

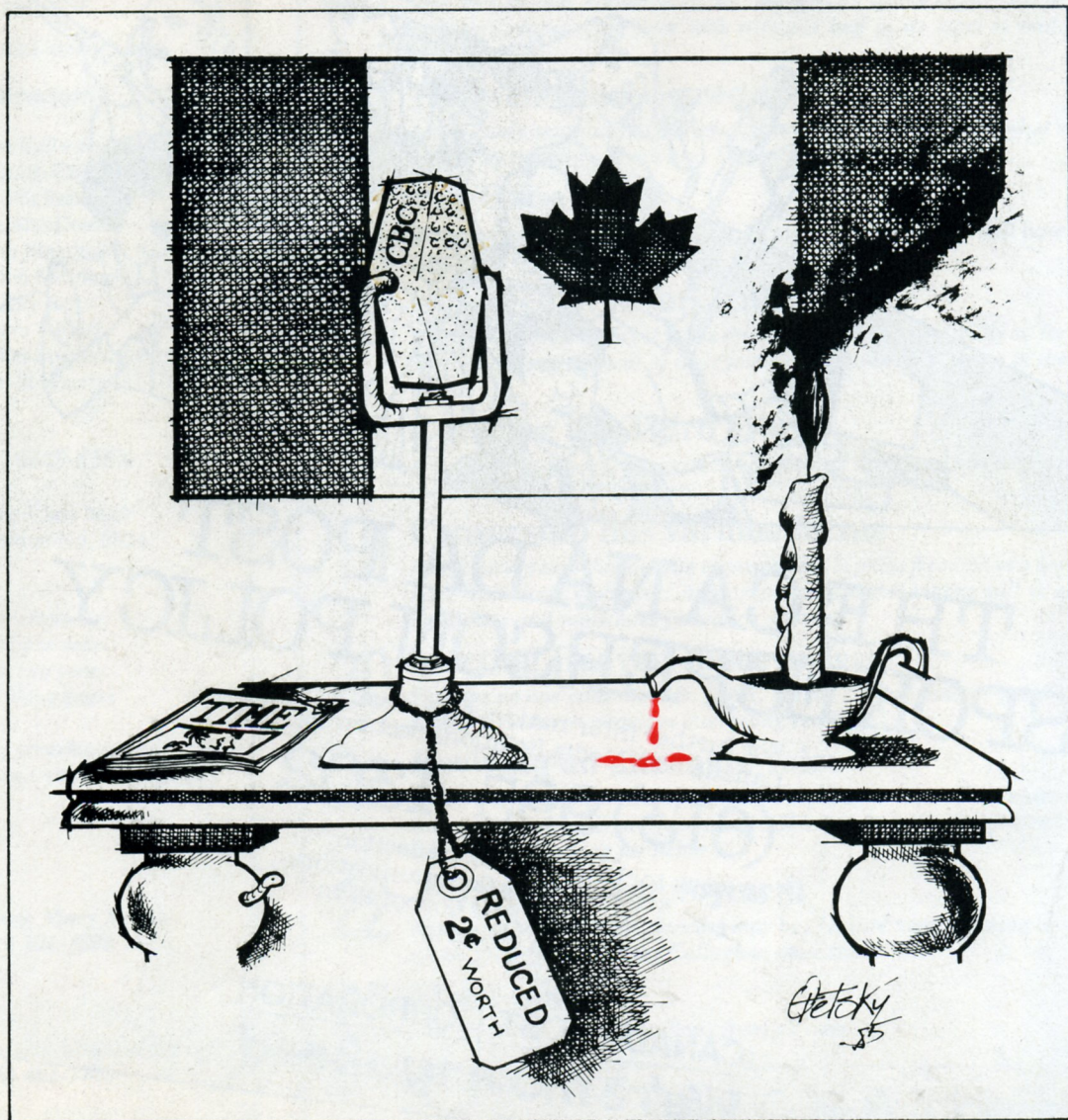
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The fragile 49th parallel

*Airwaves honor no border,
but there's a clear case to be made
for more than a token Canadian presence*

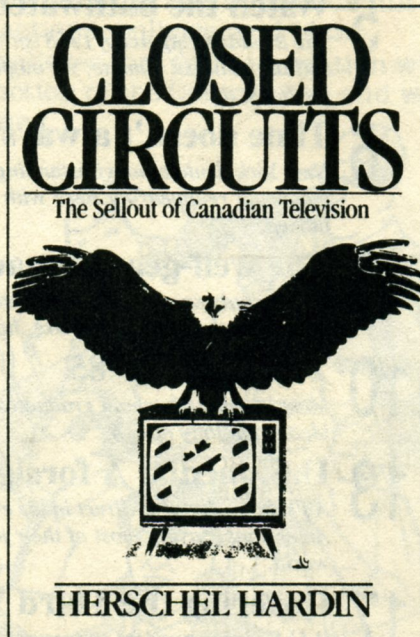
by David Spencer

The unfortunate history of the vast land that lies north of the 49th parallel is that of a colony searching for a mother country. Until the end of the First World War, our relations with two European powers was beyond question. From Jacques Cartier until 1759, we tried to "out French" the French. Then the British mentality dominated, characterized by organizations in the late 19th century such as the Canada First movement, which in reality attempted to perfect British values in a Canadian setting.

With the decline of Britain as a world power which began with the Treaty of Versailles, Canada demonstrated some symptoms, that after 400 years of historical indecision, the nation was about to deal with the question of its own identity in the period between the wars. We formed a national railway, we began to conduct our own foreign affairs, a government lost its mandate in 1911 on the free-trade question, and during the height of the Great Depression, we concluded that a national radio broadcasting service, enshrining all that was "Canadian," was a necessity.

But, alas, the pressure of making one's own decisions became the albatross around the collective Canadian neck. With the Hyde Park agreements of 1938, the surrender to American domination began in earnest and became accentuated over the years under successive and mainly Liberal governments. The question of independence centred on two vital and opposing issues. The first, articulated by historian Harold Innis, noted that in Canada's staple extracting economy, the development of industry was truncated. Innis felt that Canada should extract the surplus created by staple production to enter the industrial field. On the other hand, W. A. MacIntosh, an economist at Queen's University, promoted the concept that the surplus should be used to raise living standards in the country.

Although the above positions have been stated simply, the result of the debate is clear for all to see. By the time Pierre Trudeau came to office the



question of economic dependency had been settled in spite of grandiose gestures such as FIRA and the formation of Petro Canada. The wheels of industry were being turned in Washington, New York, Detroit, Chicago, and Los Angeles.

Surrendering the question of economic dependence, Trudeau and his ministers opted instead for cultural independence. It was their idea that Canadians could continue to be employed by such organizations as IBM (Canada) Ltd. while simultaneously developing a unique culture in two dimensions, English and French, that would be promoted through such federal initiatives as the Canadian Film Development Corporation and the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. It never occurred to the Ottawa decision-makers that the question of economic independence and cultural independence were inter-dependent.

