he's elected]."

DAN WASSERMAN

Editorial cartoonist, The Boston Globe, 1985–

B.A., philosophy, Swarthmore College (Pennsylvania), 1971; student, Art Students League of New York (New York City), 1975–78; student, Maryland Institute, College of Art (Baltimore), 1980

Contributing cartoonist, *The Washington Star*, 1980–81;

syndicated cartoonist, Los Angeles Times Syndicate, 1981-present; author, "We've Been Framed!" (Faber & Faber, 1987) and Paper Cuts, The American Political Scene from Bush to Newt (Ivan R. Dee, 1995)

Favorite topic: "Economic justice issues."



BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

into peasant cooperatives.

Pendergrast concludes his sweeping history on an up note. After largely dismissing reports of coffee's bad health effects, he offers what most readers have probably been craving all along: instructions on how to brew the perfect pot. —Jane Manners immediately after the starlet's body was wheeled out of her house in 1962. These two pictures represent much of what fame, through photography, is today: often posed and neat, orchestrated by a studio, a manager, or a publicist—but just as often candid, humiliating, and heartbreaking. —Dimitra Kessenides misdeeds. I nese ractors contributed to the zeal with which federal prosecutors went after Kerner, the authors argue.

Ultimately, *Kerner* is both a convincing defense of a maligned public figure and an illuminating tale of the messy, often haphazard workings of U.S. politics. —Jane Manners

[UNHYPED BOOKS]



Whether you're a first-time skier or a master snowboarder, with our winter sports guide, it's all downhill from here. • BY BRIDGET SAMBURG

Anyone

can be an

REAKTHROUG

IOW TO GET OUT O

Snowboarding



ANYONE CAN BE AN EXPERT SKIER

(Harb Ski Systems Inc., \$19.95) World Cup racer and coach Harald Harb has set forth step-by-step directions for how to progress from beginner and intermediate skiing into the expert realm. "It's the best, cleanest, simplest approach to ski instruction," says Rick Kahl, editor in chief of Skiing magazine. Every move is accompanied by a series of photographs that help readers visualize Harb's suggestions.

BREAKTHROUGH ON SKIS: HOW TO GET OUT OF THE INTERMEDIATE RUT

(Vintage Books, \$13) Also designed to challenge the intermediate skier to reach the next level, Breakthrough On Skis provides confidence-building measures, technical instruction, and tips for successful powder and mogul skiing. Instructor Lito Tejada-Flores's book offers lengthy explanations of the mechanics of skiing and is a must-read for anyone hoping to tackle the double diamonds.

SKIING FOR DUMMIES

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

(IDG Books Worldwide, Inc., \$19.99) 128 Skiing magazine's Kahl calls this the "best thing that's been written for beginners." Its comprehensive instructional offerings range from basic moves like turns and picking up after a fall to improving posture and learning to ski safely.

SNOWBOARDER'S START-UP: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO SNOWBOARDING

(Start-Up Sports/Tracks Publishing, \$9.95) This book has good basic information for starting out, according to John Stouffer, editorial director of Snowboard Life magazine. The simple explanations on how to ride and maneuver a board with ease are accompanied by photographs and diagrams illustrating the instructions: a plus for first-timers.

SNOWBOARDING: A RAGGED MOUNTAIN PRESS WOMAN'S GUIDE

(Ragged Mountain Press, \$14.95) World Cup competitor and coach Julia Carlson shares her wisdom on everything from how to climb a hill while strapped to a board to how to 😤 dismount from a chairlift. This volume is full of practical advice for getting started on the slopes and for selecting the proper board.



in the magazines:

FREEZE

(Times Mirror Magazines, \$3.99 per issue; \$10.95 annually for five issues) *Freeze* is "targeted to the neophyte," says Stephen Over, executive director of Professional Ski Instructors of America. The magazine, designed primarily for a younger audience, has articles ranging from equipment buying guides to in-depth profiles of skiers.

SKI

(Times Mirror Magazines, \$3.99 per issue; \$13.94 annually for eight issues) An indispensable resource for more experienced skiers, this publication provides coverage of the best resorts in the U.S., from Stowe, Vermont, to Montana's Big Mountain. There are also stories about the toughest trails, such as the recent profile of the steep Cahilty Glades, part of British Columbia's Sun Peaks, and reams of information about the latest in equipment technology.

