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for Canadian journalists

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(416) 633-1773

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Illustrations this issue: Anthony Jenkins, *Globe and Mail* — cover (first published in the report of the Royal Commission on Newspapers); Canapress — 3, 5, 9, 10; Eileen Redding — 14; Innovative Graphics — 15; *Globe and Mail* — 16; Peter Whalley and the National Film Board — 21, 28; Aislin — 25, 27; George Shane — 26.

# The Commission revisited

*The ultimate effect of monopoly  
is that journalism is downgraded.  
And the public interest suffers*

by Tom Kent

It is four years since the Ottawa *Journal* and the Winnipeg *Tribune* were killed and, in response, the Royal Commission on Newspapers set up. It is just more than three years since the Commission reported.

Between lay 10 months of intense and dedicated work by that superb newspaperman, the late Borden Spears; by the Commission counsel, Don Affleck; by Tim Creery, Peter Desbarats, Dick MacDonald, and other members of the small team that was quickly but, I think, effectively assembled.

Very little has come of it all. I still believe that, when it appointed the Commission, the Trudeau government had no intention of confusing or burying the problem. With the Thomson-Southam activities of 1980, and against the background of the Davey Committee of the Senate, the government fully recognized that the rules of the game for the newspaper business needed reform.

It also knew, of course, that reform would be difficult. Newspaper companies are better placed than any other businesses to oppose change by representing their private interests as the public interest. They also enjoy a unique power to make life unpleasant for politicians.

But in 1980 the government was freshly elected and very pleased with itself. It was disposed to attempt some reform of the newspaper business and it therefore wanted a Royal Commission that, unlike most, would report quickly. That was why I accepted the task. I would not have done so if I had had a crystal ball!

We reported on time, but not as quickly as the political circumstances changed. By 1981 the Trudeau government was in disarray, confused by the economic problems with which it could not cope and by its ineptness in federal-provincial relations. With its popularity slumping, it was much less inclined to take on the newspaper publishers on an issue that offered little, if any, electoral benefit.

There was, I think, a particular rock that broke the government's will to do

much about the Commission's recommendations. That was the fiasco of the budget in November, 1981, soon after our report was published (August, 1981). The government was terribly bloodied on its proposed changes in tax rules, from most of which Finance Minister Allan MacEachen made a humiliating withdrawal.

After that, ministers were in no mood to adopt any other tax change. And a tax change was central to the Commission's recommendations. Ours was a direct, carrot-and-stick measure. It would have reduced the net cost to a company of spending more on the content of its newspaper, putting more of its revenue into resources for the newshole.

Reports and comment on the Commission rarely made this proposal as prominent as it was important. Perhaps that was partly because taxation is, to many journalists, a dull subject. But chiefly, I think, it was because the commentators knew that they would be on weak ground in attacking the proposal. The self-interest of the proprietors would be evident, and they could not fall back on legalistic arguments; the tax measure was indisputably in federal jurisdiction. So more was made of issues on which it might not be so difficult to represent the industry's self-interest as the public interest.

The tax proposal is crucial because the newspaper problem is rooted in the business economics of the industry. A daily nowadays gets about 80 per cent of its revenue from advertising and particularly from a few kinds of advertising — grocery and department stores, employment, real estate, used automobiles, and other classified — for which daily print still is the preferred medium.

Those advertisers can get the coverage they are seeking most efficiently if the community has only one paper for people to see. This is the inescapable economics that has made us, for the most part, one-newspaper communities. Very large cities, in which there can be substantial segmentation of the markets at which advertisers aim, still provide some exceptions. But they are few, and segmentation does not

produce the old, head-to-head style of newspaper competition.

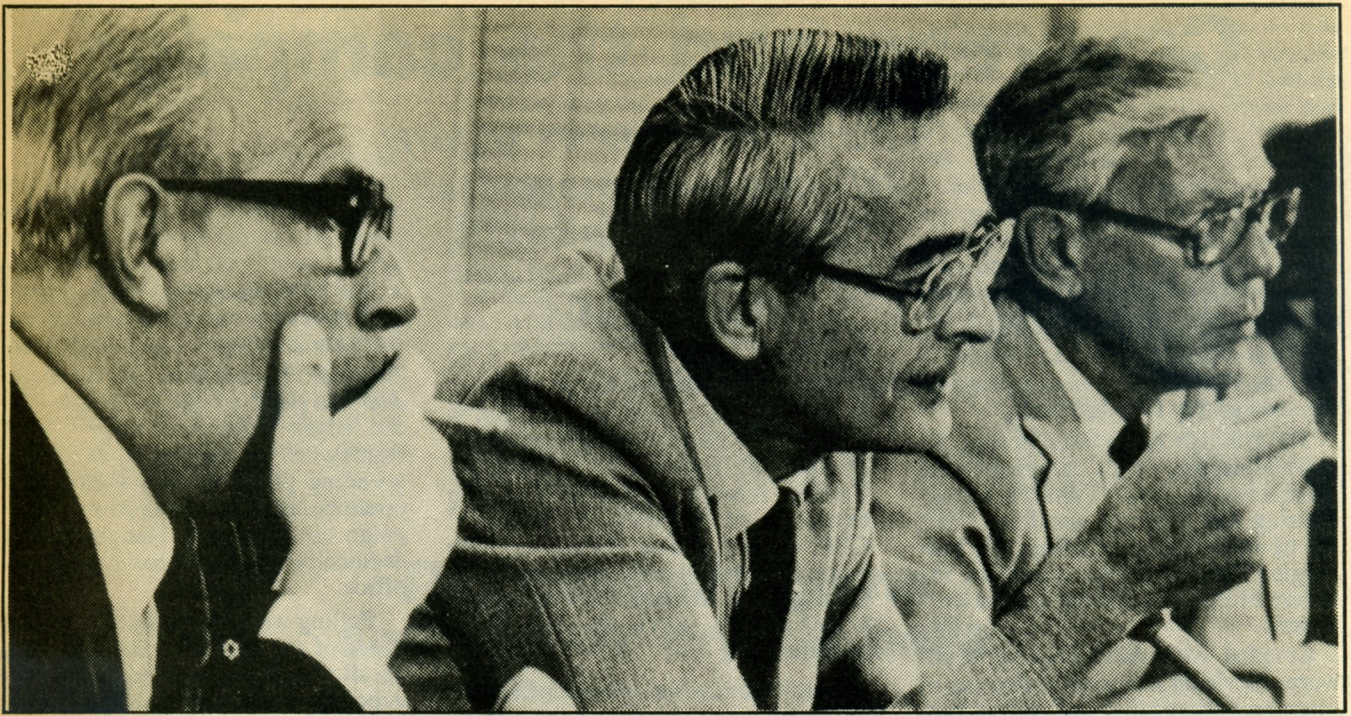
Yet, if we have to accept the inevitability of a large degree of monopoly, the public is entitled to probe its consequences. That is what the Royal Commission inquiry was about.

Even many journalists seemed until recently to go on accepting the idea, generated in times of transition from competition to monopoly, when some newspapers were indeed losing money and closing, that the newspaper business is poor and struggling. The truth of newspaper economics is that competition kills; but once competition has been eliminated or segmented, once you have a one-newspaper town or close to that in a large city, the newspaper business is profitable to an extent beyond the dreams of most industries.

It is highly profitable because the monopoly newspaper can get a great deal of certain kinds of advertising and its content otherwise — what it puts in the newshole space around the ads — does not have to cost much. The critical moment in the Commission's inquiry came early in the public hearings, when a Thomson publisher calmly characterized his editorial department as "non-revenue." That is to say, spending more on the editorial content of the paper has little reflection in increased revenue for the company. Filling the newshole is simply a cost, and all good businessmen know what to do with costs: minimize them.

If a newspaper is run according to such business logic, it is among the most attractive investments for the builders of corporate empires. They can milk from it a very large cash flow, in relation to the capital they have to employ, for further investments in other industries.

Given that fact, and the failure of government to do anything about it, we are as yet luckier than we deserve to be. Many of our newspapers are still run by people whose ambition for cash flow is qualified by a measure of journalistic conscience or pride. Editorial expense is not cut to the bone. But the game is clearly one that in the end nice guys do not win. A newspaper on the market is worth a lot more to someone who will



Royal Commissioners three: From left, Laurent Picard, Tom Kent, Borden Spears

cut the costs and exploit the cash flow than it is to people who care about doing a good newspaper job.

We experienced a massive increase in conglomerate, business-driven ownership of Canadian newspapers in 1980. The Royal Commission inquiry perhaps put a temporary brake on the trend. But in the absence of government action, it will inevitably revive and continue until virtually all newspapers are owned by people who are interested in them not as newspapers but as sources of cash for other businesses.

The consequences of such ownership are clear. Too much of too many news-holes is filled too cheaply. In essence, most papers employ too few journalists. They do not pay them enough. They do not give them enough time to know their topics and dig into stories. They do not provide their journalists with adequate reference resources. They give far too little opportunity for career development, for advanced training, for broadening experience elsewhere in Canada and abroad.

In short, the ultimate effect of monopoly on the structure of the newspaper industry is that journalism is downgraded from the increasingly skilled, responsible occupation that, in an information society, is required to serve the public interest.

If we had been blessed with more foresight, we would have long ago had legislation to prohibit the ownership of

newspapers (and other general-interest media) by people and companies with substantial interests in other businesses. That would not have created perfection, but it would have helped considerably. Now, unfortunately, it is too late to incur the disruption of rolling back all the conglomerate ownership that exists.

But a lot could still be done. The process of conglomeration could be stopped from going further. A few very worst cases of concentration could be corrected. A simple tax measure could offset much of the constriction of editorial expenditures arising from monopoly. And, as a further force in that direction, conglomerates could be required to handle their newspapers more as if they were separate businesses — identifying the editorial responsibility, publishing an annual report, and by its discussion strengthening the hands of journalists and enhancing public influence.

Those were the essentials of the Royal Commission's recommendations. The quality of the response from the industry could hardly have done more to underline the need for the recommendations. Rarely can there have been so much fury and emotion and bombast with so little substance, so much invective and misrepresentation as a pathetic cover for lack of an arguable case.

Of course, if I were doing it again

with the benefit of hindsight and second thought, there are ways in which I would make some improvements in the details of the recommendations. But the essentials would not change, except for an addition. I would insist that the Commission take a little more time in order to do what was, strictly, the government's job: that is, on the points on which there could be genuine doubt about the relevance of federal or provincial jurisdiction, work out ways in which their co-operation could be secured.

This time, however, it was not to be. Despite Jim Fleming's brave efforts, the Trudeau government lacked interest or courage and I can see no expectation that, in this respect, a new government will be better.

Nevertheless, the recommendations stand. Sooner or later some government, I think, will be driven to adopt something like them. The longer the delay, the worse it will be for the industry. ☐

*Tom Kent, chairman of the Royal Commission on Newspapers which was dissolved in early 1982, was dean of administrative studies at Dalhousie University in Halifax following careers in journalism, business, and government. He is editor of Policy Options, the journal published by the Institute for Research on Public Policy, and lives in Mabou, N.S.*

# Coverage and the campaign

*Weaknesses in news reports  
fell into two categories:  
Neglect and overkill*

by Murray Goldblatt

Print and broadcast media, as usual, have been targeted as culprits in the federal election campaign — the year of the Tory landslide.

The criticism had a familiar ring. Incidental aspects of the campaign were overblown — John Turner's throat-clearing and staccato speaking style, the trivial trouser stain affair, the bed-ragged Liberal travel schedule, the failure of Brian Mulroney to hold daily scums.

Coupled with these was the well-worn television newscast technique of squeezing candidates into a few seconds accompanied by pompous voice-overs by reporters — and the endless TV panels of recycled politicians reciting the predictable.

There were sound grounds for this kind of critique. More serious and more debatable was the charge that the whole media apparatus, including the polling organizations, was tilted against the Liberals — a hard charge to sustain.

But the media had other problems, nagging problems which tend to undermine long-term credibility.

For example, there was a disturbing habit of reporters in print and even TV to drift from reporting events into commentary, opinion-making, and editorializing. A story about a job creation program became an indictment of the speaker for election doubletalk. Reporters' pictures are attached to these instant judgments. All three party leaders got this sort of treatment.

Other media weaknesses in the campaign probably can be grouped in two general categories: questions of *neglect* and questions of *overkill*.

A whole range of economic issues was given scant attention. The parties didn't develop them beyond sloganeering, for the most part, and journalists didn't pursue them with vigor. For instance, there was the basic question of economic development itself — and such allied areas as interest rates, the troubling deficit, the taxation system, housing policy, and the persistent difficulties of job creation programs.

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## Election '84:1

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There were exceptions to this pattern: Alan Toulon and Martin Cohn in the *Toronto Star* did a thorough piece on the implications of a made-in-Canada interest rate policy. Cohn examined the elements of tax reform. CBC current affairs shows, on both radio and television, ventured into similar areas. Southam News arranged a debate on ways to rescue the economy.

There were other spheres where the media became prisoners of the parties' own silence rather than taking the initiative. One was medicare, where the future in federal-provincial terms was left in shadows. There was a similar void in foreign policy coverage, apart from the in-vogue debate on a nuclear freeze. There was silence on Canada-U.S. relations, foreign aid policy, Middle East problems, and Third World issues.

When it came to overkill, the press displayed a well-ingrained tendency to get the story without the context — and this tendency was illustrated in such high-profile items as patronage, promises, and polling.

Certainly, the Trudeau-Turner appointments deal was a big story and merited full coverage and comment. But there was little overall attempt to explain the background to patronage appointments: their history in Canadian politics, previous episodes, guidelines to distinguish "good" appointments from patronage appointments, types of positions susceptible to patronage, prospects for future Conservative action in the same arena.

Even more frustrating in this election was the coverage of campaign promises and, in particular, the costing of such promises. The media spent almost endless time and effort tracking down these costs or attempting to do so. Promises ranged all the way from job creation proposals to red meat stabilization plans. Total figures ranged from \$1.7 billion to \$5.1 billion and time spans from one to four years.

The news media made it an article of faith that all these promises be costed, that details on spending be spelled out.

But this kind of coverage represented zeal that goes for naught. Rarely could the cited figures be put in the framework of an overall budget or spending program. And even if they could be, promises in an election campaign are frequently sloughed off or drastically amended once a party is in office.

Polling was, of course, an important facet of the summer campaign. As a result, the papers and stations faithfully reported every national survey with breakdowns, party percentages, samples. In many cases, the polling results spawned big headlines, particularly from the mid-point of the campaign.

But, again, there was little backgrounding or analysis as to how poll questions are formulated, their sequence, how samples are chosen, how the results are weighted, what they represent, their timing, how they tie in with previous figures.