The strength of Herschel Hardin's new book, *Closed Circuits* (Douglas and McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto, \$24.95), is that it clearly identifies the failure of the CRTC to articulate anything more than public postures on the

question of Canadian development of the nation's broadcasting facilities.

Hardin notes that CRTC policy initiatives to develop a "Canadian" broadcasting system which were defined in the 1968 Broadcasting Act were seldom, if ever, executed into action. He paints the Commission as a willing partner to the Americanization of the Canadian broadcasting system through its lack of interest in developing non-profit public enterprises. Instead, he claims, licences were routinely handed to actors based in the private sector who identified the profit motive as their prime concern, trashing at will any concept of development of Canadian programming if it interfered with the balance sheet. Hardin frequently repeats the theme that the private sector knew that the CRTC would not go to the extreme of cancelling broadcast licences if regulations were not met.

Hardin's critique hits home on a number of solid points. One only need turn on the radio, switch on the television, or visit a record shop or video store to examine the overwhelming Americanization of our overall cultural facilities. Our standards are measured by *The Young and the Restless*, *The Tonight Show*, and *NFL Football*, all broadcast by so-called "Canadian" networks.

To determine the irony of the situation, I must relate one of the more confusing paradoxes to appear recently. During the Toronto Blue Jays' baseball playoff series with the Kansas City Royals, a *CFTO* Toronto sportscaster bitterly complained on the air that the American commentators heard on NBC, the originating network, were deliberately biased against the Toronto-based team. Yet, the CTV network of which *CFTO* is the essential linchpin chose to carry the NBC feed including its commentators while simultaneously disposing of Don Chevrier, the Blue Jays' commentator throughout the regular season. The network consciously disregarded any Canadian flavor America's pastime may have had.

Certainly anyone, including me, who has a nationalist streak, must be in

sympathy with the viewpoint expressed by Hardin. Yet, nagging questions remain which the text does not address, and in my opinion should have addressed. Certainly the most important of these centres on the question of Canadian nationalism itself as part of our culture. The Canadian, as Brian Mulroney is discovering rudely, is a complex creature. Economically and socially we are imbued with the characteristics of a national mentality which are untouchable. Our Reaganite clone discovered this when he attempted to de-index old age pensions. The point is this: Items such as the welfare state are part of our national culture and they are untouchable. However, we cannot safely extend nationalism to culture, and the reasons are historical.

Most Canadians, self included, were born within earshot and eyeshot of the border. Since we were old enough to state our first words, we were exposed to American media. With the birth of television in Canada in 1952, a significant number of Canadians had already been watching border stations from the United States. A cultural pattern had been set, and it remained to be duplicated in full or in part by our newly emerging national service.

The CBC during its formative years attempted only weakly to identify any form of Canadianism. We were treated to such items as a weekly hit parade show with Joyce Hahn and Wally Koster which was a carbon copy of the American-produced *Hit Parade*. Even the lauded *This Hour Has Seven Days* was based on a model created and used in Britain.



"The Canadian broadcasting system should . . . safeguard, enrich, and strengthen the cultural, political, social, and economic fabric of the country." — Broadcasting Act, 1968.

Although the CBC originated many of its own programs, the packages in which they came were produced elsewhere. Thus, quantum leaps by CBC producers to Hollywood, note here people like Pepiatt and Aylesworth, Norman Jewison, etc., were simple. The Canadian emigration to points south was more severe than from any other part of the world. In like fashion to our economic attitude, our cultural heritage followed the same dependent path.

Thus, the first essential question

emerges. Is the CRTC or any other agency with a similar mandate responsible for drawing regulations which will change public attitudes? If one accepts the colonialist theory I have just advanced, one must accept a "yes" response to the above inquiry. Hardin's book misses the point that the softening process for Americanization of Canadian broadcasting was well under way long before the Board of Broadcast Governors or, later, the CRTC were conceived by Ottawa mandarins.

I must quibble with Hardin on the overall tone of his text. He presents the CRTC adversaries, notably the Association for Public Broadcasting in British Columbia and the various cable lobbies in the Vancouver and Victoria regions, as somehow having a monopoly on the

Compounding the gloom for many supporters of public broadcasting is the fear that cultural issues will be on the table if the Conservative Government begins negotiations with Washington on free trade. They believe this would spell the end to any hope for cultural sovereignty, given the overwhelming size of the U.S. entertainment industry and the monumental indifference of U.S. television programmers to foreign fare. — Analysis by Murray Campbell in the Globe and Mail, Oct. 19, 1985.

Government indicates film, books to be part of trade talks with U.S.

NOVEMBER 6, 1985

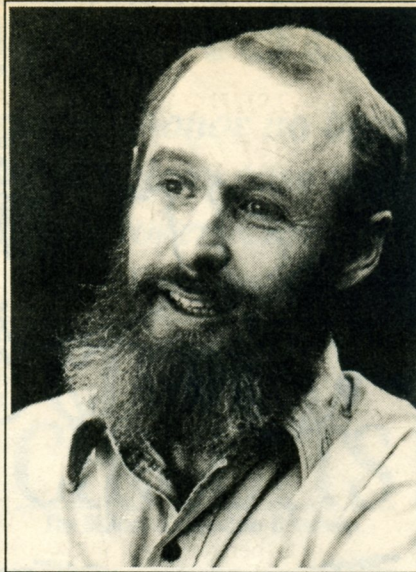
BY CHARLOTTE MONTGOMERY
The Globe and Mail

OTTAWA

Under a barrage of opposition accusations, the Government indicated yesterday that Canada's film and television industry will be part of trade talks open with the United States.

After Prime Minister Brian Mulroney quoted an old speech of his own in response to some questions.

"Should broadcasting or structural elements of our cultural industries be included in free trade negotiations directly or indirectly, there could be substantial challenges to your industry and to Canadian cultural sovereignty. A high level of vigilance and significant involvement on everyone's part will be required." — CRTC chairman Andre Bureau, addressing the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, Oct. 22, 1985.



Herschel Hardin

truth. His presentation of the many battles that these organizations fought with the CRTC declines into a "good guy" and "bad guy" relationship.

One is left with the feeling that the APBBC has a stranglehold on dogma that is not unrepresentative of the "truth" as articulated by television evangelists. Hardin clearly defines the relationship as one in which one side is clearly right in all aspects and the other clearly mistaken. This may very well be true, but I for one resent that I am being forced into a winner-take-all decision-making process.

Surely the objective here is not the promotion of the attitudes of an interest

group, no matter how virtuous, but the general questioning of decision-making by an influential government commission. In this field, *Closed Circuits* has the danger of being dismissed as a book that should be left on library shelves.

"We have abandoned our national stage to another society. Yet all the principles in our legislation, in our official statements, in the conclusions of royal commissions in the last 50 years emphasize opposite objectives." Public broadcasting "must again, as it was in 1932 and at some other moments in the past, become a national priority." — CBC president Pierre Juneau, addressing an Ottawa gathering of the Canadian Conference of the Arts, October, 1985.