SKIING

(Times Mirror Magazines, \$4.99 per issue; \$13.94 annually for seven issues) Gear and clothing reviews and travel suggestions make this an all-purpose read for skiers of every level. There are features on such topics as where to find the best lift ticket prices and how to choose the proper poles. Spectacular photos grace the first few pages of each issue.

SNOWBOARD LIFE

(TransWorld Media, \$3.99 per issue; \$12.99 annually for six issues) Lively profiles of professional snowboarders combined with inspiring pictures make *Snowboard Life* a fun read. The magazine also serves up pointers on how to get in shape for the winter boarding season. A regular "Travelogic" section provides readers with recommendations on snowboarding locations worldwide. Slopes in Argentina, Chile, and Australia were reviewed in the October 1999 issue.

TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

(TransWorld Media, \$3.99 per issue; \$18.95 annually for eight issues) Here the avid young snowboarder will find lively stories about adventurous mountaingoers, such as the recent feature chronicling the experiences of a group that traveled Idaho's snowy trails. Step-bystep instructions for the hottest new moves, such as the Backside corkscrew 540 jump, abound.





on the web:

RSN.COM

Freeskier Magazine publisher and editor in chief Bradford Fayfield recommends the Resort Sports Network for items like worldwide weather updates and resort profiles. The site's online travel reservation feature and snow-condition reports make planning your next ski vacation a breeze. RSN's links to other snow-related activities and its "Resort Cam" feature (an hourly section of photos snapped at various locations) stand out.

SKICENTRAL.COM

A plethora of information about snowboarding and skiing can be found here. SkiCentral offers links to more than 100 other sites, so browsers can do everything



from planning a trip to checking out some upcoming competitions.

SKINET.COM

Ski, Skiing, and *Freeze* magazines have combined their resources to create this comprehensive site, which includes guides to mountains and gear. Instructional pages suggest how to tackle icy slopes and poor lighting. It's a good site to visit before buying your lift ticket.

SNOWBOARDING-ONLINE.COM

This companion site to the TransWorld snowboarding magazines features chat rooms and regularly updated snow reports. An extensive section for beginning snowboarders includes a glossary of terms, advice for selecting a board, and a cost guide to taking up the sport.

SNOWLINK.COM

This user-friendly site has sections geared to children and women. The "Learning a New Snow Sport" page advises beginners on overcoming fears. Standouts are the sections on snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

[SOURCES]



ANYONE CAN BE AN EXPERT SKIER

(Harb Ski Systems Inc., \$24.95)

The video companion to Harb's book is a convenient way to pick up a few skiing pointers. The emphasis is on proper form and posture. Harb is sure to help anyone master the powder.

WARREN MILLER'S LEARN TO SKI BETTER 2: TIPS AND INSPIRATION

(Warren Miller Entertainment, \$19.95)

Extreme sportsman and photographer Warren Miller turns ski instruction into a thrilling and simple exercise. In this video, he combines the art of extreme sports photography with basic ski instruction. The video has a lot of "good primary information," says PSIA's Over. "It doesn't talk over the consumer." And it's entertaining. ✓ Assess run and make plan
 ✓ Move Toward The Eall line
 ✓ Reads down hill with pole
 ✓ Use all Eaur edges
 ✓ MainTain a rhythm



Instructional videos by Harald Harb (left) and Warren Miller (above) help every level of skier tackle the slopes.

Forget the Dow, here are two funds for the new economy

The new millennium is dawning, and with it, a new economy. You don't have to sit on the sidelines: Investec Guinness Flight offers two ways to participate in the exciting opportunities of this new era.

GUINNESS FLIGHT WIRED INDEX FUND seeks to track the performance of *Wired* magazine's Wired Index." The index is made up of 40 cutting-edge companies – more than just tech stocks – poised to be the blue chips of the 21^a century.

GUINNESS FLIGHT INTERNET.COM[®] INDEX FUND seeks to track the performance of the Internet Stock Index, known as ISDEX.[®] Created in April of 1996, the 50-stock ISDEX[®] is both the oldest and the most widely followed Internet index in the marketplace.