Isolated attempts were made to cope with these factors. Linda Diebel in the *Montreal Gazette* tried to make sense of the polls and their barrage of numbers. Michael Kinneer in the *Winnipeg Free Press* examined the methodology. The *Ottawa Citizen*, through its own staff and the work of Patrick Nagle of Southam News, did a good job of breaking down the results, nationally and regionally.

This catalogue of shortcomings shouldn't be translated into a full-scale assault on print and broadcast performance during the campaign; it is, after all, impressionistic.

There were encouraging signs. The press did a commendable job of defining riding situations, profiling candidates at local and national levels, and assessing regional moods and developments — especially in Quebec where tides were changing, and in British Columbia.

A good many of the larger papers did an excellent job of tracing the woes within the Liberal Party organization leading to the high command shuffle and the replacement of Bill Lee by

Keith Davey. Hugh Winsor, Ottawa bureau chief of the *Globe and Mail*, penetrated Liberal Party documents to sketch the erosion of support for Turner.

A number of papers depicted the anatomy of Liberal defeat thoroughly and forcefully. Two of the most noteworthy were by *Globe* columnist Jeffrey Simpson and the *Citizen's* Greg Weston. Simpson saw the Liberals in recent years as "more a significant illusion than an effective political party." The New Democratic Party's surge from near-oblivion to respectability was handled competently, although the NDP's role and future seemed somewhat more difficult to grasp.

There was a sensitive and humor-

tinged look at Turner in retreat by Val Sears of the *Toronto Star*; Douglas Gould in the *Edmonton Journal* and Jamie Lamb in the *Vancouver Sun* contributed balanced columns on Turner's record.

There was a scintillating series of portraits by *Toronto Star* feature reporter Roy MacGregor — formerly a writer for magazines whose skills in that medium served him well. In one case, MacGregor explored the mood of Jean Chretien and his dispirited loyalists as they struggled through a gloomy day of campaigning. In another, MacGregor pinpointed the once-ebullient Senator Davey, the ultimate backroom operator enmeshed in a tumbledown scenario.

A final observation: It was a little puzzling on election night to hear television anchors telling viewers that the resounding triumph by the Tories was "stunning," "amazing," "shocking," "surprising."

In an age of polls, all the major surveying organizations had been predicting a Conservative sweep, runaway win, or "huge" lead for 10 days to two weeks before votes were cast. Were the TV commentators pretending the polls didn't exist? ☐

*Murray Goldblatt is a professor of journalism at Carleton University, Ottawa, and former national editor and Ottawa bureau chief of the Globe and Mail.*

## The numbers game and cloudy crystal balls

by John Marshall

On the 10th anniversary of his respected syndicated national affairs column, in November, 1983, the *Toronto Star's* Richard Gwyn mused about the craft of journalism. The best of all trades, it was a ringside seat, he said, on events generally entertaining, dramatic — and unpredictable.

Last July, Gwyn, refuting himself, correctly predicted a federal election Sept. 4. But he then confirmed his earlier observation about pundit perils by saying the election would be "one of the closest, one of the hardest fought, and one of the most difficult to predict in years." He also said we shouldn't trust polls. They then were putting the Liberal Party in the lead.

A week before the election, another top columnist, Walter Stewart, was continuing a long-standing assault on the media's use of polls, saying, "Have you noticed that the Conservative majority bearing down on us is propelled by dubious polls?" He said if they were as unreliable as those of past elections, there could be anything from a Tory landslide to a Liberal minority government.

Well — the election ended up as one of the easiest to predict (in the broad picture). And the general lack of egg on media faces — often visible in past elections — was not because they had found ingenious journalistic tea leaves to read. It was because they were reading the much-maligned polls.

Columnist Douglas Fisher said Aug.

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22 the polls could mean 185 Tory seats or, if Quebec went the way it did in the 1976 provincial election, 210.

David Vienneau said in the *Toronto Star* a miracle would be needed to hold the Tories to a minority win. And Jeffrey Simpson of the *Globe and Mail* in mid-August predicted a "crushing defeat" for the Liberals.

With all the polls agreeing by this time, the kind of right-on predictions by the media were common — except for Vancouver Quadra. There, they generally agreed with the media-commissioned polls that made John Turner a loser, ignoring a last-minute (another of their ploys?) Liberal report that a telephone survey gave Turner 38 per cent to a total of 33 for the PCs and the NDP, and another 29 per cent unde-



Mulroney: Polls were right

ecided (Val Sears, *Toronto Star*, Sept. 2).

It was when they trod where pollsters do not go — into the fine tuning — that many journalists were less lucky in their guesses.

The *Edmonton Journal's* Don Braid said the PCs would get 50 or more across the West (they won 58), but on Sept. 1 the *Toronto Star's* Matt Maychak said a Tory landslide could add 10 or more seats to the 33 they won in 1980 in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, but that, aside from a repeated sweep in Alberta, it was safer to bet they'd pick up only two or three new ones in the other two provinces. They got six.

His *Star* colleague, Dan Smith, said of B.C. prospects that if the Liberals' vote fell below their 19.8 per cent in 1980, the NDP could lose as many as eight of their 12 seats. In fact, the Liberals' percentage was 17 and the NDP won eight seats, down only four.

Really early guesses should never have been published or broadcast. The *Globe and Mail's* Jeffrey Simpson, who on election eve expected a "handsome majority" for the Tories in Quebec with old Liberal victories of even 30,000 votes being overturned, had forecast only 15 to 25 PC seats in Quebec in mid-July.

Gwyn, who finally went for a PC sweep (181, or maybe even more than the Diefsweep of 208) was talking as late as Aug. 2 of a Liberal defeat only being "most probable."

A consolation to the journalists: Others were often as bad or worse. A

couple of days before the election, former Tory leader and PM Joe Clark said he feared his party would not win a majority — “the polls ... are often wrong.” But he thought Turner would lose Quadra.

The B.C. Tory campaign chairman, Jim Macaulay, agreed about Quadra, and said only Iona Campagnola had a

distant chance of ending the Liberal shutout on the coast.

Dennis McDermott of the Canadian Labor Congress said on July 22 the NDP would top 40 seats. Hamilton Mountain's Ian Deans said his NDP would become the official opposition and have its largest vote ever. It got only 19 per cent.

All of which won't stop editors from expecting their reporters to keep up the guessing games in the future. As Richard Gwyn said in his introspective anniversary piece, “The trade's occupational hazard is conceit.” (30)

*John Marshall is a Toronto-based freelance writer.*

## The press and politics: Social scientists take aim

by Anthony Westell

*Media and Elections in Canada.* By Walter C. Soderlund, E. Donald Briggs, Walter I. Romanow, and Ronald H. Wagenberg. Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited, Toronto.

*Canadian Politics Through Press Reports.* By Donald C. Wallace and Frederick J. Fletcher. Oxford University Press, Toronto.

Both books sound made-to-order for the post-election period in which, naturally and properly, the role of the news media in politics is under scrutiny. But both turn out to be paperback textbooks for undergraduates and not of much interest to working journalists.

I turned first to *Media and Elections* because the subject promised to be topical, but the title proved misleading. Only two of the chapters analyse media coverage of the 1979 and 1980 elections, while the rest deal with such distantly related topics as the history of the media in Canada, theories about mass communication, government regulation of the media, the Kent Report, and so on.

The authors did organize studies of radio, TV, and press coverage of the 1979 and 1980 elections. By measuring the amount of time or space devoted to election reports, and by analysing the contents of the reports, they have been able to provide tables of figures on such subjects as the percentage of stories dealing with major issues, percentage of stories dealing with major parties, percentage of stories over three minutes in length dealing with parties and issues, percentage of stories reflecting negatively or positively on party leaders, and “Spearman Rank-order Correlection between all TV and Radio Network Agenda.”

The data are used primarily to test theories about the role of journalists as

### Election '84:3

gatekeepers controlling the flow of information, and as agenda-setters for the political process. The authors do, however, suggest a few conclusions of more general interest:

— The English- and French-language media reported the elections in much the same way, raising questions about earlier studies which have suggested that the media in Quebec and in the rest of the country are so different in their reporting of national affairs as to be subversive of national unity.

— There was little if any difference in the election coverage by chain-owned and independent newspapers.

— When compared with radio and TV coverage, press coverage was less regional, local, and analytical than might have been expected.

The second book is at first glance rather flattering to journalists. It is a workbook for students being introduced to political science and consists in the main of reprints of newspaper articles — features and columns, rather than “press reports” — which are intended to provide “real-world examples of textbook political science.”

But before heads swell, let it be noted that the authors say, “Even the deficiencies in the articles will contribute to the goals of this volume. Students will become acquainted with the systematic abuses that daily newspapers bring to their coverage of politics.”

What are those systematic abuses? “Reliance on official sources; a tendency to interpret politics almost exclusively in terms of electoral activity (accompanied by a certain cynicism about the motives of political actors); a focus on personal factors — for example, party leaders — in political life, rather than social or organizational ones; an unconscious acceptance of liberal

ideology; and a preoccupation with the specific at the expense of the general.” In short, the orientation of the media is “status quo, middle of the road,” and those seeking to challenge institutional power have a hard time getting a hearing.

So the social scientists imply, even if they do not say so directly, that the news media ought to do more than report the world as they find it. Rather than reflect the norms and values of the community, it seems, they ought to challenge values and suggest a new agenda.

These are familiar views, shared, no doubt, by many journalists, but they prompt as many questions as they answer and ought not, I think, to be put to students as self-evident truths. The daily news media obviously have a number of roles, but the primary one in my view is to report the world as it is. Analysis and interpretation of the news are the secondary task, while criticism and advocacy are third, at best.

The authors of *Media and Elections* say that Canadians “have a right to expect the media to dedicate themselves to a greater degree of insight into their own roles and a more professional commitment to fulfilling their own responsibility.”

I am not sure how one dedicates oneself to insight, or that there is general agreement on what is the responsibility of a journalist.

I accept, however, the general idea that journalists ought to be more thoughtful about how they carry out their roles in the political process, particularly at election time, and I am disappointed that social scientists have not been more useful in helping us to define the roles and to measure the performance. (30)

*Anthony Westell is acting director of the School of Journalism, Carleton University, Ottawa.*



# Journalists are also citizens — and have political rights

by Donna Balkan

*"No employee who is employed by the Corporation on a full-time basis as a producer, a supervisor of news or information programming, an editor, a journalist, a reporter, an on-air personality ... may take a position publicly in a referendum or plebiscite, actively support a political party or candidate ..."*

— CBC Corporate Bylaw No. 7 (13)

*"To be objective is to have no views, political, economic, or social, about the key issues of the day. A journalist who has, for example, covered politics for 15 years should be fired."*

— Walter Stewart,  
introduction to  
*Canadian Newspapers:  
The Inside Story*



Donna Balkan

If I had to put my finger on the exact day I decided to leave journalism, it would be one day last fall — the day I was interviewed for a local reporting job by an Unnamed Producer (U.P.) at an Unnamed TV station.

Not that it was a *bad* interview, as interviews go. In fact, it was going very well until the U.P. asked The Big Question.

"You have the reputation of being something of a ... um ... political activist," he said calmly. "How can you reconcile this with the idea of objective reporting?"

Whether the question was prompted by my past activities in The Newspaper Guild or the fact that he had recently spotted me at a peace demonstration (demonstrating, not covering) didn't really matter. What mattered is that the interview confirmed my own long-held suspicion: that for the past eight years, I had been in the wrong business.

Imagine my surprise when, three weeks later, I was offered the job. Only a few days earlier, I had accepted a position in the labor movement — one which, I explained to the somewhat surprised producer, was "much more in line with my political activism."

Since that fateful day, I have done a number of other things in line with my political activism. I have been a delegate to a provincial political convention, been elected vice-president of my

riding association and, most recently, acted as media co-ordinator for the federal candidate of my choice. As I pinned on my first campaign button in nearly a decade, my sense of being "out of the closet" was palpable. Yet I sometimes can't help wondering: Did I really have to be in the closet in the first place?

The traditional response would, of course, be yes. Whether the rules are officially stated, as in the CBC corporate bylaws, or unwritten, as in many of the nation's newsrooms, it's generally considered that having identifiable political views compromises one's credibility as a journalist.

It's the reason that at The Newspaper Guild's recent convention in Puerto Rico one of the hottest debates was over whether the union should endorse presidential candidates in U.S. elections. It's also why, I suspect, a fair number of dedicated, competent journalists have left their chosen profession to become that epithet of epithets — flacks.

Of course, there are exceptions: columnists, commentators and anyone working for the *Toronto Sun*. When Stephen Lewis or Paul Hellyer are called upon to shed light on the nation's affairs, their politics are part of the package. Other journalists have entered the political arena and returned to journalism once the "taint" wore off, usually in another region.

But for most of us, it's been a question of having to choose. And the real question is, is this choice fair? Surely I

held the same political views when I was a reporter as I do now, and the only time I was ever accused of bias was in the thick of a vendetta between an elected official and a senior bureaucrat: one was a Conservative, the other a conservative.

Is there really a difference between a journalist's membership in a political party and a publisher's membership in an equally political organization — the local Board of Trade? Or what about education reporters with school-age children, homeowners covering stories on property taxes, or, for that matter, women covering women's issues? Taken to the extreme, one could disqualify every journalist in the country on the basis of potential bias.

I'm not saying reporters should be covering stories they are directly involved in. Nor should reporters in the mainstream media deliberately allow their biases to influence their coverage; I had to hold my nose countless times while interviewing people whose views I found reprehensible, but that didn't show up in the copy.

What I'm saying is that journalists are also ordinary citizens — parents, homeowners, union members, members of their community, and voters. As such, they should be able to wear their "other hats" during their off-hours and be accorded the same basic rights as other ordinary citizens.

Good journalists, regardless of their outside activities or personal views, will be able to recognize their biases, make the distinctions between their various "hats," and strive for fair, accurate reporting.

I think the Unnamed Producer at the Unnamed TV station realized this; otherwise, he presumably would not have offered me a job. But a lot of his colleagues still have a long way to go. And unless that changes, the procession to flackdom will, understandably, only grow. (30)

*Donna Balkan worked for the Ottawa Citizen, the Centre for Investigative Journalism, and CBC Radio before taking a job with a national labor union in Ottawa. Because she still cares passionately about her former profession, she has remained a Friend of Content.*

# The Thomson empire

*The multinational born  
in Timmins is a half-century old.  
The newspaper sector is at its peak in wealth*

by Susan Goldenberg

Nineteen eighty-four marks the 50th anniversary of the start of the Thomson empire. From the outset, when Roy Thomson bought his first paper, the Timmins, Ont. *Daily Press*, it has been an empire primarily built through acquisition. Today, it controls assets worth more than \$10 billion on four continents — Europe, North America, Africa, and Australia — and in 14 countries — Canada, the United States, England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, France, Germany, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Australia, South Africa, and Nigeria.

If the revenue from all the empire's business were lumped together, it would total more than \$8 billion, making it fifth, in terms of revenue, among Canadian companies. (Canada's largest company, in terms of sales, is Canadian Pacific, with revenue of more than \$12 billion.)