In spite of a few pointed remarks, I think that *Closed Circuits* is probably the most important book to emerge in the last 20 years vis-a-vis the Canadian-American connection question. In spite of its rhetoric, it should be included on college and university outlines for serious students of media. ☐

David Spencer is a member of the broadcasting faculty at Toronto's Humber College, is working on his doctorate at the University of Toronto, and frequently is a consultant to broadcast organizations, usually in the private sector.

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Watch the bathwater

*The Broadcasting Act of 1968
isn't as flawed as some think.
Be careful of the baby.*

by Joan Irwin

It's been called quaint, dangerously idealistic, and a good many other unkind things. A colleague said acidly some years ago that it might have been written by a virgin princess waiting in her tower for a perfect world and a perfect prince.

We're talking about the Broadcasting Act of 1968, still operative and, in my opinion, unfairly maligned. I'd like to put in a good word for the old Act before the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy makes recommendations for a new one to take us through to the end of the century.

There seem to be two bits of wording that some people find particularly hard to swallow. Some of us have read them so many times that they slide through our minds like the familiar background sounds of the neighborhoods, but here they are one more time:

"The Canadian broadcasting system should be effectively owned and controlled by Canadians so as to safeguard, enrich, and strengthen the cultural, political, social, and economic fabric of Canada . . .

"The programming provided by the Canadian broadcasting system should be varied and comprehensive and should provide reasonable, balanced opportunity for the expression of differing views on matters of public concern, and the programming provided by each broadcaster should be of high standard, using predominantly Canadian creative and other resources."

Those obligations are intended to apply to the broadcasting system as a whole; the Act gets specific about the CBC later on. It seems to me that the requirements outlined are reasonable and not at all unrealistic. And I don't see anything silly or old-fashioned about expecting something as important as broadcasting to "safeguard, enrich and strengthen" the fabric of the country, using "predominantly Canadian creative and other talents."

The principles and standards established in the Act may be difficult of achievement, but since hardly anyone outside the CBC has tried very hard, the degree of difficulty remains theoretical.

People applying for licences always promise that the public will be uppermost in their minds at all times, that they understand the responsibilities of being granted the use of the public airwaves. Once in business, they tend to forget the promises, which is the reason that Canadian content regulations had to be instituted.

No sensible person would argue that broadcasting, especially television, is an expensive business and fiercely competitive. It's also lucrative in most cases, and broadcast licences are precious.

It's true that there are forms of competition now that weren't envisaged when the Act was written — satellite dishes and videocassette machines, for instance. And it's abundantly clear that we can't stop signals from coming into Canada from other countries, nor can we stop people from buying equipment to capture them.

But surely that just makes it more important to define what is within our control and to continue to set high standards for it. A period when Canada is inundated with foreign broadcast signals is hardly the time to shrug off the idea that holders of Canadian licences to broadcast should do something more than import additional foreign programs, that they should, in fact, contribute to enriching and strengthening the fabric of the country.

Something is terribly, terribly wrong when only 28 per cent of all English-language television available in Canada is Canadian. In prime time it's only 23 per cent (except in Toronto and Vancouver, where it's 20 per cent).

The intent of the Act rings out as clear as a trumpet call. That's not where our problem lies. We can thank muddled governments, a weak regulatory body that became the captive of industry lobbyists, the short-sighted

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parochialism of many politicians, the greed of many broadcasters and the inability of the CBC to focus its resources on program production.

We now have a chairman of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) who believes that the forces of the marketplace should prevail:

"Broadcasting and telecommunications," Andre Bureau has said, "must be seen and treated as industries like any other and not simply as cultural forces or vehicles."

With that kind of thinking in the agency that's supposed to enforce the terms of the Act, it's no wonder the broadcasters don't exert themselves to follow it's principles.

If we — all of us — and our governments don't begin to take the perilous state of Canadian broadcasting more seriously, it won't matter much what a new Act says. We've been operating under a sound and principled piece of legislation for 17 years, and look at the mess we're in. 30

Joan Irwin is a freelance writer now living in Haliburton, Ont. Formerly a broadcast commentator with the Montreal Star and Montreal Gazette, she now contributes a weekly column to the Toronto Star, from which the foregoing is reprinted with permission.

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Time doesn't always slip away

Editor's note: The Globe and Mail carried a story Sept. 18 that Time Inc. was working on a deal to resurrect a Canadian edition of Time magazine in a joint venture with the new owners of Comac Communications of Toronto. The proposal cited apparently indicated that a quarter of the content would come from Canadian writers, with the balance culled from the magazine's international editions. The Globe story said Time Inc. would hold a 25 per cent stake in Comac, but Comac's investors would get 75 per cent control of a Canadian edition.

The next day, Sept. 19, Time Inc. denied that it plans to revive a Canadian edition. Reports that such a move is in the works, The Canadian Press conveyed in a New York despatch, "are completely untrue."

In the meantime, domestic publishers were alarmed at the prospect. Saturday Night publisher John Macfarlane was quoted by the Toronto Star, which pointed out that while a domestic Time might meet ownership rules, the 20-25 per cent Canadian content figure would be in violation of the Income Tax Act. "If the government starts to negotiate that 80 per cent (minimum)," said Macfarlane, "there'll be a whole lineup of American publications getting in bed with Canadian entrepreneurs."

And the Canadian Periodical Publishers Association warned that if the government allows an exemption, "the consequences will be devastating for Canadian magazines. . . . the economic consequences for our industry and the cultural consequences for Canadians, who would have fewer truly Canadian magazines available to them, would be disastrous."

Media analyst Barrie Zwicker delivered the following commentary on CBC Radio. Zwicker is editor and publisher of Sources, the directory of contacts for the news media, and a former editor and publisher of content.

by Barrie Zwicker

Nine years ago, *Time* magazine trashed its so-called Canadian edition and sulked back across the U.S. border rather than accept rules of corporate behavior followed by every other magazine in this country — domestic and foreign.

That was after a lengthy struggle that ended with the passage by Parliament of Bill C-58. That bill removed the massive special tax and other privileges that had enabled *Time* to become the largest circulation magazine in the country, sending staggering amounts of profit to its New York headquarters while running a mere five pages of Canadian content out of 80 pages in all.

Now, as quietly as they can, the slick, powerful and persistent operators at *Time* magazine are trying to restore much of the status quo of nine years ago. They just might succeed. If they do it could be disastrous for the Canadian magazine industry.

The front men are three Bay Street wheeler dealers who have formed a syndicate to publish a Canadianized version of *Time*.

Time has offered the syndicate a juicy deal to get its members to go lobby on Parliament Hill. The syndicate would get \$20 million (U.S.), use of the *Time* nameplate, and publication rights to all *Time*'s editorial copy every week. The syndicate would produce perhaps 25 per cent original Canadian content but call the whole thing Canadian.

The deal, if approved, would gut Bill C-58. That law's eminently fair main provision is that to qualify as Canadian for tax purposes a magazine must be 80 per cent written, edited, and typeset in Canada.