Contact us for our free research papers and a free prospectus. INVESTEG **1-800-915-6565 ext. 500 WWW.gffunds.com** GUINNESS FLIGHT

Ask for a prospectus, which you should read carefully before investing. It outlines fees and expenses as well as the risks of investing in technology and telecommunications companies and smaller companies. The indexes and the funds' portfolios include foreign companies, which involve political, economic and volatility risks. First Fund Distributors, Inc., Phoenix, AZ. Actual performance of the funds will differ from that of the Indexes, as the funds bear advisory fees and other operating expenses, commissions and taxes. Wired is a registered trademark of Advance Magazine Publishers Inc. Advance Magazine Publishers makes no warranty, including no express or implied warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, to any person or entity that makes use of the Wired Index[™] as to the results obtained or any data included therein. internet.com is a trademark, "ISDEX" is a registered trademark, and ISDEX and internet.com are service marks of internet.com Torporation (Nasdaq: INTM), and are used solely with the express permission of internet.com. Internet.com makes no warranty, express or implied, including warranties of merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose or otherwise, to any person or entity as to the results to be obtained from, the performance of or any data included in, or any other matters concerning the ISDEX Index or the trademarks or service marks described above. Under the license agreement, internet.com is partially compensated for its license to Investec Guinness Flight and the fund of the service marks and trademarks described above based on the total assets invested in the fund.

[LETTERS]

(continued from page 18)

WHAT A SHAME

I just finished reading Jarret Liotta's assessment of the effects of media on our children ["Brave New Curriculum," Reader Intelligence, October]. It's a shame that more people don't have the same common sense.

TOM CHERNASKY Plantation, FL

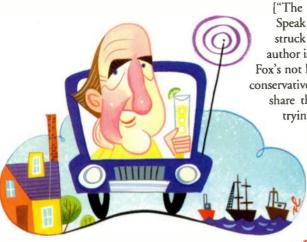
ON AUTOPILOT

*Every working journalist in the world should be sent a copy of Mike Pride's article "On Second Thought," from your October issue. All too often the media, both print and electronic, assume the automatic pilot role when it comes to decisions about what makes and what doesn't make a good story.

ALAN GRIGGS Nashville, TN

IRRESPONSIBLE

*I was reading, with a feeling of approval and satisfaction, Mike Pride's



article in your October issue regarding the lack of sensitivity of the [*Concord Monitor*] to a boy who had been raped until I reached the end of the article, where I encountered the following sentence: "Generally, it is dangerous for newspapers to worry too much about the effects the stories they publish might have." Is this the hitherto unpublished credo of "responsible" journalism?

> MUNIR J. KATUL Eugene, OR

NO TRIVIA BARRAGE

Vigilant and valuable Calvin Trillin should feel greatly flattered. Apparently the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation went to the trouble of arranging special private programming for him during summer visits to Nova Scotia ["No More Escaping The News," The Wry Side, October]. The "Wry Sider" reports that CBC titillated him with barrages of human trivia and fauna facts, such as hummingbird weights, while steering amiably clear of hard news.

That certainly doesn't gibe with the CBC I listen to several times daily. The CBC consistently offers the best international coverage and the most objective, intelligent take on U.S. as well as Canadian hard news.

> Roy Meador Ann Arbor, MI

AGAINST THE GRAIN

*After reading Rifka Rosenwein's article about Fox News Channel ["The News That Dare Not Speak Its Name," October], it struck me that although the author is obviously exercised over Fox's not having admitted to being conservative, Brill's Content and Fox share the same strengths: really trying to be honest and thorough in their reporting even when it goes against the grain. ROBERT E. BURNSIDE Portales, NM

CUT THE LABELS

*It is no surprise that Rifka Rosenwein is jealous of Fox News Channel, for Fox has achieved the balance and independence that *Brill's Content* only wishes it had. However, that is no excuse for the misrepresentations found throughout her analysis. She calls Bill O'Reilly "conservative" even though he has supported such anticonservative measures as campaignfinance [reform]. Matt Drudge, who exposed Newt Gingrich's [extramarital]



affair as eagerly as he did Bill Clinton's, nevertheless gets the same label.

DAVID ZINKIN Rochester, NY

NEWS TO AMUSE?

*Our cable company doesn't give us Comedy Central, so when we need some laughs, we tune in to the Fox News Channel, especially the last 15 minutes of *Special Report with Brit Hume*. Hume and his merry band are hilarious.