That places the empire on a par with such U.S. giants as General Foods, Xerox, and PepsiCo and significantly ahead of such well-known firms as Coca-Cola, Johnson & Johnson, Gulf & Western Industries, and General Mills. The empire's revenue is equivalent to that of General Electric Company in the U.K. and is \$1 to \$3 billion more than such major U.K. firms as British Steel, British Airways, and Marks & Spencer make.

All this has made Kenneth Thomson, who has headed the empire since his father's death in 1976, Canada's only billionaire. His personal fortune would place him at least on a par with the richest man in the United States, Gordon Getty (son of the late John Paul Getty, a partner of Roy Thomson in North Sea oil development), who is estimated to be worth more than \$2 billion. Kenneth's net worth would exceed that of such U.S. media-based family fortunes as the Hearst, Cox, and Newhouse ones, each estimated to be worth between \$1 and \$2 billion. And if all the employees who work for Kenneth Thomson around the globe were added together, they would number close to 100,000.

On a comparative basis with U.S.

firms, the empire employs one and a half times as many people as Procter and Gamble and twice as many as the large oil company, Atlantic Richfield. In comparison with U.K. firms, it employs twice as many people as Marks & Spencer, three times as many as Cadbury Schweppes, and five times as many as British Petroleum.

The empire started out in newspapers and they still constitute a major portion of its business, although it now is also involved in many other fields. In terms of the number of newspapers owned, it ranks first in Canada and second in the United States, after the Gannett company. It is the leading publisher in the United Kingdom of regional (non-London) newspapers. It owns the "national" paper of Canada, the *Globe and Mail* of Toronto, as well as of Scotland, the *Scotsman*, and of Northern Ireland, the *Belfast Telegraph*. All told, it owns 200 newspapers. At the average of 250 trees chopped daily for one newspaper's newsprint, about 50,000 trees are felled each day for Thomson papers.

Newspapers are just one segment of the Thomson media empire. It is the largest trade (non-consumer) magazine publisher in both Australia and South Africa and the second largest in the United Kingdom. In total, it owns more than 140 magazines. One South African magazine alone, the *South African Industrial Week*, grosses about \$143,000 a month.

In addition to newspapers and magazines, the Thomson empire also owns 14 general and professional book publishers in the U.K., U.S., Canada, and Australia. In the last five years, it has bought more magazine and book publishers than the rest of the industry in the U.S., spending more than \$400 million. This shopping spree has already made it the fourth-largest U.S. magazine publisher. In the fast-growing telecommunications field, it ranks first among U.S. magazine publishers.

In recent years, the empire has also branched into computer-databank information services companies and now owns 10 in the U.K. and U.S. One of these companies, Thomson & Thom-

son, a Boston firm that, despite its name, had no prior connection to the family, produces 50,000 customized trademark searches annually. Another firm, Research Publications of Connecticut, is involved in the largest micropublishing project ever: a listing of all the works printed in English anywhere in the world during the Age of Enlightenment between 1700 and 1800. It is estimated it will contain 10 million frames of microfilm and take 15 years to complete.

But the Thomson empire has become far more than a media empire. In the last 20 years, it has expanded into travel, oil and gas, retailing, and real estate. In the U.K., Thomson Travel is the largest package tour operator, with about one-fifth of the country's total business. The company operates its own charter airline, Britannia Airways, whose fleet of 33 planes is equivalent in number to the size of CP Air, Canada's second-largest airline. Thomson Travel moved into the U.S. market four years ago and is already the country's third-largest tour operator. It has also recently entered the Canadian market.

The empire now has oil and gas operations in the North Sea, whose gusher of revenue in the past six years has made possible the expansion of the empire into information services and also into oil and travel in Canada and the United States. The purchase in 1979 of the Hudson's Bay Company made the empire the owner of Canada's oldest and largest department store chain as well as the owner of two other major retailers previously bought by The Bay — Simpsons Limited and Zellers Limited. Together, the three chains account for 45 per cent of department store sales in Canada. In addition, The Bay owns Markborough Properties Limited, a major residential and commercial real estate developer in Canada and the United States. Its projects include the 3,000-acre community of Meadowvale, just west of Toronto, where about 28,000 people now live.

The Thomson empire has five main divisions: Thomson Newspapers, based in Toronto, runs the newspapers in Canada and the United States; the

Hudson's Bay Company oversees the retailing operations; International Thomson Organization Limited (ITOL), with nominal corporate headquarters in Toronto but its chief operating executives in London, looks after the newspapers in the United Kingdom and the worldwide magazine, book publishing, information services, travel, and oil and gas operations; Scottish and York Insurance Limited takes care of the insurance business, which is flourishing in Canada but on hold in the United States; and Dominion-Consolidated Truck Lines runs the trucking operations, which are solely in Canada.

The Thomson family, of which Kenneth is the largest shareholder, controls these businesses through a series of holding companies: The Bay and Thomson Newspapers by the Woodbridge Company; ITOL by Thomson Equitable Corporation; Scottish and York by Standard St. Lawrence Company; and the trucking by Dominion-Consolidated Holdings.

Although the empire was founded five decades ago, the family has realized most of its wealth in the last 20 years as the empire diversified. In 1959, six years after Roy Thomson moved to the U.K., the predecessor company of ITOL had sales of 30 million Pounds. In 1976, the year Roy Thomson died, the sales were 285 million Pounds. Impressive as these gains were, they have been surpassed; in 1983 ITOL's sales reached 1.5 billion Pounds. While Thomson Newspapers has not recorded as steep a climb, its revenue has more than tripled since 1976.

That the Thomson empire is an empire is due as much to luck and circumstance as to any grand design. Roy Thomson originally started in the communications business in radio, first trying to sell radios and then owning a small Northern Ontario radio station. He moved into newspapers because the Timmins paper happened to be in the same building as another struggling radio station he owned. In what would become something of a hallmark for later ventures, Roy plunged into the newspaper business without much advance study of the industry, simply because it was an additional way of making money.

This tendency to decide to enter a business because it seemed like a good idea often resulted in the purchase of financially or managerially troubled companies that more cautious people would have avoided. In the long run — a decade or longer — these investments



*The first Lord Thomson: As much luck as grand design.*

sometimes turned out to be astute. This was true with the U.K. travel business, for instance, but much less so with the U.K. book companies. Happenstance was a major factor in the empire's diversification. The ideas for the insurance and trucking businesses came from Roy's long-time friend and accountant, Sidney Chapman. The North Sea oil bonanza was due to three American oil companies needing a British partner to facilitate getting exploration licenses from the government.

In some ways, the empire has gone full circle. It started in Canada, branched into the U.S. as Roy bought some newspapers there in the 1950s, and moved to the U.K. after Roy settled there in the '50s and where he expanded into travel, book publishing, and oil and gas in the 1960s and 1970s. Then, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, under Kenneth, the emphasis has switched back to North America with the purchase of eight major Canadian papers, including the *Globe and Mail*, and of The Bay in Canada, and with the slew of magazine and book firm acquisitions in the U.S. Kenneth is also responsible for the sale in 1981 of the crown jewels in Roy's portfolio: the *Times* of London and its sister paper, the *Sunday Times*. Kenneth sold them because of financial losses and constant labor unrest.

Just as it has returned geographically to where it started, the empire is also again placing its hopes for the future on the media. This time, however, the stress is on high-technology electronic

information services and publications aimed at the professions, rather than newspapers, although the newspaper field is not being ignored, with an average of four U.S. papers being purchased annually.

The decision to build up an information services business makes sense considering that the market for electronic programming for business and professional uses is said to be growing by an astounding 75 per cent annually. Moreover, profit margins can be as high as 35 per cent, and the Thomson empire seeks high profit margins like a cat chases a mouse.

Other basic features of the empire also remain ballasts and contradictions, as they have been throughout the years. The stringent penny-pinching, in which every box of pens and every paste pot is included in the budgeting of most newspapers and supplies are doled out grudgingly to reporters, is counterbalanced by acquisitions costing millions of dollars.

Most of the smalltown Thomson papers are objects of virulent contempt within the journalism profession for their stiff budget controls, a perceived emphasis on service club news, and their efforts to remain non-unionized. Yet the quality of the *Times* and the *Sunday Times* did not decline under the Thomsons, nor has that of the *Globe and Mail*. The Thomson smalltown papers do not differ in their type of content or anti-unionism from other smalltown newspaper chains, such as that of the Gannett company.

There are other paradoxes, too, in the Thomson empire. While many of its newspapers are monopolies as the only paper in a town, in other businesses the empire does not steer clear of competition. Travel, book and magazine publishing, as well as oil and gas, are all fiercely competitive fields and crowded with rivals — yet the empire has not hesitated to move into them.

There are contradictions in the management style, too. Highly intelligent, entrepreneurial people are eagerly sought and given considerable leeway in daily operations, but are reined in by the knowledge that the empire demands, on average, 20 per cent profit margins, much higher than what most of its competitors achieve. Most of the employees of the empire have never met Kenneth Thomson because despite his efforts to visit different operations, the empire's vastness would require years for him to see every company. Consequently, managers feel very much like their own boss, rarely remembering that Kenneth, and not themselves, holds the ultimate control.

Not only does he have the ultimate control, but the Thomson empire will remain a Thomson empire. Roy Thomson did not make the same decision as William Randolph Hearst, who diluted family control by naming 11 warring members to the board of trustees for his estate. Hearst's five sons were outnumbered by the six trustees who were managers of the Hearst business, and consequently, while the sons held the titles, the managers had the power.

Roy Thomson's will made it very plain that Kenneth, then Kenneth's eldest son, David, and eventually David's son, would run the empire he founded. Already, David is being groomed to take over one day. Even his full name — David Kenneth Roy — shows that he is the latest generation in an intended dynasty. Unlike many business empires that have crumbled because of family dissension and corporate lack of purpose, the Thomson empire is firmly entrenched as it marks its golden anniversary....

The goose that laid the golden egg for the Thomson empire has often been tarred and feathered — but it has never been plucked. Instead, the "goose" — the chain of 52 Thomson-owned papers in Canada and 88 in the United States — has become fatter despite withering criticism directed at most of the papers for poor editorial quality, leveled both by the journalism profession and investigative commissions set up by the Canadian government.



*Kenneth Thomson: Sold the crown jewels in Roy's portfolio.*

Indeed, although it is smarting from receiving the most severe roasting among the chains for poor quality by the 1980-81 Canadian Royal Commission on Newspapers, the Thomson chain is at its most powerful. The commission lambasted chain ownership, but none of its recommendations, including one calling for the breakup of the Thomson chain, have been implemented. The final challenge to the power of the Thomson and other Canadian newspaper chains was broken in late 1983 when Thomson and Southam Inc. were acquitted of conspiracy and merger charges laid in connection with their putting an end to competition between them in several cities by closing papers.

Not only are the challenges to its size crushed, but the Thomson chain is financially blue-chip and recession-proof. Through fair and foul economic weather, it consistently rings up the highest profit margins among North American newspaper and magazine chains, ranging from 25 per cent in boom economic times to 14 per cent during the recent recession. Its low point is equal to the highs reached by most other Canadian and U.S. newspaper organizations. Its profit margins surpass in revenue both Southam, Canada's largest newspaper chain in terms of circulation, and the Gannett chain, the largest in the U.S....

The empire has not seemed to care about its bad image. The problem stems from the Thomson empire regarding its

newspapers as a business like any other, in which financial rules must be followed and a profit made, whereas journalists like to feel that their profession is a lofty calling and not just another enterprise.

"Thomson Newspapers is run like most manufacturers run a shoe factory, and the average writer, with no clue about how a newspaper operates financially, regards Thomson's tight operating budget as penny-pinching," says a senior executive at a rival Canadian newspaper company. "The average writer forgets that if there is no profit, they don't get their salary. Part of the Thomson Newspapers' problem is that Kenneth Thomson won't recognize what poor employee and public relations his papers have as a result of their getting a higher public profile and, therefore, becoming more of a target."

Thomson executives are not immune to the criticism, but, at the same time, they see no need to change the thrust of their papers. As Thomson Newspapers executive vice-president Brian Slaughter puts it: "We like to think all our papers are fine papers. There has been a tendency for some criticism of our papers simply because they are smaller papers and people in metropolitan areas may not understand the different functions of smalltown and metropolitan newspapers. The economics don't exist in a small town to produce the *New York Times*." Although most smalltown Thomson newspapers are unremarkable, one of its U.S. papers, the *Daily*

*Gazette* of Xenia, Ohio, won a Pulitzer Prize for its 1974 coverage of a devastating tornado that hit that city...

Nineteen eighty-three was both a good and a bad year for Thomson Newspapers. The good news was the court's decision and the federal government's pullback from a newspaper act. The bad news was the national attention focused by the Thomson-owned *Globe and Mail* on disputes at two other Thomson newspapers over what the reporters involved described as threats to their journalistic integrity. For their part, Thomson executives felt many papers and magazines covering the disagreements provided inaccurate and slanted coverage because of the long-running hostility in Canada toward the Thomson papers. (The cases cited involved the *Lethbridge Herald* and the *Brampton Daily Times*, both examined in previous issues of *content*. — Ed.)...

The Lethbridge and Brampton incidents resulted in further bashing by media rivals and critics of the Thomson chain. But as it marks the 50th anniversary of Roy Thomson buying his first paper in 1934 in Timmins, the newspaper empire is at its peak in wealth. The collapse of the proposed newspaper act leaves the door open for it to expand in Canada. However, Slaight says all that the chain contemplates in Canada is changing some more of its weeklies into dailies, the continuation of a process started 12 years ago. There are more buying opportunities in the United States, and acquisitions there plus the rate of inflation should push Thomson Newspapers over \$1 billion in revenue well before the end of this decade....

As the Thomson empire marks its golden anniversary, all its many contradictions remain. The big spending and decentralization are counterbalanced by stiff budget controls and

stringent reporting procedures. The monopolies held by most of its newspapers conflict with the involvement in fiercely competitive businesses like travel, oil and gas, and book publishing. The passion for high profits is in contrast to new-product encouragement through the accelerated development fund. The loathing of smalltown North American papers for their content and anti-unionism by many journalists and union leaders is offset by the respect of investment analysts for the fat profit margins. There continue to be both headlong, unplanned plunges into some businesses and long analyses of other ventures.