Real Canadian magazines have to originate — at high cost — every page, every issue. No weekly CARE package from New York for them. In trade terms what the syndicate wants to do is called dumping.

Culturally the proposed deal puts Canada last. This country already suffocates in an over-abundance of foreign magazines: more than 90 per cent of the titles on Canadian newsstands are American.

And if this *Time* deal is approved how could a flood of similar ones be stopped? We'd have some enterprising go-between making millions by publishing Penthouse "Canada" with a nude foldout from Saskatoon.

Time and its friends are trying to do an end-run around a vitally important Canadian law, using the lure of American money and soft soap in high places. It will be a national embarrassment and potential disaster for Canadian magazines if they succeed. 30

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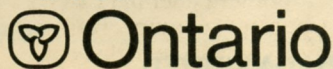
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The well-gearred graduate

*A study says J-schools are more in touch
with what's needed by the craft.*

There are caveats.

Wrapping up the second three-part look at journalism education in Canada, researchers concluded that today's reporters "are extremely well-educated" and "the oft-maligned journalism schools are responding to the industry's needs."

The study, whose final report has just been released, was conducted by the Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association (CDNPA) of Toronto. It polled newsroom personnel with five years or less experience, essentially asking how their education prepared them for newspaper work. Previous surveys in the most recent round were conducted among journalism school directors and managing editors. The three-phase examination to a large extent was a five-years-later parallel to a series of studies launched in 1977 by CDNPA.

While journalism schools by and large were complimented — 74 per cent of the respondents said their education prepared them well for journalism careers — there were a few caveats. The majority said their schools' treatment of current affairs was barely adequate. Many also said training on video display terminals was not adequate at all (as the survey later showed, respondents found that knowledge of VDT systems was useful but not all that important).

Of the 130 newsroom employees who replied to the questionnaire — 30 per cent of the cross-Canada sample — most agreed with what managing editors had to say about how important certain elements were to their jobs. They agreed, for example, that the most important element to a reporter's work is accuracy. That was followed by dedication and motivation, report-

ing skills, spelling and grammar, writing skills, sense of news value, curiosity, interviewing skills, ethics, general knowledge, current affairs, reading comprehension, and knowledge of politics. Other academic knowledge and copy editing followed.

The survey raised the question of compensation for field placement while they were in college or university, a topic of increasing debate among journalism educators and their advisory committees from industry. The CDNPA report shows that most interns (58 per cent) did not receive any form of wage for their work, while 32 per cent did. British Columbia interns are more likely to be paid, as are Quebec and Prairie students. Only 15 per cent of the Ontario reporters had been paid when they served as interns.

Speaking of money, the report says it is difficult to determine a true industry average entry-level salary. But researchers figured the average starting salary of the respondents was \$277 per week. The 1985 study shows that 40 per cent of the respondents had started at \$300 weekly, compared to 15 per cent at that level in the 1980 survey of graduates.

A few other highlights from the recent study:

*Some 56 per cent of the respondents said they still were with the newspaper that first hired them. The other 44 per cent had worked at an average 1.7 newspapers prior to landing their current jobs. One person had worked for four other papers.

*Described as "surprising statistics," 44 per cent of the respondents had worked in an unrelated field before returning to school and then following a journalism career, and 86 per cent had had some related work experience prior to graduation (including internships, summer jobs, and freelance assignments).

*Regarding the need to have a second language, 61.5 per cent of the Quebec respondents thought it ranked first on a scale of 1-6, whereas 37 per cent of the Prairie respondents did not think it was important at all. Overall, 21 per cent chose it as No. 1 and 21 per cent as No. 6.



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*Half the respondents were aged 25-29, a third were 20-24, and 15 per cent were 30-34.

*In line with earlier studies of Canadian journalism education, females outranked males 52 to 48 per cent. Indeed, the researchers say, the surveys have indicated that more women than men are entering the field.

The survey demanded numerous open-ended responses, including advice for those contemplating careers in journalism. The report suggests the range of advice be given to anyone considering entering the field, "if only to dispel some of the myths or misconceptions that exist." Among the comments:

"Do 16 times more than the course asks you to do."

"Do not go to undergrad J-school. Instead, study history, economics, politics, literature, or whatever for four years. Then, if you like, take a one-year journalism program."

"Be prepared for small assignments — rabbit shows and township council meetings. Do them with grace because they can be learned from."

"Enjoy your work because self-satisfaction is the only reward, stacked against poor hours, poor pay, and frustrations and deadline pressures. But if you like writing, meeting people, and always learning new things, there's nothing like it in the world — it's great."

The survey respondents also had some advice for journalism schools:

"Place more emphasis on broadening students' general knowledge — from economics to politics and current affairs."

"Get down from the lofty heights. Stress things like spot news which most young journalists will be covering when they graduate."

"Approach the question of ethics in journalism — it may be the only chance future reporters have to consider issues before they hit them in the face."

The questionnaire asked people if they were happy to have chosen journalism as a career. "A remarkable 98 per cent" were, the report's writers note. Wrote one respondent: "It's the only job I know of where you usually end your day a little smarter than when you started it."

The 1985 study was developed by CDNPA staff in consultation with the association's Research and Editorial Division committees. Data processing was provided by Kubas Research Consultants. For further information, contact: Bryan Cantley, Manager of Editorial Services, CDNPA, 321 Bloor St. E., Toronto, Ont. M4W 1E7. ☐



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The Class of '85

Most journalism school graduates facing the "real world" still have ideals and lofty notions

by Catherine Stapells

"Everyone here wants something more out of life than nine-to-five. There's a creative impulse. We're slightly different from the norm." — Graduating J-student.

facts. The profession lives up to my personality — aggressive."

Whatever the bug is that draws people to journalism, it's catching. Entry into both of Ryerson's two programs is tough, particularly the two-year JRAD — journalism graduate — program,

which is open to those who already hold a degree. For the school year beginning Fall, 1984, Ryerson accepted 30 students or just 16 per cent of the qualified applicants. Some 187 people were turned down. The previous year, Fall, 1983, 24 per cent or

Trying to describe the typical journalism student is like trying to draw the average snowflake. No two are alike. They differ to extremes, from fresh-faced kids out of high school to parents on their second careers. The common thread that seems to run through them all is a highly individualistic, self-driven mania to be abnormal.

"They're all eccentric. They all have something different about them," jokes one student about her classmates. "They drink heavily or chain smoke or eat a lot of candy. They're workaholics. They're funny, weird people, but that's not what makes them interesting."

It would seem that journalism attracts a bunch of egotistical misfits. In fact, many end up at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto (and other universities and colleges, no doubt) through fluke or lack of any other place to go. Their comments reflect their myriad motivations:

"Why? No particular reason; a friend suggested it."

"Journalism interested me because it's a profession where you can talk all day and get paid for it."