> LILA LEE BRYANT Festus, MO

AVOID CONFLICTS

I found Bill Kovach's "Report from The Ombudsman" in your October issue very interesting, but one thing jumped off the page at me: Kovach's use of his son as a source to make a "review of the current scientific literature" regarding the degree to which the sugar industry pollutes Florida Bay.

Journalists should avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest, let alone the actuality of one. Kovach should have found a different source or done the research himself.

> JERRY LAMARTINA Kansas City, MO

Bill Kovach responds: If Mr. LaMartina believes that there is a conflict, then I have to accept that. I probably should have used one of the magazine's researchers to do the literature search. My goal was to use a source whose values, standards, and background I knew to be ideal for what was needed.

MISLEADING STAT

*I don't understand the significance of the [October] "Ticker" item showing that in [the] 1992-93 [TV

[LETTERS]

season], 17 percent of the TV characters [on entertainment series] were black and in [the] 1998-99 [TV season] 10 percent were. Since blacks are 12.8 percent of the population, it appears they were overrepresented one year and underrepresented six years later. What does this tell me? Was this a steady decline? Was 1992-93 an aberration? Was 1998-99 an aberration? These two statistics alone are misleading and tell me nothing.

> MARK WARDA Clearwater, FL

WORRISOME

*In your review of The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind The New York Times ("All In The Family," October), you discuss how the Ochs-Sulzberger family has not squabbled or "imploded" in a way that compromises the character of The New York Times. While we may all be grateful beneficiaries of this family's values and sense of mission, the praise and focus on family miss a larger issue: If high-quality news reporting is central to the proper functioning of a democracy, isn't it worrisome how much we rely on the vicissitudes of family ownership to preserve the character of great newspapers? Shouldn't we be concerned about how to arrange for the profession's values and these great institutions to be preserved and cultivated without relying on the fortuitous ownership of enlightened families?

> David F. Ransohoff Chapel Hill, NC

SMALL PROBLEM

David Johnson's provocative October essay ["Value Added," Next] fails to address one slight problem with the "brave new world" he seems to advocate: How does anyone make a living?

> BILL SMITH Grays Harbor, WA

NO SELLOUTS

*Thanks for your story about those wacky Magliozzi brothers and their refreshingly stubborn refusal to sell out to commercial TV ["The *Car Talk* Guys Just Want To Have Fun," October].

But for the record, the *Car Talk* guys did once condescend to appear on the small screen, although it was, truth be told, public television. They were featured in my 1993 *Frontline* documentary on General Motors, *The Heartbeat of America*.

> Stephen Talbot San Francisco, CA



CRITICAL COLLEAGUES

I realize that Brill's Content is an American publication and therefore must focus on the American angle, but I would like to mention for your readers that The Cambodia Daily is very much a multinational effort ["Reporting After The Killing Fields," October]. We have had nationals from France, Canada, England, Japan, Ireland, and Scotland working at the paper as reporters, business managers, and senior editors over the past six years. Most important, however, are our Cambodian colleagues. The newspaper's mission has always been to train Cambodian journalists in the ways of Western journalism. Many sources do speak English here, but our Cambodian colleagues are invaluable, and I want to emphasize that the Daily would

not have the impact that it does without them.

DEBRA BOYCE Associate Editor The Cambodia Daily Phnom Penh, Cambodia

GET SERIOUS

*Evan Gahr's analysis of "truth in labeling" in news sources ["Using *Conservative* Liberally," October] was laughably off base. The point of labeling newsmakers is to give readers information they need to judge where they're coming from. Does Gahr seriously believe that there's anyone out

> there who doesn't know where Ralph Nader or the National Organization for Women falls on the political spectrum? Their views have been in the public domain for years, and conservatives have been pummeling them as the purveyors of liberal excess for just as

long. Gahr's story is an example of the kind of journalism that can be fac-

tually correct but wildly misleading. MIKE HUDSON

Roanoke, VA

ANY BETTER?

Evan Gahr complains that the media identify Ralph Nader as a "consumer advocate" but label the Washington Legal Foundation conservative. I would suggest that the rightwing equivalent of a "consumer" organization is a "pro-business" one, but I don't think Mr. Gahr or the Washington Legal Foundation would find that description any better. I think that *Brill's Content* would do well to continue focusing on the less obviously ideological ways that media distort the news.