Finally, there is the paradox of the heads of the empire: the extroverted but steely Roy and the shy but steely Kenneth. All the contradictions in their personalities, interests, and activities have proved lucrative in the past, so there is little reason for the family or empire to resolve the paradoxes in the future. 30

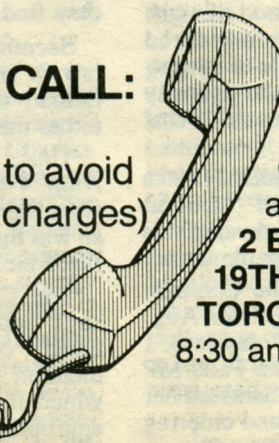
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# Knowing your subject

## *The MacBain-Potapczyk harassment case underlined the need for reporters to get facts straight*

by Lewis Seale

Looking back over my 18 years in various newsrooms, I think it was usually easier to work up a snappy lead than to get the background right — all because of the way I bounced, like every reporter, from story to story, each with its esoterica to master.

This is a problem that impresses me perhaps even more strongly now that I'm on the other side of the fence, as an information officer, and see the same simple errors cropping up time and time again in stories on human rights.

Here at the Canadian Human Rights Commission, we usually just sigh over these familiar flubs. Seen as a whole, each story is by and large on track; the major facts are right. No material damage is done — if it's not damaging to let the public get a misleading picture of the process. We remind ourselves that there is no way every reporter can be aware of every technicality in every field every day.

But recently, seeing these errors daily in the flood of publicity on the MacBain-Potapczyk harassment case — to say nothing of the flood of sighs around the office — we wondered whether the time wasn't ripe to try getting the straight goods out to as many reporters as possible. *Content* seems like a good place to start.

Here goes. **First**, "Canadian Human Rights Commission" and "federal human rights tribunal" (and variations of these) are not interchangeable terms.

It was a tribunal, not the Commission, that handed down a decision Aug. 1, upholding Kristina Potapczyk's complaint that then Niagara Falls MP Alistair MacBain sexually harassed her while she worked for him and ordering MacBain to pay her \$1,500.

Thus, the morning show interviewer who said Aug. 2 that "the Commission has now ordered Mr. MacBain to pay (Potapczyk) \$1,500 in compensation" was wrong, and so was the Parliamentary correspondent of one of the big dailies who wrote Aug. 3 of "the Cana-

dian Human Rights Commission's ruling" in this case.

Confusion is understandable. Partly because it is the Commission that appoints tribunals in the first place. (I perhaps should mention for the record that MacBain has gone to court to challenge this tribunal's impartiality in light of the fact it was appointed by the Commission.)

But tribunals are not arms of the Commission. Once appointed, they are independent. They have different powers. They hold their own hearings and reach their own conclusions. Indeed, a tribunal sometimes throws out a complaint that the Commission had earlier upheld.

(Why this apparent duplication? Speaking in the broadest terms, the Commission is a conciliator while tribunals are adjudicators. The Commission investigates complaints and tries to bring about voluntary settlements when it finds that discrimination has taken place. Tribunals hold hearings on knotty cases referred to them by the Commission, and they can make binding orders to remedy any discrimination they find has taken place.)

**Second**, the terminology of criminal law is inappropriate in reporting on human rights cases disposed of by either the Commission or a tribunal.

Thus, the wire reporter who wrote Aug. 4 that the tribunal had "found (MacBain) guilty" was out of step, and so was the one who wrote, also Aug. 4, that MacBain was "fined" \$1,500.

The Canadian Human Rights Act says complaints may be "substantiated" or "dismissed." It makes no mention of "guilty" or "innocent," which in legal proceedings are terms appropriate to criminal matters (however loosely they may be used in other contexts).

"Substantiate" is, admittedly, a \$64 word. We ourselves, in such informal texts as news releases, often find refuge in 98-cent synonyms like "upheld." Sometimes we walk around it by saying, for example, that a complaint

"was (or was not) settled."

The Act makes no provision for fines (money payable to the state) in cases of this kind, but it does allow tribunals to award compensation (money payable to victims). Potapczyk's \$1,500 is compensation.

While I'm at it, I might mention a third error that did not particularly feature in reporting of this case but crops up regularly — that the Canadian Human Rights Act applies only to federal employees.

In fact, the Canadian Human Rights Act protects everyone in the use of goods, services, facilities, and accommodations under federal jurisdiction — borrowing money from a chartered bank, for instance, or travelling on an interprovincial bus line.

In employment, it protects workers in industries under federal jurisdiction (the loans officer and the bus driver in the examples given), as well as federal workers (members of the armed forces and the RCMP, along with public servants and employees of Crown corporations) — about a tenth of the national labor force in all.

I know better than to try convincing reporters that an information service has answers to all the questions they'd like to ask. But they should try us; they might like us. We're in *Sources* and all the usual telephone books.

We have, besides, a few publications that reporters might find helpful to have handy when there's a federal human rights case to be covered: *Canadian Human Rights Act: Guide* (a primer in what we hope is everyday language); *Your complaint* (a step-by-step outline of the process); and, for the studious, and/or masochistic, the *Office Consolidation of the Act*.

Free copies are available from: Canadian Human Rights Commission, 400-90 Sparks St., Ottawa, Ont. K1A 1E1. Tel. (613) 995-1151. ☎

*Lewis Seale is information and production officer with the Canadian Human Rights Commission in Ottawa.*

## The Globe and myth

*Canada's national newspaper  
has, in many respects, been changing  
from a writer's to an editor's journal*

by John Marshall

As sure as the best fish and chips are wrapped in newspapers, the readers of Canada's "national newspaper" are trapped in its mythologies.

It took only a few days after I'd been hired by managing editor Clark Davey in 1973 for me to get my first perception that there was something fishy about at least some of the images the *Globe and Mail* projects.

Like many Canadians, I'd been a fan of editorial page columnist Richard Needham — not, of course, for his weird Ayn Randish political insights but for his humorous pieces and for his self-proclaimed embrace of the role of an aging '60s flower-child, friend to all, gallant to women, holding court for them in coffee shops (though not houses). I looked forward to meeting him.

To reach his office he had to pass daily through everyone in the archaic newsroom (this was before the *Globe* consummated its share of the pieces-of-silver death of the *Telegram* and got the paper's modern premises). One evening I intercepted Needham and introduced myself as a newcomer, pleased to become a colleague.

He seemed terribly puzzled by the thought. The man of so much print cordiality gestured around vaguely and mumbled something about not really knowing anyone in the newsroom. It wasn't a complaint, just an observation. My small talk was quickly chilled to the minuscule. And in later years, though occasionally still trying in vain to strike a flash of humor or friendliness from him, I became accustomed to seeing him coming and going, rarely talking to anyone, except editors, often with some female walking a deferential distance behind carrying things for him.

Not long afterward I found that under the *Globe's* surface appearance of a well-ordered, homogenous news package there were other dichotomies. I had mentioned to a cityside editor that I had

a lead for a good business story and would take it to the Report on Business section (R.O.B.). You would've thought I'd said I was taking it across town to the *Sun* or the *Star*. I'd never encountered such ludicrous and inefficient, turf-guarding jealousies before, not even at the *Star*. Once, I was involved in a one-story press conference that both departments insisted on covering. And there were times when, probing some corporate hankypanky where some specialized knowledge would be helpful, I asked to have an R.O.B. reporter teamed with me. Again, it was as though I wanted to share our information with the opposition. I had to make an end run around the editors and inadequately pick R.O.B. brains on my own.

However poorly administered the place was, I at least thought I was with an up-market paper tailored for an aware audience. Then, while serving my first month or so as a copy editor, I wrote a headline using the term, "Greening of Ontario," a succinct way to colorfully describe an otherwise no-news provincial throne speech stressing such trendy things as conservation and green belts across the province.

"What's that mean?" the news editor, Al Dawson, growled, waving it around and reading it aloud. He apparently had never heard of Charles Reich's blockbuster, *The Greening of America*, a term which had entered the language about three years before. When it was explained to him, he threw the head back for a rewrite, saying, "Globe readers aren't ready for that."

Would that such minor disillusionments had been the only confirmations of reservations I had about the newspaper I had often described — somewhat intemperately I admit — as the best provincial daily around. This heresy used to get me into debates with academics and other non-media acquaintances who seemed to think a newspaper couldn't be good if it was bright and competitive and imaginative. Still does. Conversely, I often had to defend the much maligned Toronto

*Star*. Still do. So why was I at the *Globe*? Opportunism. I'd been dropped by the *Star* (*Content* July-Aug. 84) and had sought a *Globe* job because I wanted to remain in Toronto and in daily print journalism — and the *Sun* wasn't my kind of paper.

And while the *Globe* doesn't stack up too well against other top world newspapers (read Martin Walker's scathing 1982 assessment of its foreign coverage in *Powers of the Press*, a survey of the world's leading dailies), serious Canadian newspaper readers are still lucky it exists. It complements whatever other news media they're stuck with, particularly if they are in the journalistic wastelands of most smaller cities or places like Halifax. The *Globe* is not all bad from the inside point of view either.

Among other gratifications it gave to me was Canada's first futures studies beat with the freedom, time, and travelling expenses to develop it. I had the pleasure of being one of the first to publicize in the lay press the principles of the conserver society theory with all its repudiation, implied and implicit, of the so-called free enterprise system. And this — at times on the front page — in the Bible of the GNP-worshipping, growth-is-all, Coca-culture corporate congregation. (And one of the satisfactions of appearing in the commercial rather than alternate-voice press, particularly in the *Globe*, is that you are reaching the unconverted.)

There also were spin-offs from that beat into exposés of the propoganda-blanketed, nuclear-power industry, which included the chance to learn from colleague Tom Claridge, likely the most knowledgeable and best-connected reporter in that fertile field.

I also covered the addictions beat for some time, and that got me back to conventions in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and my favorite city, Quebec, with the old ego satisfactions of seeing up to four stories a day in print from them. There's the recompense, too, of a critical letter from one of the organizers of the B.C. session, an

ideological affair catering only to reactionary marijuana-bashers and which ignored the most dangerous and common addictive drugs — alcohol and nicotine. Attached were clippings to demonstrate “good” journalism — nice non-analytical, non-questioning local reports of the sessions. He obviously had not liked my account of how one “expert” couldn’t answer pointed questions, and of how one of the organizers chain-smoked in my room and sent out for more cigarettes while he consumed all my scotch and went into a diatribe about kids using drugs.

However, that beat, like any other, confirmed the truth of that trite but true axiom that reporters are to be envied because they meet so many interesting people, some of whom become friends as well as news contacts. They ranged from meticulous scientist Gus Oki, who lived on Toronto’s skid row for two years for his study of street alcoholics, to writer, artist and tropical fish fancier Gary LeDrew who operated illegal after-hours booze cans patronized by the likes of comedian-singer Tommy Smothers.

But, while it’s a good idea for any writer to occasionally take a beat job — in particular for the kind of self-starting initiative that’s required — those with itchy feet and equally peripatetic minds prefer being generalists. For them, a long-term sentence to one area of interest or to something like a legislative press gallery or courthouse would be grounds to complain to Amnesty International.

And during more than eight years at the *Globe* (I wonder who first called it the *Mop and Pail*) I was given lots of opportunity to exercise both feet and mind. In my 50s, I achieved a childhood dream of seeing the awesome reaches of eternal ice close to the pole and Canada’s dramatic fiords of Baffin Island. It shows even the least-wanted of reporting assignments can be developed into self-rewarding ones. The Arctic tour — of defence department areas of interest — became possible when I got stuck with a part-time military beat instituted because our publisher, Brigadier Richard Malone, wanted to see more defence coverage. An additional thrill for this amateur photographer was to see two of the pictures I took blown up into two full-page spreads, a rarity in any paper. (I had to take nearly 300 pictures to get a handful of useable shots.)

Then there was a series of articles fingering a murderer — frustrated police put me on the track of the clues — and linking bike gangs with drugs



*Arctic explorer: Even our intrepid Marshall caught a few winks aboard a military aircraft while touring the North with then-Defence Minister Barney Danson.*

and deaths. Research led me to some experiences as far from my normal life as the Arctic ice had been — acceptance by the non-implicated though once-notorious Black Diamond Riders. I had to join in bayonet throwing and real-gun fast-draw competitions, and I once had to retreat from their swimming pool when they began throwing their “old ladies” into it — naked. Another proposal to the editors (arising from a conversation with a gasoline station operator) resulted in a series exposing the petroleum corporations’ methods of controlling prices at the pumps, among other things of interest to combines investigators.

**A**nother suggestion (being on staff is no different than being a free lancer — you have to dream up ideas) put me into Washington under the watchful eye of an FBI agent to probe documentary evidence seized from Church of Scientology headquarters, which had helped to pin various

crimes on their top leaders. The documents provided material for another *Globe* series, because, among other things, they included confidential minister-level Ontario government papers the cult had somehow obtained. I also found they had two different code names for me, an honor apparently granted because of various earlier stories of mine about their activities. They had a file, too, of reports from one of their agents in the Clearwater *Sun* giving details of my telephone conversations with reporters there who were also probing their activities.

I was never sued by these usually litigious followers of science-fiction writer L. Ron Hubbard, but they said a lot of nasty things about me. City editor Warren Barton used an amusing ploy to stop this once when two of them came to the *Globe* to complain. He called a reporter over, telling him to make notes, then asked the complaining Scientologists to repeat their allegations about me in front of a witness.

There were other satisfying series





non-editorial sections where, unlike the newsrooms, there could be potted palms, new furniture, and space. Of course, the managing editor and editor had cans-en-suite offices that could act as impressive fronts for any visiting dignitaries. The editor-publishing executive suite area was redesigned fortress-style to make it less open than the *Telegram's*. But then, it was for a brigadier and his aides, not the ebullient John Bassett who would often answer his own phone — or anyone else's if he happened to be near it.

These matters are not petty ones. They represent a built-in disrespect for news gatherers and their work that, somehow, *Globe* readers rarely seemed to detect, though they suffered from it. Canada's national newspaper has been perennially short staffed. Inexperienced summer students and year-round part-timers are regularly used on assignments that should be covered by seasoned reporters, sometimes even specialists. Senior writers, even those on beats, have had to fill in on week-long junior shifts, their own work, contacts and morale suffering of course. Important beats — including police, courts, even medicine — have gone uncovered for long periods except for hit-and-run methods. Writers get thrown into assignments with no thought of their suitability and often without opportunity to even pull the files. Poor planning is congenital.

**T**he *Globe* perpetuates its own mythologies. Its style book calls it a "reporter's newspaper." (In the revised 1976 edition this was changed to "writer's," presumably because by then the producers of some reports were being identified for some reason as feature writers rather than staff reporters.) The book goes on in both editions to say the newspaper's "drive, its sting, its energy, its impact — any superiority it has — comes from the excellence of its writers." Amen.

And it used to be so at the *Globe*, as in fact it continues to be in the feature sections. And at times, from national and foreign bureaus, individualistic, stylish, sometimes even humorous writing gets onto the news pages. But I saw the paper change from a writer's paper to what is thought of as an editor's paper, the juices wrung out of individualistic writing and, eventually, out of some good writers. Either that or they left. Such bright stylists as Joey Slinger and Christie Blatchford found their talents more appreciated elsewhere.