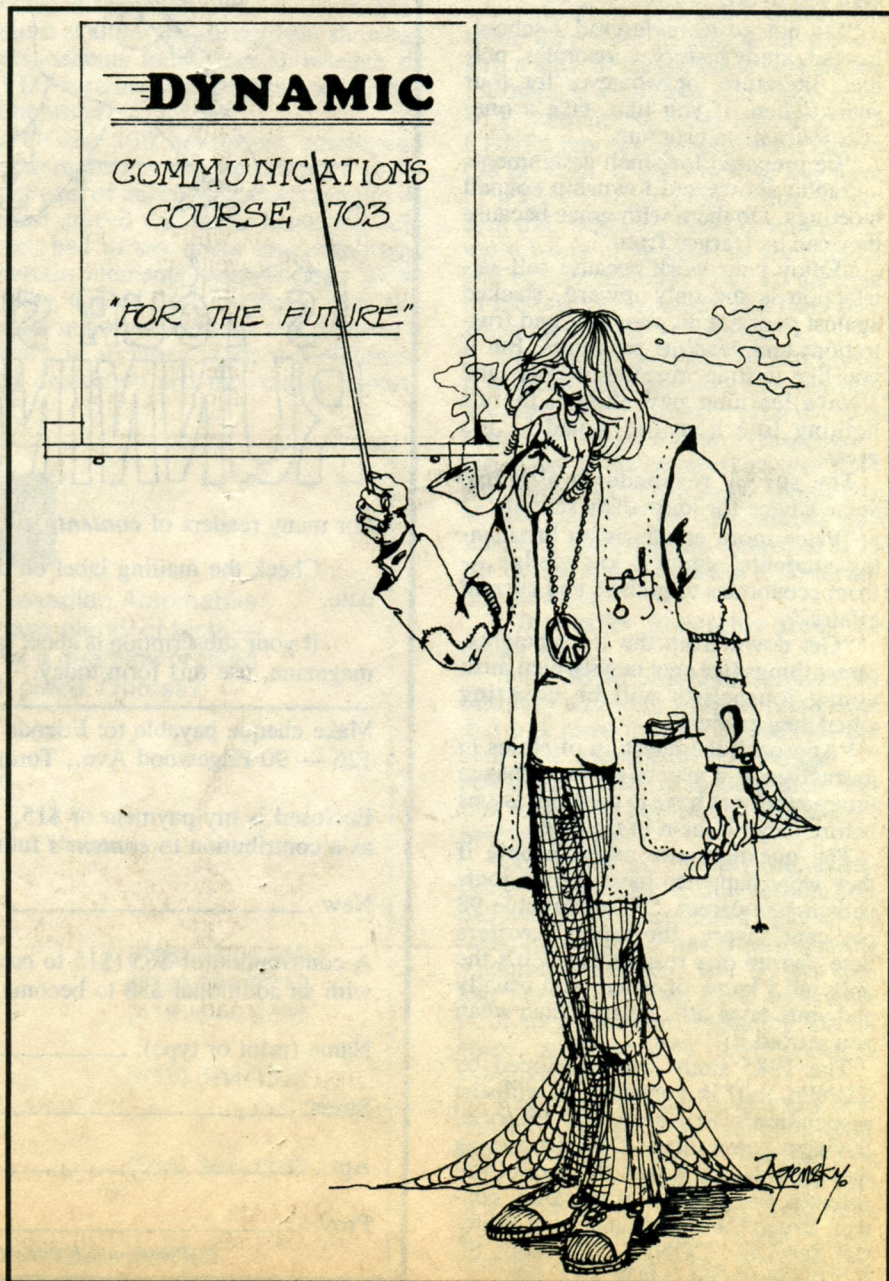
"After high school it was time to make a decision. I can't add, can't dance, can't draw, so what was left? I didn't even think they'd accept me."

To be fair to those with a serious nature, most are in journalism schools because of a genuine calling to the craft.

"Journalism brought together all the things I wanted to do, be with people and write," explains yet another.

"I needed a profession that involved writing, was exciting, had no restrictions (nine to five), and dealt with people. And I've found it."

And still another view: "I was editor of my high school paper. I like chasing



30 out of 125 were accepted.

The three-year program is open to those who have a grade 13 diploma with at least 65 per cent in English and history. For the Fall, 1984, year, Ryerson accepted 130 or 33 per cent of 393 qualified applicants. The year before, Fall, 1983, 34 per cent of the qualified applicants were accepted.

Once enrolled, no one claims not to have enough to do. The schedule is demanding on time and energy. What should a student have, then, to get through?

"Interest and ability," says instructor Larry Perks.

"You've got to have ability, some natural aptitude. You can't take a person with no interest and make him a journalist. Yet any ability you don't have, can be made up by interest.

"People have different abilities. Journalists should have a willingness, a motivation to experience everything."

With today's tough job market, Perks argues for the all-round education. It's important to journalism students to not turn their minds off to different jobs. He says they'd be surprised at the kinds of jobs they'd enjoy.

"If you can find happiness in a job, then you'll do well."

Indeed, jobs are of prime interest to graduating students.

"My goal after graduating? To even-

tually get a job," says one.

"I worry about not finding a job," rhymes another.

Don Obe, chairman of Ryerson's School of Journalism, is concerned about how worried graduating students are about getting jobs.

"The obsession is almost palpable," says Obe. "I'm worried that the concern with jobs will override the concern with overall ethics and reform of the business.

"We should be journalists first, employees second. Journalists at their best are never just employees of a certain outfit, but are responsible to the profession."

Obe is concerned that in students' desire for jobs, they'll compromise more than they should to keep the job. This problem, he says, will only change through the efforts of principled people.

Students share these concerns. In broadcast, especially, students seem to think they need to alter their appearance to be acceptable on camera.

This student won't play the game: "Journalists are willing to do a lot to make it. But I won't compromise the way I live to fit in. I don't want people to compromise their dignity for the sake of news."

Some people are drawn to the perceived glamor of journalism but admit

this notion is lost quickly.

"There are a lot of journalists who mislead people, misrepresent them and themselves to get a certain quote, and they jump to conclusions," says a concerned student. "I've met many who are just in it for the glamor, the freebies."

"Some have terrible journalistic ethics," agrees a colleague. "I want to be one of the good guys."

Students do think about the role they, as journalists, will play in society, and what their responsibilities should be. Should the new batches have their say, the media are headed for change.

"The attitude of the press must change. They're too self-righteous, too sure of themselves. Journalists never become part of it. It's easier to criticize when you're not really part of what's happening. They're like armchair quarterbacks."

Says another: "Journalism gives you the feeling of power over people."

And: "I came in with the notion that journalists are observers who stand back and analyze. But they're part of the event; the process of reporting makes them part of it."

And: "Journalists should not be afraid to accept they're uninformed. They must keep on going until they get the whole story."

The logical next question is whether



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students think they've been well prepared to perform as responsible journalists. On the whole, the answer is, yes — at least among those interviewed for the purposes of this story.

Offers one: "The value of three years at Ryerson is being able to understand the structure (of journalism) and how it operates. It's up to us to fill in the holes."