> WILLIAM A. BAKER Santa Barbara, CA

BRILL'S CONTENT (ISSN 1099-5234) (GST 866176886) is published reanthly except combined issues in December/January and July/August by Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10175. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY, and additional mailing offices. Subscriptions are \$15.95 for one year in the U.S., \$20.95 in Canada, and \$25.95 in all other countries. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to BRILL'S CONTENT, PO Box 37523, Boone, IA 50037-0523. Vol. 2, No. 10, December 1999/January 2000. Copyright ©1999 Brill Media Ventures, L.P. The Copyright Act of 1976 prohibits the reproduction by photocopy machine or any other means of any portion of this issue except with the permission of the publisher. For subscription information, please call 1-800-829-9154.

TO THE EXTREME

*Can it really be that people are starting to suspect America's major news organizations of having political bias? I have another example of unbalanced labeling by the media that is even more revealing than Mr. Gahr's. As everyone knows, right-wing "extremists" are behind every tree and under every rock. So where are the left-wing extremists? I doubt that anyone under the age of 40 has even heard of the term.

> WAYNE BATTEIGER Tucson, AZ

BELUSHI'S BLAST

*What a joy to read the article "How Woodward Goes Wayward" in your September issue.

I have known since 1984 that Bob Woodward is not a reporter; he's not even a very good nonfiction writerhe is a glorified gossip columnist. His sensationalism perpetuates the same "big lie" that manipulates the American public into believing what he is exposing. Deep Throat could have been a high-standing White House executive or just two giddy teenage girls (as proposed in the film Dick), but my personal experience leads me to think that Deep Throat was purely an unethical, grandiose concoction to shill us into buying into a story with the illusionary auspices of "journalist truth and honor." It seems to me that Deep Throat is most probably where the author enters the text, for the narrative goal of transforming himself into who he always wanted people to see him as, Robert Redford. I could go on about the inconsistencies and the out-ofcontext juxtapositioning and the incidences of his choice of "dramatic narrative" about those closest in my life, the end result being one of the most slanderous pieces of journalism I've ever read: *Wired*.

The last time my family met with Woodward was to discuss possible titles for his book about my brother John. We were quite satisfied with Don Novello's title, *A Casualty Along The Way.* Bob said he like *Wired.* I said, "Bob, that means 'drugged up.' You said this book wasn't about drugs." He replied (this *is* an exact quotation), "No, no—'wired' means 'wired' for success. Like in politics, if you were a senator's son, you would be

www.siliconvalley.com

How do you live up to a name like that, anyway?

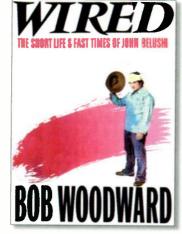
Start with tech news from the San Jose Mercury News, the Pulitzer Prize-winning newspaper of Silicon Valley. Add powerful research tools, including a news archive and a database of Silicon Valley's top 150 companies. And top it off with personality and perspective from high-tech columnists who get it, because Silicon Valley is not just their beat. It's their home.

Whether you're building a career, a company or a portfolio, SiliconValley.com is your connection to the heart of hightech. Bookmark it today.



[LETTERS]

wired to succeed. And your brother was wired for success." That was the last day I saw Bob Woodward... until late one night. He was appearing on *Nightwatch* with Charlie Rose on CBS, where, of course, Charlie's first question was "Why did you call [the book] *Wired*?" Bob replied, without the least hesitation, "It means 'drugged up.'"



I may be handing Mr. Woodward more power than he deserves, for, after deeper and less emotionally involved scrutiny, it seems to me that he may know no other way, not only to write, but to live.

Bob and I were walking down Sixth Avenue in Greenwich Village during one of the interviews for the book when I was subjected to his "investigative journalism." "Mr. Drama" appealed to me in a sleazy, eighth-grade mock male confessional and whispered, "Let's trade secrets."

I said, "What?" He said, "I'll tell you a secret, then you tell me one."

I said, "Well, uhhhhh... okay, I guess?"

He stopped walking, turned 45 degrees, put his hands in his pockets, and, with his head down in a kind of forced moment of vulnerability, said, "I slept with [identity deleted to protect the individual's privacy]."