The basic problem is at the general



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copy desk level (ultimately, of course, at the top editors') where the common-denominator editing goes on. If there were no bylines on the stories, the most discerning reader would rarely be able to identify a writer. However, if the same writer works through another department or copy desk — national or world, say — you can see the difference. Some staffers' best writing appears when they freelance to the travel or book pages. They either know better than to try it for the city desk, or it gets changed.

The *Star* had the reputation for the stupidities of its editors' reading of their readers' stupidities. A reporter used the word Machiavellan, and a gratuitous explanation in brackets was inserted about Machiavelli, a statesman of Florence, being a proponent of crafty politics. At the *Globe*, where such common terms are also thought to be too difficult for newspaper readers, they are more apt to be edited out or simplified. I was once told I couldn't use the term surrealistic to describe the weird atmosphere of an organization about which I was writing. I was told the word applied only to a specific kind of art form.

Sometimes the most vital aspect of a

news report can be the atmosphere, the feel, the sound, the smell of an event, a description of the participants. But there are few *Globe* reporters who have not complained about all this "color" being removed, leaving nothing but the dead bones and an inadequate, maybe incorrect, report. It's usually a case of a copy editor — asked to trim something to size — being allowed to act as a mechanic and doing it the easy way, by cutting out what is seen as just unimportant "color." The readers lose.

I hastily apologize to those editors who have improved my copy by diluting the more florid or convoluted prose of which I am too often guilty. We all need editors. But as the style book says, it's the writers who provide the sting.

Some editors think differently, particularly on what is seen to be policy stories, especially if they involve criticism of newspapers generally, their own in particular. I found out that as a "stinger," I could also get stung — and at the *Globe*. ☐

*John Marshall, a Toronto freelance writer, continues his Journeyman series in the next issue.*

# To name or not to name

*Challenging a publication ban  
isn't unusual. There's a difference  
in a Thunder Bay sexual assault case*

by John Racovali

Bob Standish reached across the pick-up truck's bench seat and placed his hand on her thigh. It was not a welcome gesture and his wife asked him to stop. Bob, sliding closer, declared he could do as he pleased. He shoved the diminutive woman down on the seat.

The day had begun innocently enough. Bob, through an intermediary, had arranged to meet Vicki, ostensibly to discuss the terms of a cash settlement in their separation agreement. The couple, after 10 years of marriage and two children, had stopped living together five months earlier.

He picked her up just before 10 a.m., several blocks from her parents' home, where she had moved. Bob drove to Boulevard Lake in Thunder Bay's north end and wheeled into a secluded clearing on the small lake's wooded shore. He parked and the discussion had continued.

Vicki struggled to escape from beneath her husband. Threatened with a gross assault, the frightened woman agreed to intercourse.

Afterward, he dressed, circled to the passenger's side and, using a 110-format camera, twice photographed Vicki. Once, her hand raised as if in surprise, shielding her partially clad body. And again, through the open door, pulling up her socks.

Standish warned his wife: Call the police and I'll hand out photographs of you around Thunder Bay and say you've been raped. Later, he drove her home.

At 11 a.m., a distraught Vicki telephoned a girlfriend who hurried over after work. They returned to the friend's home and called police and a lawyer. Acting on the lawyer's advice, the friend photographed the bruises on Vicki's body.

Bob Standish was charged under the terms of Bill C-127, enacted last Jan. 4, with threatening to use a weapon to sexually assault his estranged wife.

"He said he didn't mean to hurt

me," Vicki testified at his trial, Thunder Bay's two daily newspapers reported. "He said he did it so I wouldn't go out with anyone else. He said he did it in a rage of anger."

An Ontario Supreme Court jury found Standish guilty of the charge June 15. Standish, who had no previous criminal record, was subsequently sentenced to seven months' imprisonment and one year of probation. Mr. Justice Coulter Osborne recommended he serve his term evenings so he could keep his job, and ordered he continue supporting his wife and children during probation.

Now, the Standishes' names are fictitious. They've been changed to protect both the innocent and the guilty. And this magazine.

*Content* risks a contempt-of-court charge if it were to print the convicted husband's name. That would violate a publication ban issued June 11 by Mr. Justice Osborne before the trial began.

Misleading readers with pseudonyms is only one example of the contortions required to live with the ban. Indeed, the standard, neat formula — identify the accused when charged and report on trial, verdict, and sentence if any — isn't much help when covering sexual assaults between married couples who have the same surname.

That's because a section of the Criminal Code allows the complainant, usually a woman, to ask the judge to ban publication of information that could suggest who she is. Identify the accused, the husband in this case, and you indirectly identify the victim. That'd be contempt of court.

The *Times-News* and *Chronicle-Journal*, two Thunder Bay dailies, the former a morning paper circulating in Northwestern Ontario, the latter available in the city after noon, normally do not publish sexual assault victims' names.

"This case was unusual," their managing editor, Mike Grieve, wrote in a monthly newsletter distributed to other Thomson-owned papers. "...it was extremely newsworthy. We felt

identification of the man was no problem. Identification of the woman could be justified because sexual relations between husband and wife (unlike accused and rape victim in other cases) should not be a cause for embarrassment. The violent, not the sexual, aspect seemed paramount."

Representatives of the two newspapers went to court and argued against the publication ban, maintaining it violated a constitutional guarantee of freedom of the press. They lost. An Ontario Court of Appeal will consider their arguments, possibly this fall, their lawyer in Thunder Bay said.

The appeal has sparked passionate outbursts over the media's perceived right to identify sexual assault victims.

"Now your newspaper is using the Charter (of Rights and Freedoms) to insist on the public's right to persecute further the victim of sexual violence, under the guise of the public's right to know," a reader wrote in a letter published April 7.

"The public has no right to see me naked," Rita Ubriaco, a public school board trustee, went on. "Nor does the public have the right to see my pain and humiliation. A press that wishes to bring every salacious detail to the public is not free. It is the slave of the lowest instincts of its audience."

Crown counsel Leon Nicol, during debate on the ban, accused the two newspapers of wanting to capitalize on the sensational aspect of the case. "They see this case as being newsworthy. I find (that) contemptible. They just want to sell newspapers."

The kernel of the controversy is the Criminal Code's Section 422(3). Meant to protect a sexual assault victim's identity, it allows the complainant to ask for a ban on publication of proceedings. (The prosecutor can ask for a ban and the presiding judge can order one at his or her discretion.)

"But not only that, it does so in a much broader way," David Cheadle, the newspapers' lawyer, says, "because it enjoins the media — not just the press but all media — from publishing

not only the identity of the complainant, but any information from the trial that could — underline 'any' and 'could' — disclose the identities. Now how the hell are you going to cover that story?"

Lawyer Cheadle says the publication ban has a prohibitive effect proportional to population. In a smaller town, more information is culled. "You could publish things in a large metropolitan area without too much fear that by publishing certain facts anyone could put that together and say, 'Ohhh, that must be Sally Jones, whose husband is a brute'. But in a small town, take Orillia or Barrie or Thunder Bay, people tend to know everybody else's business."

So there's a question: Is it morally responsible — or reprehensible — for the media to identify a sexual assault victim?

The wife in this case asked for a publication ban to protect her young son and daughter, says Doreen Boucher, co-ordinator of the Thunder Bay Physical and Sexual Assault Centre. "The girl had school friends who could see in the paper her mother and father were going through this."

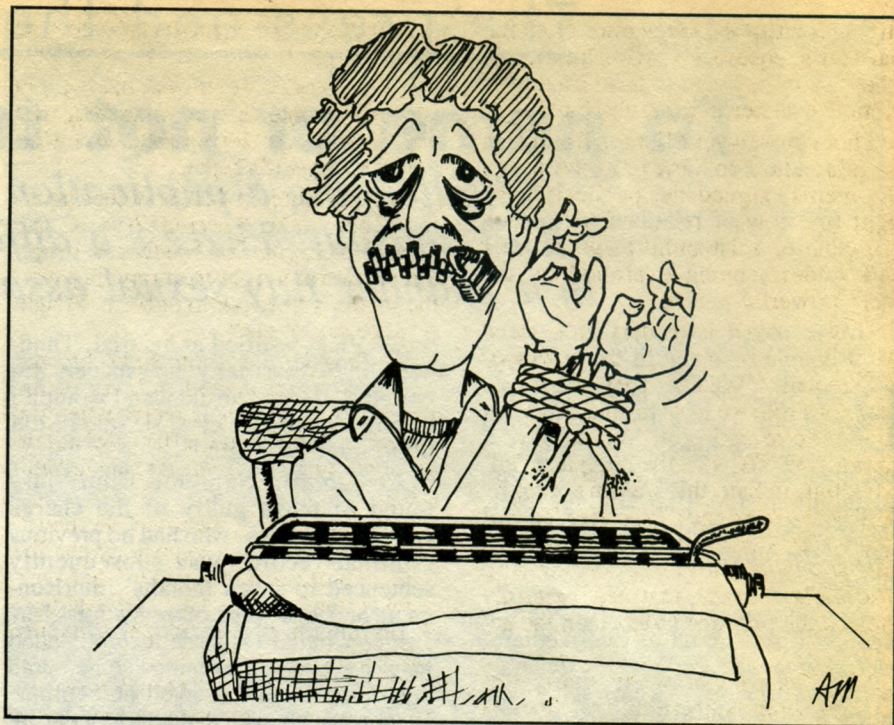
When the newspapers contested the ban, the wife was shocked; her lawyer had assured her she would remain anonymous.

"Here she wanted a basic recognition of privacy and suddenly it got blown all to hell," Boucher, her counsellor, said in an interview. "Suddenly she was thrown in the middle of a whirlwind. On an emotional level, she felt what the paper did was disgusting."

There's already enough to intimidate and discourage a woman from laying charges without worrying if her name will become known. "The bottom line with rape victims," according to Boucher, "is, they don't want anyone to know. If it were to go in the newspaper, forget it."

The centre received 53 complaints of sexual assaults between May 1, 1982, and April 30, 1983, she said. Only 24 resulted in charges. Figures prepared for the trial show there were 82 complaints between May 1, 1983, and March 28, 1984. Thirty-two women pressed charges.

Although the newspapers' coverage of the husband's trial ended June 22, Boucher said reverberations of the appeal on the ban are still being felt in Thunder Bay. A father, aware the case was not decided, tried to persuade his daughter not to charge her assailant in a more recent attack.



"It's a crime of humiliation, not only for the victim, but for her family," Boucher said. "It's really something they feel should be kept private. Not the facts, just the name."

Cheadle, the papers' lawyer, maintains, however, that the public has a right to know who the convicted attacker is. "He may be babysitting my kids, he may be cutting my grass. I might be leaving him alone around my house to put on the storm windows with my wife there."

Cheadle said the newspapers' arguments against the ban were shot down because they're the "messenger." The husband's trial was not closed to the public — indeed, his name appeared on an indictment posted in a courthouse hall — and the lawyer had argued the role of the press was to expand the walls of the courtroom to reach people at home.

Recalls Cheadle: "Now the judge admitted that anybody who took the trouble and time to go over there and sit in the courtroom would know that this lady was Mrs. ... and the accused was .... They could walk out of that courtroom and tell anybody anything they wanted about what was happening and identify the principal players. And without fear of any reprisal from the court."

"But you and I know that when that's handled by amateurs, stories become so distorted that what the public learns by word-of-mouth often tends to confuse the facts, obscure them, distort

them. You know, there's no legitimacy to that kind of dissemination of information."

He contends the furor over the appeal and the order not to identify the couple has blunted an important point in the case. "I'll bet you there are a lot of fellas out there on the street who still think they can go home and punch their wife's ticket any hour of the day and any day of the week they want. Because they have a God-given right ... as the spouse of that woman, to what they want from her."

"Now this law represents a major change. That is no longer the fact. And by virtue of being limited in the publication of this to some extent, that story hasn't come across."

Grieve, the managing editor, says that if the appeal succeeds he won't dig out the file on the case, won't dredge up the background and publish the husband's and wife's name. It's no longer news.

"We're not trying to zero in on a woman, we're not trying to do something with a husband-wife rape case, but rather have a look at trying to do something to stop a move, or possible move, to secret trials."

"Really, that's what it's coming down to when you can take a person and convict them and have them locked away ... in secrecy. There's a guy who goes to jail, whose name the public never knows."

He and Cheadle say Section 442(3)'s

stipulation that the judge must grant the ban if it's requested is unconstitutional. They want the judge to have more discretion whether to grant the ban.

Thomson lawyer Michael Doody, in an addendum to Grieve's newsletter comments, argued the public has the right to know of relationships (coach and athlete, artist and protegee, teacher and student) being exploited by the more powerful person.

Grieve asked if readers understand the principle involved in the newspapers' appeal. "Whether they know it or not, it's a role we have to take. And I'm happy we're taking it. We do have a counsel who is with the company full-time, but, in fact, this was an appeal by the *Times-News* and *Chronicle-Journal* against this section of the Criminal Code. (It's) the *Times-News* and *Chronicle-Journal* that are certainly footing the bills and have taken the action.

"I'm happy that we're doing this kind of thing, something that doesn't provide a big return in sales or anything else. It's an important thing. If we don't think about these things, who will? Maybe the readers at home won't and maybe newspapers somewhere else won't. We all, I think, take a bit of

responsibility in questioning some of these things.

"We happen to think that 442(3) isn't reasonable. It was something that was passed by Parliament but that doesn't mean it's right."

So, take Section 442(3) of the Criminal Code, take Section 2(b) of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms; weigh a rape victim's right to anonymity with the media's freedom to publish. Which is more important?

In Thunder Bay, on June 11, the scales of justice tipped in favor of the victim. How they will teeter when the appeal is heard could affect the nature of news reported from sexual assault trials.

Lawyer Cheadle believes the newspapers will win their appeal against the ban. (Thomson Newspapers' primary legal counsel, Tory, Tory, DesLauriers & Binnington of Toronto, will handle the appeal.)