Today's journalism students (Ryerson's, at any rate) are overwhelmingly of middle-class backgrounds; this year's graduating class had only a handful of non-whites. More thorough research might disprove this, but it would seem journalism doesn't have a strong attraction outside the middle-class. Naturally, there are exceptions, but a look at the class of '85 supports the observation.

A student says: "The middle-class angle is different from that of the rich class. I don't think that class changes the facts; it changes the tone, maybe. The slant has always been white. It doesn't bother me that much, because it still is up to the individual who's doing the job."

Suggests another: "The middle-class write about different things because

their interests are different. But Toronto is the middle-class capital of the world, and I think it's a good vantage point. We can reflect on lower-class plight and upper-class gains. It would be great if we cared about every story we write, but we don't; we care only about those stories which affect us."

Anyway, once enrolled and immersed in the program, most students stick it out to the end. Based on a preliminary report done by members of the journalism faculty at Ryerson, 10 per cent or three of 30 people drop out of the JRAD program between acceptance and graduation.

In the three-year program, prior to 1981, 30 per cent dropped out between acceptance and graduation. Since 1981, this has decreased. The report estimates that between first and second year, roughly 13 per cent drop out; there's a four per cent attrition rate between the second and third years.

Those who leave with their degrees have mixed goals and hopes for post-graduation years:

"A good news reporter."

"My parents expect me to save the world."

"I just want a job."

The occasional wiseacre notwithstanding, journalism students are serious about their futures and are aware of how difficult it will be to succeed. Most are optimistic about fitting in, somewhere. The Ryerson report showed that of the 30 responses from 54 students who graduated from the JRAD program in 1981 and 1982, 86 per cent had journalism-related jobs as of last year. Among those who graduated from the three-year program in the same period, of 125 responses to the 250 polled, about 75 per cent had jobs in the field.

New graduates, and those nearing the end of their formal journalism schooling, *do* know their journeys have just begun. Most leave school with their ideals and lofty notions intact, tempered with the realities of hard work and long hours which accompany journalistic victories. ☐

Catherine Stapells graduated this year from the School of Journalism at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto, and refers to herself as a "freelancer. And waiting . . ."

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U.S. media: A foreign view

*A French scholar
is direct in his evaluation:
They're the least worst in the world.*

by Claude-Jean Bertrand

When in France, I love American media. When I am in the United States, they make me mad, so mad that I feel like telling everyone I meet.

It is rather embarrassing, however, to go public with one's irritation when one is a guest in the country, a guest with a deep liking for the U.S. Criticizing a country's media is not like criticizing its shoe industry; it is like stabbing at the country's nerve centre.

Another cause for embarrassment is that excellent media criticism has been produced by Americans for many years. Who am I to add anything to it?

Since the Pentagon Papers and Watergate, American media impress everywhere, even in the Third World: In no way are they a weak spot that Americans might feel hypersensitive about. And my criticism will not be solely negative. I intend to make my critique as French as I can, by repeating little of the criticism already heard a thousand times (although the constant repetition of the criticism *has* proved most efficient in improving the media). Being an outsider who knows the media in his country and in the U.S., I can focus on failings and successes that are less often mentioned in America.

A French intellectual is normally elitist (hence contemptuous of American mass culture); he is normally left-wing (hence hostile to the U.S. as the embodiment of capitalism); and, let me add, he is normally anti-clerical (hence scornful of American religiosity). Though I would probably be labelled a flaming-red radical by such ultra-conservatives as Senator Jesse Helms or Reed Irvine, founder of the Accuracy in Media (AIM) organization, I wish to note and stress that, a) I have written two books on American churches; b) I so like American prime-time television entertainment that I sometimes get worried about it; and, c) for about 10 years I have devoted much of my time and energy to studying American media.

On the whole, I tend to focus on the half-full glass rather than the half-empty glass. While there is much about

the present-day U.S. that I deeply dislike (e.g., the inexistence of national health insurance and the insecurity in the streets), I have a progressive American's approach: I am impatient to see this extraordinary nation realize its potentialities — in the interest of everyone, within and without its borders.

To steer clear of a catalogue of known sins, let me dismiss at the outset the criticism aimed everywhere at media. Everywhere, dailies suffer from inaccuracies and superficiality due to lack of time. Everywhere, television is accused of being a mere headline service run by showmen. Everywhere, journalists are accused of being ignorant, incompetent, unimaginative, lazy, sloppy, ill-bred, intrusive, cowardly, biased, unethical, self-righteous, and arrogant.



There are, though, some American characteristics of the journalist, seemingly blessed by editors, which must be pointed out as negative. One is an excessive love for facts, figures, and quotes, hence with accuracy. So when *Washington Post* reporter Janet Cooke in 1981 gave a fictional account of an

indisputable reality (drug addiction of youth in the ghettos), it was denounced as a major journalistic crime. But no one bothered about the silence which for years the media kept around the famine and disease that killed hundreds of thousands in sub-Saharan Africa. I do not condone Janet Cooke's behavior, but it should be put in perspective.

Another Americanism is the inverted pyramid tradition which makes for long, repetitive stories — often dealing with boring rituals of social or political life, in a dry, dull style. Under pretense of being exhaustive, the journalist (even a media critic like David Shaw at the *Los Angeles Times*) provides not substance but bulk, and quite often trashy bulk.

The fundamental flaw of the American media resides in the United States not having a national, public service-oriented system large enough to check and balance the locally-rooted, profit-oriented private systems — a system of the kind Japan has (the NHK), and Britain has (the BBC), and Canada has (the CBC). All American media sins derive from that flaw and fall into three categories: localism, commercialism, and political freedom.

Excessive localism turns the little newspapers (read by half the population) into municipal bulletin boards and turns the metropolitan dailies (read by the other half) into a journalistic cafeteria that offers mostly local news and syndicated padding. Both types practise boosterism and tend to mistake news releases for reporters' copy. That also is the case in many countries, but much less seriously because of the absence of a local monopoly or because there is a national press.

Localism means amazingly little news about foreign nations. A foreigner cannot survive in the U.S. without a newsmagazine. And since very little entertainment, even music, is imported from abroad, the general

public has little knowledge of the outside world. That helps explain many economic, political, or military blunders made in recent decades, for lack of an understanding of the history and cultures of other countries, such as Vietnam or Iran.

Worse, largely because of the media, people feel little but indifference, or possibly contempt, toward what happens outside the U.S. (or even outside their little community), especially in the Third World where three-quarters of mankind live and where life for the masses is still short, nasty, and brutish (as Hobbes defined it for Britain in the 17th century).