I said, "You slept with [identity deleted]?" "Yes, I'm ashamed of it."

1. Title of publication: Brill's Content. 2. Publication No.: 0017-371. 3. Date of filing: September 30, 1999. 4. Frequency of issue: Monthly except for combined issues in December/January and July/August. 5. Number of issues published annually: 10. 6. Annual subscription price: \$15.95. 7. Complete mailing address of known office of publication: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 8. Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business office of the publisher: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 8. Complete mailing address of the headquarters or general business office of the publisher: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. Editor: And managing editor: Publisher: Adrienne Cleere, 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. Editor: Steven Brill, 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. I. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 10. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 10. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 10. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 10. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 10. Owner: Brill Media Ventures, L.P., 521 Fifth Avenue, 11th Floor, New York, NY 10175. 11. Known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: none. 12. NA

	Average No of Copies Each Issue During Proceeding 12 Months	Actual No. of Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
15. Extent and nature of circulation		
a. Total no. of copies (net press run)	303,153	323,558
b. Paid and/or requested circulation		2 2
1. Paid/Requested outside county subscript	ion 165,412	223,277
2. Paid in-county subscriptions	0	0
3. Sales through dealers, and carriers, street		
vendors, counter sales, and other non-U	SPS	
paid distribution	23,789	18,365
Other classes mailed through the USPS	0	0
c. Total paid and/or requested circulation	189,201	241,642
d. Free distribution by mail (samples,		
complimentary, and other free copies)	708	1,304
e. Free distribution outside the mail (carriers,		
or other means)	1,750	1,310
f. Total free distribution (sum of 15d and 15e)	2,458	2,614
g. Total distribution (sum of 15c and 15f)	191,659	244,256
h. Copies not distributed	111,494	79,302
i. Total sum (sum of 15g and 15h)	303, 153	323,558
j. Percent paid and/or requested circulation		
(15c divided by 15g times 100)	98.71%	98.92%
16. Publication of statement of ownership: Dec.		
17. I certify that all information furnished on th	is form is true and complete	

I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete.

134

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

Steven Brill Chairman and Editor in Chief

"Wait...you slept with [identity deleted]?"

Unfortunately, I did not have a secret that deep to complete the moment. But it turned out that he didn't, either.

Woodward spins a lot of yarns and gets most of them published. I appreciate not being alone with that knowledge. I'm glad you could turn the screw on him.

> JAMES BELUSHI Los Angeles, CA

Editor's note: Because of the nature of James Belushi's letter, we contacted Bob Woodward for a response, which follows.

Bob Woodward responds: I am truly sorry that Jimmy Belushi lost his brother John 17 years ago. John's drug-overdose death and all of its grim warnings are documented in my book Wired and in police and other investigations. It is absolutely false to say or suggest that I confided personal details to Jimmy Belushi as part of an alleged scam of confiding secrets. He is perhaps confusing a discussion we had about Wheaton. Illinois-hometown for John, Jimmy, and myself. Jimmy and I agreed it was a town that buried many of its secrets. For an accurate description of this environment, see David Halberstam's book The Powers That Be. Halberstam correctly shows how I discovered some of these Wheaton secrets when I was in high school working as a janitor in my father's law office. Those secrets may have included who in town may have had affairs. Before publication of my book on John Belushi, I attempted to explain to Jimmy that Wired has multiple meanings, a notion that then and still escapes him. Perhaps his anger is understandable. I understand his distress over the selfportraits of many in his brother's circle who were drug enablers or people who didn't have the strength to halt John's course of selfdestruction. It would have taken an uncommon amount of courage for John's friends and family to have saved him. John was not simply an accident "along the way." This suggested title perfectly reflects the view that it is as if John had accidentally stepped in front of a truck.

As the record tragically shows, John and others were responsible for the sad outcome. I will throw my lot with those thousands of readers, including many of John Belushi's friends, who saw *Wired* as a cautionary tale and warning. That Jimmy's anger leads him to conclusions about Nixon or my sources speaks for itself and is not worthy of my comment. I genuinely hope Jimmy eventually finds peace and closure over his brother's death.