The assault centre's Boucher warns: "We know if this goes through, we know it has very, very bad implications for other rape victims in Canada. <sup>30</sup>


*John Racovali is a general assignment reporter with the Times-News in Thunder Bay.*

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The following are updates to the most recent edition of **SOURCES** (Summer 84):

(page 66, column 3)

**THE ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN FILM CRAFTSPEOPLE**

Correction of spelling error of contact:  
Donato Baldassarra (not Baldassara)

(page 69, column 2)

**BRITISH AIRWAYS**

Correct telephone numbers of contacts:

**Sandy Gardiner**

Public Affairs Manager, Canada

Office: (416) 595-2561

After hours: (416) 499-5666 (not 367-5253)

**Maureen Kelly**

Public Affairs Officer, Canada

Office: (416) 595-2562

After hours: (416) 367-5253 (not 966-3473)

(page 76, column 2)

**CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS OF MEDICAL DEVICES**

Correct telephone number of contact:

**E.R. Hillrich**

Executive Director

Office: (416) 243-7477 (not 243-7447)

(page 100, column 3 & page 101, columns 1 & 2)

**CANADIAN RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES FEDERATION**

Delete from contacts:

**James Girling**

Editor, Rights & Freedoms

Office: (613) 235-8978

Correction of spelling error of contact:

**Nicolas Pangopoulos** (not Panagopolis)

Revised contacts:

Shreesh Joyal is replaced by

**Dan Danford**

President

Office: (306) 244-1933/329-2575

Reg Robson is replaced by

**David Coop**

President

Office: (604) 687-2919

New address for Victoria:

Victoria Civil Liberties Association  
480 Sparton Road  
Victoria, B.C. V8X 3X3

Revised contact:

Frank Preston is replaced by

**Ros Lamberton**

President

Office: (604) 479-6144

(page 141, column 2)

**THE MUTUAL LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA**

Revised contact:

David Cowlis is replaced by

**Douglas Booth**

Public Affairs Officer

Office: (519) 888-2547

(page 148, column 1)

**THE OMBUDSMAN/ONTARIO**

Revised contacts:

Frank McArdle is replaced by

**Eleanor Meslin**

Executive Director

Barry Kearns is replaced by

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# An absence of discourse

*Real communication, it is argued,  
requires sharing, interaction,  
participation, and feedback*

by Earle Beattie

It will come as a great shock for journalists — some of them my older graduates — to be told they do not communicate. Neither the print reporter nor the broadcaster addressing audiences that have ranged up to a billion people has ever really communicated.

The media are engaged in on-going monologues and not in the dialogues that communication demands by definition. Massive transmissions travelling at the speed of light over tremendous distances to vast audiences do not communicate. However superb the information, it is not communication even when informing world publics in the many languages of the Olympics.

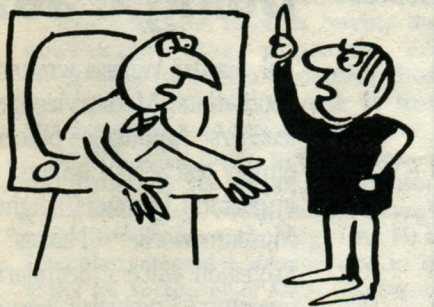
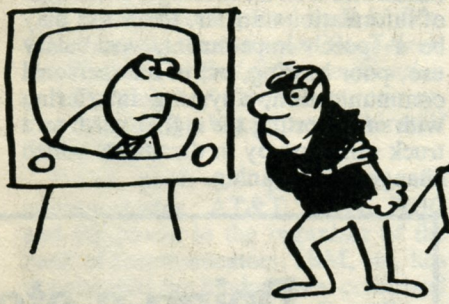
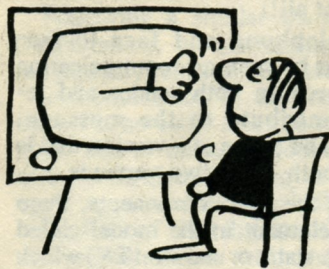
Neil Armstrong's radio message from the moon in 1969, "That's one small step for man, one great leap for mankind," is known around the globe. But these relays became communication only when Mission Control radioed back to him (and even then there was some dispute about the actual wording); the masses of viewers and listeners remained voiceless. To quote Marshall McLuhan from *The Mechanical Bride*, the role of the public is to "put up or shut up."

In short, communication requires sharing, interaction, participation, and feedback of more than a token kind that is not controlled by the message-maker. It cannot, therefore, be a single reaction to a set piece as in an opinion poll, but must be a genuine exchange of messages, a discourse.

In order to enter into communication, the receivers would have the right and the means to join in two-way processes that link senders and receivers in a reciprocating feedback loop. They must, of necessity, exchange roles as senders and receivers as they do in the interpersonal encounters — person-to-person conversation.

The sender must know that the individual receiver has received; he must know that the receiver knows and the receiver cannot be a statistical assumption. Otherwise, there may be transmission but no communication.

Some scholars get around the pro-



blem by spelling communication with an "s" when they mean the hardware and no "s" for the meaning. But laymen never knew they were doing this.

Bear with me while I raise some points that probably should be considered by the so-called working reporter.

The non-communicative aspect of journalists or those who work in the arts dawned on me halfway through my career as, first a journalism teacher at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto in the 1950s, then at the University of Western Ontario in London in the 1960s, and finally as a communication professor at York University's Atkinson College in Toronto in the '70s and '80s. It came through consideration of theory and after graduate college work in communication studies. As one of my professors, the late Malcolm MacLean at the University of Iowa, used to emphasize, "There is nothing so practical as a good theory."

The word communication is ambiguously defined in dictionaries as "impart" and "holding intercourse." It stems from the Latin, producing such English derivatives as commune, community, communion, communism, commonwealth, and company. All carry the meaning of "more than one." The prefix "co" is present in each case, being a synonym for "with" (it takes at least two to be "with").

The first part in most of the words is "commune," where common possession is a basis of human relations. This may be a physical sharing as in communal land or symbolic sharing as in the church's sacrament of "holy communion" where the mystical body of Christ is said to be shared when some Christians unite in a ritual partaking of the host. Some were "ex-communicated" and could not share.

In roughly the same way, Hitler symbolized his anti-Christ dogma of Aryan superiority with the symbol of a crooked cross, the swastika, and achieved a near-total communion of people, united in idolatry. They congregated in the black mass of the Nuremberg rally and, from all accounts, their communication was visceral and empathic.

It was like a current running through the audience, leaping from predisposed person to predisposed person, fusing separate identities in a vast homogeneity. Their feedback to Hitler's tocsin was the tumultuous roaring repetition "Seig heil!" with arms raised in the Nazi salute like one

mammoth member in deification of Der Fueher. The object of their worship stood under a huge swastika and the imperial eagle in that great amphitheatre, as trumpets blared and lights swept over the naive, upraised faces.

The Rally could be called communication personified and dramatized. Perhaps if this version of communication were cited more often, not as something always good but as a negative force with hypnotic overtones — mass persuasion through perceived blood affinities and stage-managed drama — communication would take on deeper (and darker) meaning.

In surveying the literature of communication on this issue, I read most of the established scholars and found a large number using the word communication in the old, untenable way. These authoritative voices in the study of theory included Cooley, Lazarsfeld, Lasswell, Janis, Kelley, Shannon and Weaver, Berelson, Steiner, Schramm, Gerbner, Servan-Schreiber, Smythe, Kapper, Park, Emery, Ault and Agee, Melody, Miliband, Eugene and Ruth Hartley, and Harold Innis.

But reinforcement of the participation theory came from more recent scholars, such as McLuhan, Thompson, Irving, Illich, Siegelbaum, Cherry, Cox, the World Association of Christian Communication, certain CBC people, Stavins, Raskin, Enzenberger, and Wellman.

In theory, Claude Shannon and Warren Weaver dominated the field of communication study for many years after they published *A Mathematical Theory of Communication* in 1949. Shannon, an engineer with Bell Telephone, was seeking a model that would express the capacity of telephone lines, but scholars went from there to employ his model for all media. Weaver was a sociologist who added the human dimension.

They began with a *Source* which selects (puts together) and sends a *Message* through a *Transmitter*. The resulting signal goes to a *Receiver* which is relayed to the brain or "destination."

In oral speech the information source is also the brain, the transmitter is the voice mechanism producing the signal which is transmitted through the air (the medium or channel). In a medium such as TV, the Source is the person transmitting words and pictures via a camera, microphone, and other electronic gadgetry to the audience's eyes and ears to the brain. (Some deny the brain is involved at all!)

The telephone and face-to-face speech can be seen as communication systems because both sender and receiver contribute to the message, amend it, and arrive at a version that is made by both, or at two versions.

Besides the four components, there is a fifth element in the model called *Noise* (e.g. static or snow on TV) which has an effect on the message. In the case of information transfer, the Noise may be a speech impediment, vocabulary use, poor hearing, or, in interpersonal communication, anything interfering with or distorting the signal (such as a truck rumbling by in the street) which changes the meaning.

In later studies, Noise was divided into two: physical (those named) or semantic (psychological), like day-dreaming. The early model also missed out on the element of *Feedback*, which can be inferred or actual. As I've already observed, there is little or no actual feedback in regular media systems.

Since I may still have your attention, I should say that at about the same time I encountered a linguistic theory of communication called "semiotics," a far different approach to the subject — that is, a study of signs.

Signs are the constituents of codes and the more we share the same codes (the same language or sub-language), the more meaning we will get. English, French, shorthand are codes. So is lifting an eyebrow or thumbing a nose.

Simply, it is a theory that says there can be many meanings in the message. Between sender and receiver there always are two messages and if the message is a speech given to a live or a media audience there can be at least as many messages as there are people. That is because you must, of necessity,

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perceive and interpret a message in your own way.

The sender's message is only so many words and has 100 per cent meaning only to him, though he can be *en courant* generally with you. But in fact you can get an opposite message to what was given. Messages are interpretations resting on selective individual perception according to people's backgrounds, experiences, mentalities, and cultures.

Thus, in semiotics the receiver is regarded as playing a more active role than in the linear process models. He helps to create the meaning of the message. He brings to it his history and socio-personal bias, his attitudes and emotions, although he may try to be "fair" in sending or receiving a message.

One U.S. scholar, Colin Cherry, defines communication in an etymological way, similar to this article. In 1971, in *World Communication: Threat or Promise*, he asked:

"What, then, is 'human communication?' Strictly, the word communication comes from the Latin *communico* — meaning *share*. Share, notice, not 'I send messages.' Communication is essentially a social process.

"Sharing does not mean simply passing something, some sign from one person to another; it implies also that this sign is mutually acceptable, recognized and held in common ownership or use by each person ... it is those personal unions, a union — mediated by signs."

Harvey Cox, a U.S. author, advocates a "theory of communication" which would provide the space or time

for participation by the public and involve non-professionals in message-making. He says "the technology of the mass media is 'one-way'. It makes us all quiescent customers of their images and values ... monodirectional and therefore a manipulative exercise." People, Cox says, "are encouraged to be 'listeners' and 'watchers', consumers not creators."

Following a similar theme, *Media Development*, an international Christian journal, states in an editorial about "democratization of the media" that there "is no other solution to this problem but to create a communication order in which all have equal status and equal opportunities which the present order denies." Not the sort of sentiment that would warm most media boardrooms.

In a recent book edited by R.L. Stavins, carrying the ominous title, *Television Today, The End of Communication and The Death of Community*, one author, Marcus Raskin, expresses himself in this jargon:

"The shift of power to the communicator, AT&T, RCA, NBC and the power to the organizer of the bank of communicators, IBM, etc. has not changed the fundamental colonized relationship of the mass media audience ... but when the issue is buying and consuming, the sponsors and advertisers undertake to employ those strategies which will change us from passive viewers to active consumers."

On the other hand, public access to the media, or its deeper connotation, participation, is being made increasingly feasible by technology. As Hans Enzenberger said a decade ago in an essay for *Sociology of Mass Communication*:

"For the first time in history, the mass are making possible mass participation in a social and socializing process ... such a use of them would bring the communication media, which up 'til now have not deserved the name, into their own. In its present form, equipment like television or film does not serve communication but prevents it."

So, back to my original contention that journalists don't communicate — and more generally that the mass media don't communicate.

We now have videotex which is proclaimed by many as heralding two-way communication. Then you have Barry Wellman, director of the University of Toronto's Structural Analysis Program, describing such publicity as "two-way hype." In the *Globe and Mail* (March 9, 1981), he declared: "This is just a fancier form of TV channel-changing and as two-way as telling the TV that you would rather watch *Love Boat* than *Taxi*."

Whether we're speaking of videotex or the CBC's David Halton reporting from the federal election, of Gwynne Dyer chronicling the history of war or the latest report from Central America, we are not *fundamentally* speaking of communication. Not if you go by the description offered earlier that communication requires sharing, interaction, participation, and feedback. (30)

*Earle Beattie, now retired, hopes this description of his personal journey into communication theory will challenge "the technique crowd, who may grind their teeth a bit or may just ignore it as a Cloud Nine bit of embroidery." He is editor emeritus of Canadian Journal of Communication.*

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Robert Tuomi  
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Office: (416) 826-8640  
Residence: (416) 653-9208



# Mailbox

Editor:

Great to see you carrying on!

Sorry I can't really afford to help you more than being a regular subscriber; if there is a way I could help from way out here, I'll try.

Wish I was more in touch with the media people here; we invariably grumble that your news is only from the East (then don't send you anything). Alas, I'm in the office mostly, as life-style editor, and don't do much writing anymore.

Anyway, I'm a *content* fan, have been for years, and hope you continue. I'll be doing more of a sales pitch in our office than ever before. I agree. It's an important publication. Hang in there!

Jan McMillan  
Edmonton Journal

Editor:

Reading Barrie Zwicker's article in the July-August issue (In the looking glass) causes me to write.

Many of Zwicker's comments are well taken, but the lack of knowledge which he displays of the Canadian scene is overwhelming. Especially the paragraph which begins: In Canada, the "professors and other individuals category is virtually non-existent ...."

Come on now! He goes on to list a very elite list of persons who have captured media attention because of their involvement in the media. He lists a few of the royal commissions, excluding the LaMarsh Commission — which commissioned some of the most original research ever done in this country — ignores completely the vast number of persons who are doing mass communication research in this country; does not even mention the Canadian Communication Association — and ignores completely the *Canadian Journal of Communication*. (Editor's note: The letter writer, who teaches at St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, is editor of the publication being described.)

Granted the latter is not yet on the level of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, but it is only 10 years old. The *Canadian Journal of Communication* has published some articles in recent years which criticize the media. It has published articles which examined in great detail the adequacy of the media coverage of labor, business, the Quebec referendum, and foreign news.

It has published articles which examined the effect of monopoly

*Readers' letters are welcomed. We reserve the right to edit for space. Address correspondence to: The Editor, content, c/o Humber College, 205 Humber College Blvd., Rexdale, Ont. M9W 5L7.*

newspapers in Ottawa and Winnipeg. It has also published articles examining the role of the journalist and the relationship between journalists and the Lougheed government in Alberta.

Perhaps the journal is too academic for Zwicker, but I think more likely he is unaware of it. Certainly the journal started out as a journal of media criticism — it has expanded its purpose since the *Media Probe* days but media criticism is still a part of the role which the journal plays in this country.

Similarly, Zwicker's statement about the "dozens, perhaps hundreds, of journalism reviews that sprang up in the 1960s died except for a handful..." must be taken with a grain of salt. Journalism schools, like all university programs, grew without restriction in the '60s and '70s. Times have changed and the journalism reviews which began at that time found their funding restricted and their role duplicated by other journals which have been around for a long time, such as *Journalism Quarterly*, *Journal of Communication*, *Journal of Broadcasting*, *Communication Monographs*, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, and others.