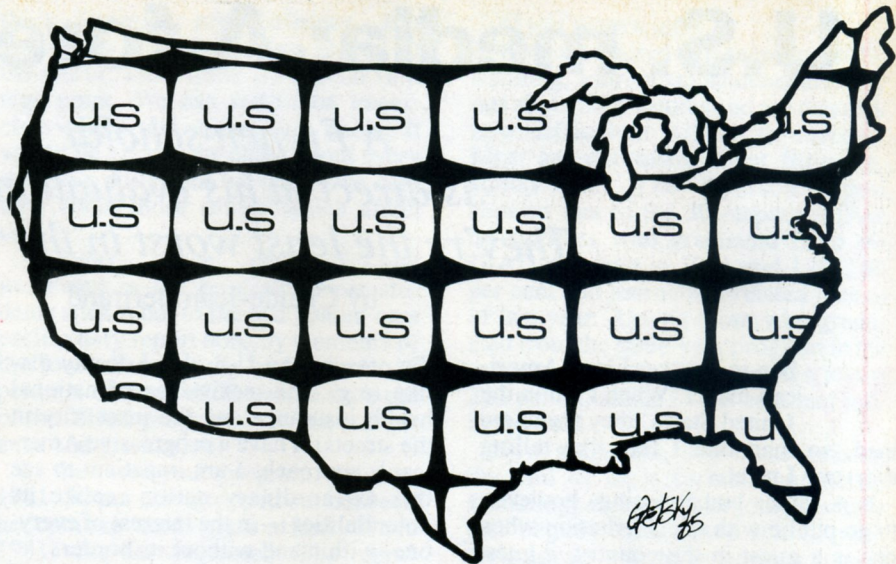
Another effect of localism is that most American media are small, even very small. They do not have the means to produce much, or any, of their material. They need to appeal to central suppliers that can share the cost among the multiple outlets. The result is that from one end of the United States to the other, one reads the same features in the dailies, listens to the same tunes on radio, and watches the same network offerings on television. Media monotony is amazing in a land that is so vast and varied.

The second major characteristic of American media is commercialism. They exist not to serve the public and make a living — but to serve Mammon and make a fortune. As Harold Evans, the former editor of London's *Sunday Times*, once put it: "The British press may have trouble staying in business, but the American press has trouble staying in journalism." They economize on news: Most dailies subscribe to only one wire service, not even to the two major American ones. They have no or few correspondents even within the U.S.; there're more than 1,600 dailies but they have fewer than 10 in Latin America.

They economize on entertainment, too. It is sometimes mediocre, such as the game shows, but most often monotonous, like series and sitcoms, manufactured on the Hollywood assembly lines. What is bad is not what American television does, but that it rarely does some types of programs: serious drama, political debates, first-class documentaries, or children's programs.

The media even economize on technical quality: "In most foreign countries," wrote *TV Guide* a few months ago, "the basic goal of television broadcasting is to provide high-quality pictures. In the U.S., the principal goal is to make money."

To maximize income, media practise prostitution; i.e., they practise for



money acts that are socially immoral, acts that stimulate then slake desires, instead of satisfying needs. I admit I am using the term for its shock value, as did Upton Sinclair when he entitled his book on the press *The Brass Check* (from the tokens used in western brothels). But see how the 11 o'clock news shows are advertised on local TV stations, hours in advance: You are not served the news, you are titillated into desiring the news.

Sometimes the prostitution is to the rich public, especially in the case of newspapers that strive to move up-market for the sake of advertisers. Not only do they tend to neglect (or stop) distribution in the poorer areas, but they multiply special sections to seduce every possible hobby group among the wealthy. Metropolitan papers remind the traveller of those fat whores, gorged on junk food, who in some parts of the world are highly appreciated.

Mainly, of course, the prostitution is to advertisers and the estimated \$96 billion they will spend in 1985. Newspapers are invaded by advertising. Is there another product you buy on the market that gives you one-third of what you want and two-thirds of what you do not need? Even in the reputedly best daily, the *New York Times*, five of six successive pages may each contain only one little article, up to seven-eighths of the space in that temple of news having been sold to the merchants. On television, one gets mentally raped every 10 or 12 minutes, even during the news shows.

And the media, though more rarely than they used to, do keep out material that will displease advertisers, or introduce material likely to displease them. A case pointed out earlier this year by the *New England Journal of Medicine* was the poor coverage of the dangers of cigarette smoking by newsmagazines. More importantly, the agenda-setting itself sometimes seems done with the interest of business in mind: Some issues never get into the limelight, such as the trade deficit, or corporate tax reform.

Let me stress that I agree it is better that media be privately run. While they are under the obligation to serve all groups, it is all right that they do it for the money. But why should they make double the profit other industries make on average — while *not* serving the public properly?

And now let us consider the third distinguishing feature of the American media, their political freedom. I have four major questions:

1. Is total freedom of speech and press a good thing in an almost exclusively commercial society? In other words, is that particular individual right to be a privilege of the very rich? Or, as A.J. Liebling put it, is freedom of the press only to be enjoyed by the few that own a press?

2. Do American media enjoy political freedom? Legally, maybe — though the First Amendment myth does not protect the media adequately. Is there another democracy where so many journalists have been jailed in the last 15 years? What value will the Freedom of Information Act retain after a few more years of being nibbled at? Are not the courts intimidating the media (at least the small ones) with those spec-

tacular libel cases? Anyway, since media belong to, or are subsidized (i.e., fed advertising) by businessmen, it is doubtful that in practice they enjoy full political freedom. Do businessmen allow more liberty than the State? I doubt it. In France, government subsidies go to all newspapers, from fascist to communist. All political groups get time on State-run television and radio — even though a majority of people may dislike one or the other. Is it the case in the U.S. — or must one spend a fortune on election spots to get heard by the general public?

3. If American media have political freedom, do they use it? If yes, then how come for so many years so many media did not report the Vietnam situation accurately? How come so few journalists were detailed to cover Watergate before it became too big to ignore or dismiss?

4. If the media do use their freedom, is it for the good of the nation? There has been much talk in the early 1980s about eliminating the Fairness Doctrine (so-called right-of-reply) which serious people (few journalists, though) consider to be a threat to press freedom. But even now, with broadcasting having to respect the doctrine and the print media not having to, I do not see anywhere all sides presented on all important issues for a vigorous public debate. What media would present the atheist, or Marxist, or Third World viewpoint when none presents the radical and many seem very reluctant to mention the liberal?

Examine what the churches and schools in the U.S. have done to build a democracy, and also what many politicians have done — and then compare with commercial media. Could it not be argued that democracy has developed in the United States *in spite of* press freedom? And have not the media during the past 20 years contributed to creating political apathy and even hostility toward all institutions democratically elected and governments in particular — by being systematically negative and doing little to promote the political education of the people?

At this point, a seemingly crazy question comes to mind: To what extent are the media responsible for everything wrong in the U.S.? If they are merely a mirror to reality, they should reflect everything faithfully. Then people would take action to cure the wrongs. But to the media reflect properly? If (as I believe) the media are one



semi-autonomous nervous system in the national body, how come, 1) they miss so many deep trends (e.g., the black migration from the south, the mass entry of women to the job market), and, 2) they didn't trigger and keep going national alarms (against the spread of drug addiction, for example, or the increase in violent crime)?