[TICKER]

392 Number of stories about the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign published in the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, USA Today, and The Washington Post from January 1, 1991, to August 31, 1991

575 Number of stories about the 1996 U.S. presidential campaign published in those newspapers from January 1, 1995, to August 31, 1995

087 Number of stories about the 2000 U.S. presidential campaign published in those newspapers from January 1, 1999, to August 31, 1999'

71 Percentage of Americans who believe that the press should almost always report on spousal abuse by a presidential candidate

3.5 Percentage of Americans who believe that the press should almost always report on cocaine use by a presidential candidate (as a young adult)

2.3 Percentage of Americans who believe that the press should almost always report on the extramarital affairs of presidential candidates²

++ Page on which the first piece of editorial copy appears in the October 1999 issue of *Marie Claire*

04 Page on which the first piece of editorial copy appears in the October 1999 issue of *Vogue*

87 Page on which the first piece of editorial copy appears in the October 1999 issue of *In Style*

114 Page on which the first piece of editorial copy appears in the October 1999 issue of *Vanity Fair*³

8.6 Percentage of the 100.8 million television households in the U.S. that are Hispanic

1 Percentage of 48,000 stories airing on ABC, CBS, and NBC nightly newscasts from 1995 to 1998 that were about Hispanics⁴

11 Number of 1998 covers of *YM*, *Teen People*, and *Seventeen* (of a total of 33 covers) to feature African-Americans

5 Number of 1998 covers of *Details*, *GQ*, and *Maxim* (of a total of 34 covers) to feature African-Americans

² Number of 1998 covers of *Harper's Bazaar*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Elle*, *Glamour*, *Mademoiselle*, and *Vogue* (of a total of 72 covers) to feature African-Americans⁵

\$2.8 billion Amount spent by Americans in 1996 to access the Internet (for household use)

\$4.6 billion Amount spent by Americans in 1997 to access the Internet (for household use)

\$6.2 billion Amount spent by Americans in 1998 to access the Internet (for household use)⁶

52 Percentage of U.S. college students with Internet access who regularly visited entertainment sites in May 1998

O1 Percentage of U.S. college students with Internet access who regularly visited entertainment sites in May 1999

16 Percentage of U.S. college students with Internet access who regularly visited shopping sites in May 1998

32 Percentage of U.S. college students with Internet access who regularly visited shopping sites in May 1999⁷

76 Percentage of parents with children under 13 who believe that the U.S. motion picture industry's rating system is a useful guide in deciding what movies children should see

21 Percentage of parents with children under 13 who believe that the rating system is not very useful

³ Percentage of parents with children under 13 who have not used or have not heard of the rating system⁸

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

1) Pew Research Center For The People & The Press 2) Pew Research Center For The People & The Press 3) Vanity Fair, In Style, Vogue, and Marie Claire (tally does not include table of contents, masthead, editor's letter, contributors' page, or letters to the editor) 4) Nielsen Media Research, National Association of Hispanic Journalists 5) YM, *Teen People, Seventeen, Detaits, GQ, Maxim, Harper's Bazear, Cosmopolitan, Elle, Glamour, Mademoiselle*, and Vogue 6) Veronis, Suhler & Associates Inc. (a mediaindustry merchant bank) 7) Greenfield Online, Inc. (an Internet-based marketing research firm) 8) Motion Picture Association of America, Opinion Research Corporation International (a market research firm)

KICKER BY MICHAEL COLTON

BRILL'S CONTENT DECEMBER 1999/JANUARY 2000

136

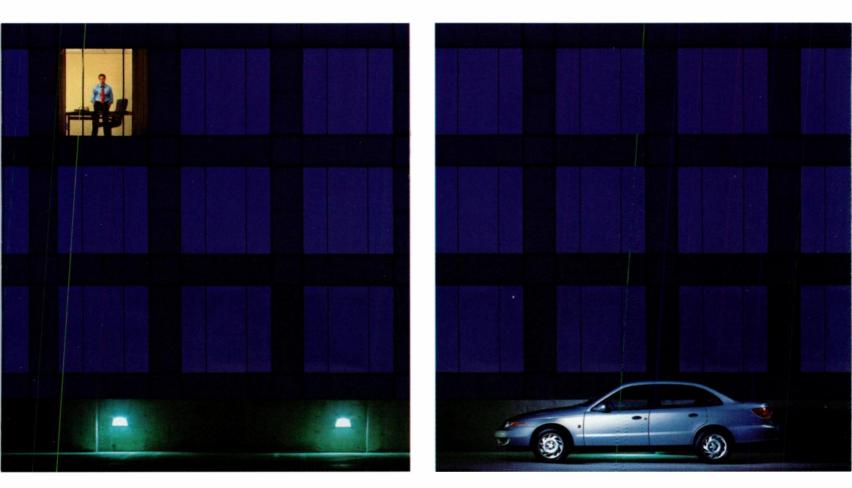
On November 1, former *Today* anchor Bryant Gumbel was to reclaim the morning airwaves following a lengthy absence. Joining Gumbel on CBS's *The Early Show*: Jane Clayson, a former ABC News correspondent who won the job of coanchor following a summer-long talent search dubbed Operation Glass Slipper by CBS News executives. A *Brill's Content* investigation has unearthed this document, which sheds new light on how the network chose its Cinderella.