To the extent that journalism reviews attempted to be competitors with *Time* and *Newsweek*, they failed because it is these media which the media critic should be examining in detail, as W.A. Swanberg has done in his excellent biographies of Luce, Hearst, Pulitzer, and others.

Zwicker should also not forget the excellent work that academics like Walt Romanow, Earle Beattie, Ben Singer, Fred Fletcher, and others are doing in this country. Communication studies and media criticism are growing in this country. I hope my point is made.

I am sending along my cheque for my subscription to *content*. Unfortunately, my budget will not allow the extra to be a sustaining contributor, but perhaps in the future I will be able to do that.

E.D. Tate  
Saskatoon

Barrie Zwicker responds:

Prof. Tate makes several important and welcome points. He correctly identifies publications and individuals I

failed to mention. I especially wish I had included reference to the LaMarsh Commission. Not only did it do some of the best media research, it also was the victim of a malign attack by the mainline media, which concluded with *de facto* censorship.

I can't agree that a "vast" number of persons is doing media criticism in Canada, at least not the kind I discussed, namely the less academically and more politically relevant kind.

I was an early admirer and supporter of *Media Probe*. I still think it unfortunate that it gave up its expressive title. Perhaps there was no choice.

I would maintain that the journalism reviews did not fail because they attempted to compete with *Time* and *Newsweek*. Rather, the latter adapted slightly to the growing public concern over media power. The mainline media have great capacity to adapt (be-latedly). The alternative media — including journalism reviews — are always under-funded and, like mice, vulnerable to being squashed when the mainline elephants shift slightly.

I feel a kinship with Prof. Tate and thank him for his criticisms. A tardy order for a sub to the *Canadian Journal of Communication* is on its way.

Editor:

As one who has been a subscriber to *content* for several years, I feel there is a real need for "Canada's national newsmedia magazine" to continue.

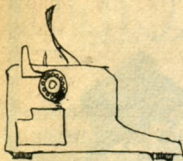
At the same time, I would be less than honest if I did not say that over the years I have been disappointed with the content of *content*. The emphasis on Eastern Canadian activities and an overly academic outlook leaves much to be desired.

As a working journalist for more than 40 years, I feel that *content* could be much more tightly written and a damn site (sic) less pontifical.

Phil Frost  
Union Bay, B.C.

*Our concern is less with what content has been in recent years and more with where the Friends of Content can take it. Our intention is to provide a mix of stories about the craft/profession — by subject, tone, and geographic origin. Our home base of Toronto notwithstanding, we most definitely see the magazine as national in scope. Pontificating, however, we do not see as part of our role.* ☺

# Short takes



For those of you who have been wondering why we are, for the first time since 1958, being subjected to a huge Conservative majority government, the answer comes from Sen. Keith Davey: *The Globe and Mail* did it. Short Takes has learned, via secret means of investigative journalism (I read about it in the papers), that the senator sent a letter to the *Globe* Sept. 2, accusing the paper of deliberate distortion and biased news reporting, intended to scuttle the Liberals in favor of Brian Mulroney. It was reported that in the letter, Sen. Davey claimed that Canada's National Newspaper stooped to 'yellow journalism,' especially with that front-page pic of Mr. T. with a pair of forks, depicted on a wall sign behind him, seeming to poke up out of his head. Funny, not all people share the senator's views. Just a few days earlier, on the letters page, a reader gave it to the *Globe* for favoring the Liberals because it published more pictures of Geills Turner than of Mila Mulroney. Could this letter have simply been an attempt to deflect criticism of the vile PC-*Globe* plot? Does Canada vote the way the *Globe* tells it to?...

At the aforementioned *Globe and Mail*, Catherine Motherwell, formerly of the *Calgary Herald*, joins ROB, specializing in small business and personal investment stuff. She joins husband Gary Loewen, also formerly of the *Herald*, whose appointment to the *Globe* sports copy desk was reported here last issue. And speaking of ROB, associate ROB editor Peter Cook is now editor of the new ROB magazine scheduled to start monthly in March, '85. Jonathan Chevreau, the ROB writer on technology, left, as did Jack Wiloughby, who went to join *Forbes* magazine in New York. ROB also has two new assistant editors. Don Grey replaced Rick Mackie, whose defection to the PMO was reported last issue, and which may not have been such a great move in hindsight. And former ROB reporter Ed Clifford is now assistant editor to the Monday special ROB section, replacing Gordon McGregor, who went to the *Montreal Gazette*.

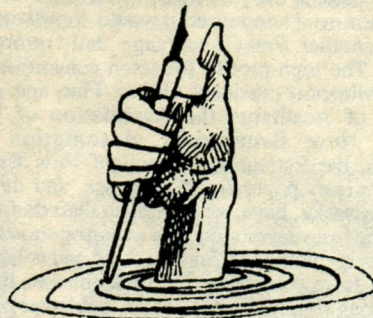
Doug Campbell, formerly of the *Vancouver Sun*, joins the *Globe* foreign desk, and reporter Kevin Boland left for parts unknown at this writing. Also, Jennifer Hunter moves from ROB to sports, where she will write about owners and the business aspects of sports. And the *Globe* just hired seven summer students to full-time positions. They are: Kimberley Noble at ROB, Matthew Fraser, John Haslett-Cuff and John Allemang in features, and Mary Gooderham, Margaret Polanyi and Andrew Fagan cityside. The hires were culled from a summer student gang of 18....

At the *Toronto Star*, David Lewis Stein, who was a part-time columnist, moves up to full-time column mongering. George (not the baseball player) Brett is back full-time after a period of freelancing columns. New copy editors are Steve Petranik and Peter Melnychuk. John Honderich, son of B, is now financial editor. Rod Goodman becomes ombudsman, and Marilyn Anderson takes over as editor of *Star Probe*. Gary Lautens, the "Chuckles" half of the famed "Knuckles and Chuckles" *Star* management team, returns to regular column writing, much to the public's delight. He retains the title of editor emeritus. And Bill Schiller, formerly of the *Windsor Star*, is about to join *Windsor Star* alumnus Brian "Slapper" McAndrew at the *Toronto Star* as a general reporter. Schiller is the guy who first broke the Amway-Revenue Canada story, and took a National Newspaper Award in business writing for it....

At the *Toronto Sun*, not many changes on the surface. The *Sun* has a new executive editor in Lester Pyette, formerly editor-in-chief of the *Calgary Sun*. And Deanne Dunn, former lifestyle editor of the *Edmonton Sun*, is the new lifestyle editor in Toronto. As to other changes at the *Sun*, none are yet reported — but a quick look at the building at 333 King St. reveals its walls periodically swelling slightly, and ominous rumblings coming from within....

At *Maclean's* in Toronto, former Washington bureau chief Michael Posner is the new foreign editor. The old one, David North, is the new London bureau chief. Former European bureau chief Marci MacDonald becomes the new Washington bureau chief. Former National editor Malcolm Gray replaces Southam Fellow Thomas Hopkins as Departments editor. And John Hay of the

Ottawa bureau left to join the *Ottawa Citizen* as a feature writer. Dianne Lone, associate copy editor, has fled *Maclean's* to become an associate editor at *Canadian Business*, continuing the tradition begun by Jackie Carlos. Copy editor Carla Straessle leaves to wrestle with a career as a freelance copy editor and writer. Her first customer: *Maclean's*. Going the other way, freelance copy editor Louise McKinney comes on staff. New associate editor John Barber replaces June Rogers, whose departure was reported last issue but whose destination was unknown. She has now landed in the netherworld of freelancing....



Speaking of freelancing, we hear that the Periodical Writers Association of Canada (PWAC), in its battle for justice for the freelance writer, has decreed that the working minimum per diem rate for freelancers shall henceforth be \$350. This is a minimum; publications wishing to pay more may do so. In the July, 1984 PWAC newsletter, president Jane Widerman writes, "It's time writers gained a more accurate sense of their worth. No more payment on publication, no more payment by word, and no more letting our clients dictate fees to us. We are professionals, and it's time to start acting that way." The \$350 per day minimum is based on the idea that a freelancer spends about two days a week writing, and the rest hustling. Everyone is entitled to \$700 per week, ergo, \$350 per day. Makes perfect sense. The only foreseeable problem is that, with staff writers everywhere quitting in droves to become freelancers now that we will all get \$350 a day, there may be a glut of freelancers soon. But what the hell. We can always go on strike. We are, after all, professionals....

Spies in Ottawa say there is not much movement there, due no doubt to election fever. *Ottawa Citizen* editor Russ Mills will be moving up the corporate ladder at the capital's only English-language daily. He has been named the paper's new general manager. A successor in the top editorial spot has not yet been named. Meanwhile, *Citizen* reporter Julian Beltrame has been seconded to Southam News' Halifax bureau for a one-year stint.... The new PR director of the Communications Workers of Canada is Alan Pryde, formerly of the Ontario Federation of Labor and the Canadian Labor Congress. And one of the most important figures on the Ottawa media scene, National Press Club chef Peter Adelberg, has left to cater to a somewhat loftier clientele. He is the new chef at the Rideau Club....

Relatively few changes at the *Montreal Gazette*, too. In addition to the aforementioned Gordon McGregor, who is now an assistant financial editor at the *Gazette*, the newsroom welcomes news editor Jim Withers, cityside reporter Marion Scott, financial reporter Brian Dunn, and copy editor Quinn McIlhone....

From the Atlantic Provinces, donalce Moulton-Barrett called to say that Alexander Bruce, recently appointed editor of the *CityStyle* insert of *Atlantic Insight*, is no longer the regional director, Atlantic, for PWAC. This is because PWAC rules forbid an assignment editor from holding the position, because it's a conflict. The new regional director is John Mason, a freelancer from Dartmouth....

Gordon Catt has resigned as publisher of the Kings County *Record*, Sussex, and as editor of *Farm and Forest*, both Henley publications. Dorothy Dearborn has resigned as editor of the KCR. Catt is travelling in Ontario; Dearborn is not saying what her plans are. Ana Watts is a newcomer in the KCR newsroom....

In Halifax, Lyndon Watkins, now part owner and publisher of *The Daily News*, has resigned as editor of *Atlantic Business* magazine....

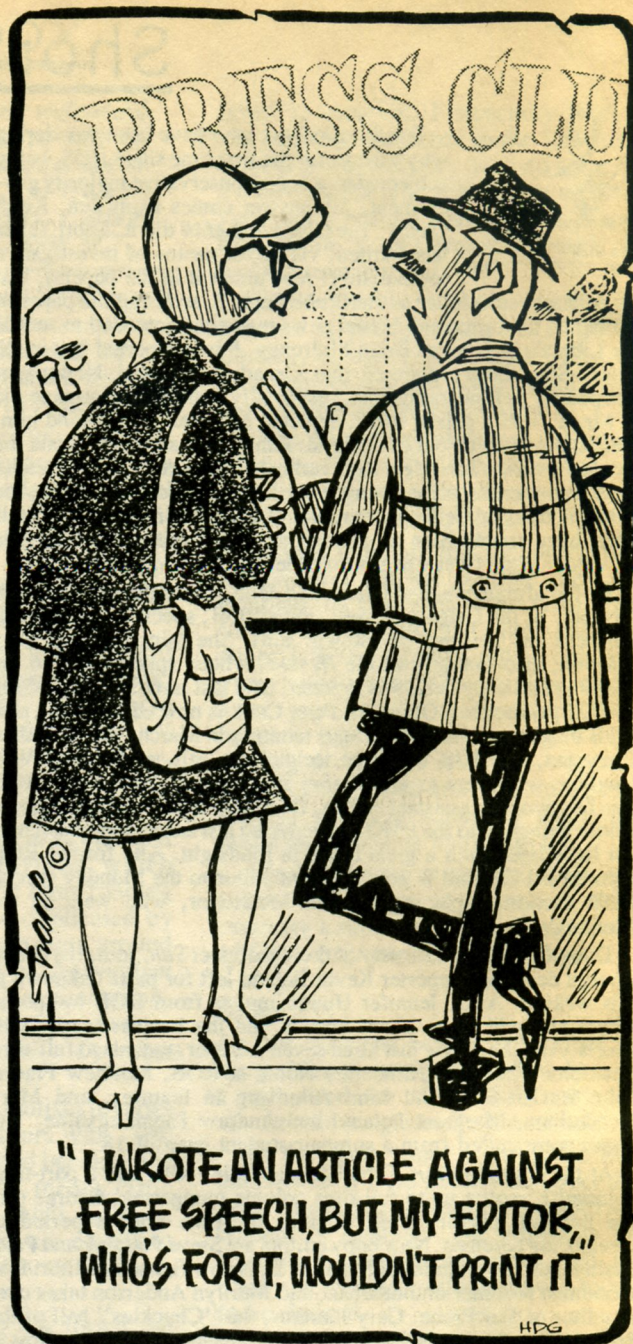
Caraquet publisher Alpee Michaud, mover and shaker in getting New Brunswick's new French-language daily off the ground, is going to take to court the people he said "stole my project." The new daily, *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, is now publishing but without Michaud. He initially interested 200 people in investing a total of \$250,000 in the daily, based in Caraquet in northeastern New Brunswick. But he was dumped from the board of directors the shareholders appointed. The issue became a political football, with journalists from across the province crying 'foul' when the New Brunswick government announced it would contribute a \$4 million trust fund to another French-language daily proposed for the Moncton area. The high-profile Moncton consortium, headed by Universite de Moncton president Gilbert Finn and involving the N.B. Society of Acadians, the Association of Francophone Teachers of New Brunswick, Assomption compagnie d'assurance-vie, the Economic Council of New Brunswick, the Federation de caisses populaire Acadiennes, and the Societe historique de Madawaska, have yet to publish their daily. But this has not kept the issue from developing like a soap opera with proponents attempting to merge with the Caraquet daily and soliciting support, unsuccessfully, from politicians and francophones in Nova Scotia and P.E.I., among others. But Michaud, publisher of two French-language weeklies, and the board of directors which ousted him have one thing in common. Both reject the idea of a merger with the Moncton paper; Michaud thinks the Caraquet daily should be published in conjunction with his now combined weeklies, *Le Pont-Le Voilier*, to ease costs—a plan originally put forth by Michaud but rejected by the board. Michaud's civil suit against Les Editions de l'Acadie Nouvelle (1984) Ltee., publishers of the Caraquet daily, and a number of directors, would seek reimbursement for such things as money he invested at the start, as well as expenses for publicity, market studies, and some salaries....

At the *Calgary Sun*, former editor-in-chief Pyette who went to Toronto, is replaced by Bob Poole. Former assistant managing editor Peter Gibson has been named managing editor. Nancy Beasley, a reporter hailing from Toronto-area weeklies, most recently the Scarborough *Mirror*, is now on staff along with fellow Humber College grad Daryl-Lynn Carlson, formerly of the *Olds Gazette*....