		PAGE 1 OF 1
CBS APPLICATION FOR COANCHOR,	The Early Show	_
CBS APPLICAT	Education	
ame rate Measuremonis		
Gender OF Measure dioner partles)		
UDS AFFLICE lame Gender [] F Measurements [Age Gender [] F Measurements [Previous hosting experience (excluding dinner parties) Previous hosting experience (excluding dinner parties) Which pageants have you won? (check any that apply) Mice	Before a commercial break, Bryant ad-libs amusing joke about the weather. Choose th	
angeants have you won? (check and	reply: doesn't start raining	in the
D Junior Miss		
	 a) "Let's just nope to studio!" b) "Wait a second, Bryantwas that in the order of the second and right, buddy." 	ie script:
mire Grosse Former Ontario	b) "Wait a second, bryanth buddy."	
Which of the following terms best describes you?		
the following terms best det	In "Socaking of the to to tell us	why we
	Conners that more slowing	
actor areactor	should cherrie and a famous ac	tor who's
L'actor =	should chew our loop men During your Interview with a famous ac	, he begins to
Do you look more like:	During your interview with a famous ac suffering from an embarrassing aliment cry. Do you cry with him, pat his hand g cry. Do you cry with him, pat his hand g	ently, or give
To lone Pauley		
D Paula Zahn Lisa McCree	his knee 4 strict	and a set in the set of the set o
All of the above	his knee a sympathetic squeezer EAP	م موجود الله الموجود المراجع الم المراجع الم
D All of the above D All of the above Do you live (or have you ever lived) in a glass house Do you live (or have you ever lived) in a glass house		and a second
Do you live (or have you ever lived) in a gass that allows you to interact with placard-waving		and a second
that allows /		
gawkers?	with the correct exp	ression
Which is your favorite morning activity?	Match the story with the correct exp	a.giddy excitement
Which is your favorice the	L. Medical breakchious	b. motherly concer
in chowering	surgery	b. motherly cont
	2. Interview with HolyHours 3. Scandal-ridden sports hero comes	c. bosoniy
T interviewing a set i waying gawkers	- I leiddell Sport	collegiality
	ing? clean thins how to	d. tearful
You are chatting with the saw What are you wear	dean 4. Psychologist explains how to communicate with your mate	sympathy e.coy bemuseme
You are chatting with the survivor of an embasy explosion in South America. What are you wear upellow turtleneck and beige blazer	5. Congressman/war hero protests	f. earnest skepth
		f. earnest stept.
	rovernment poner	g. sensitive enthusiasiti
[] Gap corus	ndlcate 6. Cooking with Sophia Loren 7. Are You as Happy as You Can Be?	entrusianti
Which words best describe your (Also P) which words best describe Bryant Gumbel.)	7. Are You as Hippy	
which words best describe bir	thear about CB	51
You Bryant	How did you first hear about CB	
m ri warm	U saw it on television u saw it on television u newspaper or magazine artic	le
a nintelligent	U newspaper of these U surfing on the Internet	
D Watchable	C) curling On the	
	L) advertisement	the subscription
D D African-American	() a friend () other	and some that we we seem a series of the set of
 a engaging a tough a willing to work for less than \$400f 	Li ourer	the second s

World Radio History

More power. More control. More headroom. The new Saturn L-Series. A Different Kind of Company.

A Different Kind of Car.



Management. The next big thing from Mike Wilmot. LS. The next big thing from Saturn.