At the *Brandon Sun*, summer student and Ryerson grad Rick Morgan joins the ranks of the fully employed as a general reporter. And former Winnipeg *Sun* editor Paul Sullivan has gone to the CBC....

At the *Vancouver Sun*, veteran Indian affairs reporter Ron Rose retires after 40 years on the beat, and leaves a legacy: his son. Chris Rose has been hired from the now-defunct *Columbian*, as a reporter. Also at the *Vancouver Sun*, columnist and Southam Fellow Linda Hossie left and is reportedly headed for the *Globe* in Toronto. Reporter Ros Oberlyn left to join CBC-TV news in Vancouver. The *Sun's* new book editor is Daphne Grey-Grant, former editor of the *Western News* in Port Gray. She is replaced there by Marilyn Prupas....

Across the hall at the *Province*, former Sunday editor Geoff Molyneux is the paper's new national affairs columnist. His Sunday paper duties are taken over by Eric O'Higgins. Rewrite man Bob Ross has taken a four-month leave of absence to tour Australia and the south Pacific. Veteran football writer Kent Gilchrist becomes the new sports editor, replacing Bob Scott who is recuperating from a cycling accident. Kristin Jackson has left the rewrite desk to join the *Seattle Times*. Peter O'Neil of the *Calgary Sun* joins the business department as a reporter. Rob Dykstra, formerly of the *Calgary Herald*, left the Sunday paper to teach at Langara school of journalism. And the *Province's* Charlie Anderson has been named "hero" reporter of the Monday paper by a grateful city desk. Each Monday, the paper runs a headline something like, "Hero saves dog," with a throw to a story inside. Anderson has the task of doing the "hero" stories....



And while we're on the subject of headlines, I see a Toronto *Star* item from Aug. 18, reporting that a British newspaper, the *Financial Times*, has selected a list of the world's most confusing headlines, mostly its own. Winners include, "Assessing deceased's living expenses," "U.S. Stocks may be headed up or down or maybe just sideways," and "British technology to the fore in Japanese drains." Well, the Brits may have the most confusing, but Toronto still has the best. I give you the headline on Bruce Blackadar's Aug. 31 Toronto *Star* theatre review of *Privates on Parade*, a study of British military drag queens: "Long live the Queens and their Privates"....

Former editor of the Windsor *Star* Norm Hull died July 6 at 69. Forty-three years at the *Star*, he retired in 1974....

The University of Western Ontario's Graduate School of Journalism in London is the lucky recipient of \$500,000 from the federal government, to establish a centre for mass media studies. It will be the first such centre attached to a Canadian school of journalism.



The money comes from a federal program announced last spring by the secretary of state, according to UWO journalism dean Peter Desbarats. The whole program marked \$25 million to be used to set up "centres of specialization" at Canadian universities; the UWO application was only one of many. "All Canadian schools of journalism suffer from a lack of research activity," Desbarats told Short Takes. "In most of them the professors are so busy teaching that there is little time for research." That is bound to change at UWO. They hope to get the money by the end of this year — by March, '85 at the latest. It will go toward creating an endowment fund to pay the salary of a "high quality academic" in the \$50,000 per year range, plus secretarial and office backup. With the university putting an equal amount into the fund over a 10-year period, "you're looking at the injection of a million dollars," said Desbarats. That's enough to keep the thing self-sustaining. Some of the topics likely to be researched will be the ethics of mass media, educational opportunities of mass media technology, the social impact of new information technology, and the quality of performance of the Canadian mass media. The centre will maintain contacts with a similar centre attached to the Columbia School of Journalism in New York....

John Sawatsky, author of *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service* and *For Services Rendered: Leslie James Bennett and the RCMP Security Service*, has been named to the University of Regina's Max Bell Chair of Journalism. Sawatsky made headlines last year when he flat-out refused to answer a Crown attorney's questions in court about the preparation of *For Services Rendered*. That was during the preliminary hearing of a former RCMP corporal, James Morrison. Sawatsky's actions were based on journalistic integrity. He has a mighty background in journalism, and was the Vancouver *Sun's* Ottawa correspondent from 1975 to 1979. He is the third person to get the Chair; predecessors were Stanley Burke and Maggie Siggins. The Chair was established to let a prominent journalist act as a visiting professor for a year, to the benefit of the school and its students. Meanwhile, Sawatsky's new book, *Gouzenko: The Untold Story*, has been published by Macmillan....

From the Ghost of James Fleming Dep't: The last four holdout English-language dailies against the Ontario Press Council finally joined up. They are the Niagara Falls *Review*, the Lindsay *Post* and the Peterborough *Examiner*, and the Sudbury *Star* when it ends its labor dispute. There are 42 English-language dailies in Ontario....

Professional Publishing Associates of Toronto announces the birth of a bouncing baby bimonthly, *Today's Parent*, as of November. It's a glossy mag with a starting circulation of 100,000, and is aimed at the parents of anything from newborns to adolescents, but not including Cabbage Patch Kids....

The Third Journalists' World Winter Games will be held near Quebec City March 31 to April 5, 1985, writes Pierre Jurtschychyn, secretary-general of Le Club Sportif des Medias du Quebec. The idea was born in the mind of the late French sports journalist Lucien d'Apo in 1980: an international Olympics for journalists. At this writing no list of events was available, but I do not believe that running off at the mouth and jumping to conclusions will be among them....

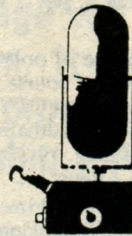
From the Looking Through the Keyhole and Seeing Another Eye Dep't: The Toronto *Star* reports that Ontario Industry and Trade Minister Frank Miller, late in August, broke the story of reporters who have the temerity to buy imported cars. That's right. To their eternal shame, many Queen's Park reporters have, according to Miller, bought imported cars. Miller wonders aloud how reporters covering 'Canada's Industrial Heartland' could buy all those Toyotas....

From the Startling Revelations Dep't: A wire story said that in Washington former U.S National Security Adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski blurted out that lying is a key element in U.S foreign policy. He told a Senate governmental affairs committee that "The

prevailing conditions and the awesome dangers of the nuclear age have put a further premium on the rapidity of response, on the centrality of decision making, on the covertness of some needed actions and even on some degree of duplicity in the area of publicly proclaimed intent." In English, that means its OK to lie your brains out if you're in the government. For further information, please contact any political reporter in Ottawa....

And finally, from the We Stand On Guard For Thee Dep't: the Media Club of Canada will hold its 1984 general meeting October 17 to 21. Fort Worth, Texas.

— Dave Silburt



It will be interesting to see which of two new Canadian pay-TV services attracts more subscribers and how soon — Much Music or The Sports Network. The deciding factor will be information content. There's a hunger in the land for information about politics, business, and, yes, sports, which very well may be the saving grace for pay-TV. "In this environment, pay television could not be expected to grow at this time," said chairman Andre Bureau back in August when the CRTC made everything west of the Ontario-Manitoba border exclusive territory of Allarcom and everywhere east of the line the turf of First Choice. Pay-TV companies claimed to have lost \$40 million in 18 months. But in 18 months pay-TV had attracted 550,000 subscribers, whereas "it took

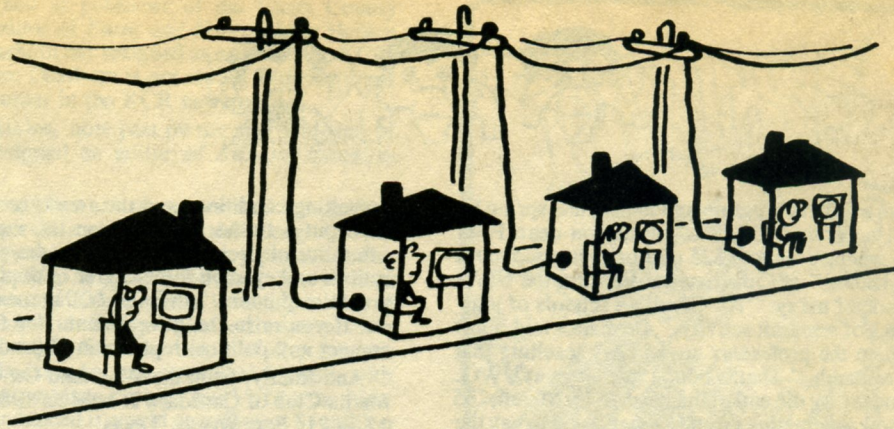
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three years in the States to have 10 per cent penetration after Home Box Office was begun in 1972," as Susan Cornell points out from the Canadian Cable TV Association in Ottawa. Under the new rules, pay-TV is also offering the Cable News Network which since 1980 has drawn 26.8 million viewers; it is the third largest U.S. pay-TV service....

Broadcasters were as ambitious as anyone in their use of polls during the federal election campaign. The major parties, of course, conducted their own surveys, generally on a daily basis. But CTV ran polls July 5-7 and Aug. 27-29, the CBC Aug. 4-12. Southam owns broadcast properties; its polls were Aug. 1-7 and Aug. 19-22. They all quoted Gallup polls in February, July, and August....

All this will have some relevance Nov. 8 in Toronto when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney speaks to the national Radio Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) convention. If he can avoid discussing polls, image, and first loving and then leaving the media, it will be a first at these events. In addition, RTNDA will stage seminars on stress and on media relations. The latter includes chairperson Taanta Gupta, news director of Vancouver's *CKWX*; and panelists Gerry Brown, Public and Industrial Relations; Denis Harvey, CBC English network vice-president; and Sam Hughes, president of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. News people may be more interested in a Trial by Media panel of Judge Denys Dionne, Quebec Cour de Sessions de la Paix; criminal lawyer Edward Greenspan; and *CKOC* Hamilton news director Con Stevenson. Harvey Kirck of CTV will be roasted (in a fraternal fashion) Nov. 9 and broadcasting pioneer Dr. G.R.A. Rice will be honored Nov. 10 at the President's Awards Banquet....

*On the move:* From Atlantic Canada, Esther Crandall reports that Doug Huskilson, ATV news director in Saint John, has been transferred to Halifax; Pat Ryan, ATV Charlottetown, has replaced Huskilson in Saint John. Jennifer Henderson left ATV's Saint John newsroom to freelance. Greg Dennis, graduate of King's College Journalism School in Halifax, now is with ATV on New Brunswick's north shore. Glenn Johnson, a Charlottetown freelancer, has moved to *CHSJ* in Saint John. Another newcomer there is Chuck Stevens of Sault Ste. Marie....

Back from a nine-month sabbatical in France, Peter Ray has returned to the BN wire-voice service in Montreal.... Back with the farm news on *CKNX* Wingham, Murray Gaunt (a former provincial Liberal legislator) was part of a government commission investigating beef marketing.... Former *CKRY* Calgary staffer Gene Constaime (who broke back into broadcasting at *CKJD* Samia) is on the air at *CKAN* Newmarket.... After two years with Broadcast News, Keith Leslie got the nod as replacement in the Queen's Park Press Gallery for Regis Cornale who moved to the Ontario ministry of natural resources.... Norm Jack has moved to the desk at BN Toronto from *CKY* Winnipeg.... Communications advisor to the office of the attorney-general in Ontario is John Yoannou, formerly a reporter-newscaster at *CKEY* Toronto.... The Queen's Park Press Gallery set something of a precedent when accepting for active membership *CKCO-TV* Kitchener cameraman Brian Magee. The unofficial rule had been that "if it doesn't write, it's not a reporter".... A new correspondent for Global TV is Jeffrey Kofman since Kevin Newman moved to Ottawa from Toronto....

There've been a few administrative changes at *CKO* Toronto that leave Bob Holliday and J. Michael Phillips as senior editors, Derek Rapaport in charge of public affairs, and John McGillivray on sports.... It has been confirmed that Jim Munson is off to London, England for CTV News this fall.... In Kitchener, *CHYM* has added Ken Welch as sports director and Cal Johnstone and Richard Thomas to the newsroom.... In Barrie, *CKBB* replaced Johnstone with Martin Vanderwood who had left the station to be news director of *CFTI* Timmins and returned.... News director Trish Lamers added college graduates Blair Andrews (Ryerson) and John Rodenburg (Mohawk) to the staff at *CKOT* Tillsonburg.... Brent Coppens left *CKOT* for *CKAR* Oshawa, joined in news by Toronto freelancer Paul Romanuk, Lee Habinski, who was at *CKO*, and Humber graduate Tom McColgan....

We got brought up short by Corinne Arseneau for a previous item on *CKNS*, step-sister to *CKNR-CJNR* out of Elliot Lake. Karin Dillabough is news director of all three; Arseneau and Lou-Anne Bourcier are news staffers.... Formerly news director of *CFBQ* Parry Sound, Carlo Klemm first went to *CIYR* Hinton but now is news and sports director for the entire Yellowhead radio network originating from *CJYR* Edson over *CIYR*, *CKYR* Jasper and Grand Cache, and *CFYR* Whitecourt in Alberta.... Steve Brown (ex-*CHLO* St. Thomas, *CHEZ* Ottawa, *CKGM* Montreal, *CKRA* Edmonton) has found a home as news director of *CFR* which signed on with 50,000 watts in Calgary last January. The news team there includes Bruce Seely, Leslie Kramer, Don Seel, Jay Branch (*CJME* Regina), Murray Wood (*CJNB* North Battleford), and Susan Booker (*CFUN* Vancouver).... Broadcast News has added David Lang to its Vancouver desk; he is replaced in Victoria by John Weldon, former news director at Drumheller's *CJDQ*. ☐

— Bob Carr

## Share your news

*Short takes* is compiled by long-time broadcaster Bob Carr and freelance print journalist Dave Silburt, both based in Toronto. They're both adept at using the telephone to assemble the nuggets of information contained in this regular *content* feature. They can't do the whole task, largely for reasons of time, and yet we want *Short takes* to be as comprehensive and as current as possible, within the confines of publishing deadlines. So your contributions are welcomed. Other than items about people on the move — historically a popular element of the magazine — *Short takes* consists of information that might not, or not yet, justify longer treatment. On the broadcast front, contact: Bob Carr, 494 Richmond St. East, Toronto, Ont. M5A 1R3; telephone (416) 366-6306. For print news of any kind, contact: Dave Silburt, 2285 The Collegeway, Mississauga, Ont. L5C 2M3; telephone (416) 820-0535.



# WATCH THIS PAGE

**For news about education for journalists**

The next eight issues of *content* will contain a page giving information about educational opportunities for journalists.

In one issue each year the page will be devoted to the Southam Fellowship program. It will give up-to-date information about application procedures and conditions for entry for the next fellowship year.

Each of the other issues will be given over to a school of journalism to tell its story. The schools will be chosen by the editors of *content*. All Southam will do is pay for the space.

In this way Southam is expressing its support for Canada's journalism schools, its belief that we must seek a continuing improvement in journalistic standards, and its support of *content's* efforts to provide "news and thoughtful comment about journalism in Canada."

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