Now, many of the specific good qualities of American media derive from the same three basic features dealt with earlier. Localism accounts for media being close to the people and keeping local politics alive. Decentralized political responsibility, community self-government which all European nations are moving toward (as their media also localize), never ceased in the U.S.

The commercialism of media has several happy effects. One is that they respond fast to public desires and provide useful services. Media owners, acting not as bureaucrats or ideologues but as good businessmen, have been able to afford first-class equipment, personnel, and methods.

In Europe, not to speak of the Third World, media owners and workers may have lofty ambitions to serve society,

but too often they do not have the wherewithal. Actually, U.S. media are so wealthy that their philanthropic foundations have been able to provide a major contribution to making American research and education in mass communications the best in the world. Lastly, hefty profits, hence large dividends, make media owners (especially mere shareholders) relatively indifferent to the contents of the media. So journalists in the U.S. enjoy a rare autonomy. The corporations, political parties, or governments which, in most other nations, have to give money to keep the media alive, naturally insist on getting *their* news and views across. In the U.S. now, even topics to which business was long very sensitive about, such as consumerism and environmentalism, are publicized abundantly.

As regards political freedom, whatever its bizarre haziness, the First Amendment is a powerful myth. Whatever complaints one hears about over-classification of government documents, about lie detector tests for federal employees to prevent

leaks to the media, about multiplying exemptions to the FOI Act, American government is by tradition, and remains, open, extraordinarily so compared to its European counterparts. The media, because they feel privileged (and also for commercial reasons, to please a maximum public), try to stay neutral, non-partisan; hence, they stay more independent toward all politicians and, in times of crisis, have proved to be far better government-watchers.

During the past 25 years, the evolution of the American media has been toward improvement. One cause has been criticism that never stops flowing. It has created a demand for a rise in quality. What has made actual progress possible has been the better calibre and training of journalists who have both more general culture and specialized expertise, and a better awareness of their duties and social responsibilities.

One result has been a wider definition of news and fewer taboos — news made easier to understand with analyses and graphs and more attractive with summaries, packaging, livelier style, and graphics. It also has seen more experimentation in many directions, from using color to using ombudsmen.

One responsibility that media seem to have discovered is to allow the public access although they (and the Supreme Court) have rejected Prof. Jerome Barron's idea that the First Amendment, in a mass society, implied a right of access to the media. In practice, op-ed pages have spread all over the newspaper press. There now are more letters-to-the-editor and more open forums, more call-in programs on radio and television, while cable has its public access channels.

And which of those media does a bloody-minded French media-watcher particularly appreciate? *USA Today*, the *International Herald Tribune*, and the *Christian Science Monitor* among dailies because, as a European, he likes clear, compact, well-edited, good-looking papers; the three newsmagazines, but especially the very informative *U.S. News and World Report*, and any of the high-brow monthlies; many of the PBS programs, from *Sesame Street* to the *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour*; and such cable channels as the two CNN, C-Span, all the movie networks, and the Disney Channel.

So, what is the bottom line?

Considering their own ideals and the huge resources they possess, the American media are still, on

the whole, very mediocre. They do not play enough the positive role they could and should play in society — and that is mainly due to their commercialization. However, if American media are compared to those in the Eastern bloc or in the Third World, their excellence immediately appears. And the media of no other Western nation provide global services of an equal quality. (Editor's note: Readers are referred to *Bertrand's Les medias aux Etats-Unis*, published in 1982 by *Presses universitaires de France*, Paris.)



The contradiction is partly explained by the dichotomy between the relatively mediocre media that most Americans get if they make no effort (the local daily, the loudest radio station, network television) and the excellent media they can obtain if they make an effort (the *New York Times*, for instance; the local all-news or classical music station, quality magazines by subscription, and pay cable). Borrowing from a definition of the BBC, I would say American media are *the least worst in the world*.

My conviction is that the media could improve faster. Under the influence of technology, prosperity, and education both within the media and among the public, highly positive changes have occurred: the national distribution of the *New York Times* and *USA Today*; the multiplication of specialized magazines, sold at a high price, hence more dependent on readers and less on advertisers; the slow but seemingly unstoppable development of Public Broadcasting and National Public Radio in spite of White House opposition; the taste the public has acquired for new, adult, uncut movies on pay-cable; and, last but not least, the concern shown by media people for their credibility, for the public hostility toward them, for ethics.

All people involved in the media should start considering them more as utilities than as manufacturing industries — and as institutions not just useful, but indispensable, crucial, to social life. The public, by enjoying its choices to the full, can scare the traditional media into providing better service. This it has, to some extent, already done.

Media owners could start thinking

on a long-term basis and consider how profitable quality can be, as the *Los Angeles Times* has illustrated superbly. Media producers, including journalists, should remember that to entertain and to inform are only two of at least three basic functions the media should assume. The third is education.

What "quality media" do naturally, what "public service media" (meaning broadcasting in most democracies outside the U.S.) are assigned to do, is fundamental: Education, pure and simple — for children, the education of people into active citizens, education of people into wider and higher interests, the arts and the outside world, to serve both the U.S. and the rest of mankind.

The problem is that media can at best be only slightly better than the society they emanate from. The U.S. is, among other things, a country of violence (with about 10 times more homicides per 1,000 inhabitants than Britain), of sexual puritanism, of financial greed, with an obsession with size and a distaste for intellectual jogging. This, inevitably, is reflected in the media. These could, however, stand halfway between the refined elite and the great unwashed, and strive to move closer to the former than to the latter.

Actually, the old media (dailies, radio, network television) appear to be slowly fading away, gradually replaced by the new, and to me far preferable, media: magazines, audiocassettes, and cable television.

Between 1980 and 1984, the number of households went up 8.5 per cent, the circulation of newspapers one per cent. Radio listening went down an hour a week. During the past 10 years, network TV has lost more than 15 points in global shares.

So critiquing the old media might seem little different from flogging dead horses. Fortunately, there still is abundant life in them. ☺

Claude-Jean Bertrand, of L'Institut francais de presse in Paris, is a professor, author, and media analyst. His North American activities have included academic sessions in the journalism department of the University of Minnesota and the communications department at Stanford University. Earlier this year, he taught at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y., which published his critique of American media in booklet form. We are grateful for the Newhouse School's approval to publish the foregoing article, which is drawn from the original text.

Covering the Third World

*An American correspondent
suggests the 80-second news spot
is the sonnet of the 20th century*

by Mack Laing

On one side of the argument stood the journalistic firemen, their asbestos skins thickened by years of reporting bush wars under foreign suns.

On the other, development journalists, milder-mannered, patient to a point, as frustrated as ploughshare salesmen at a swordmakers' convention.

The occasion: Encounter 85, held Sept. 12-15, the almost-annual discussion session at the University of Western Ontario (UWO) in London. It's run by Western's Graduate School of Journalism, financially supported mainly by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The subject this year was Information-Crisis-Development: News from the Third World. It attracted about 35 Canadian reporters, editors, editorial writers, and television and radio producer-editors, many in senior positions.

The complete cast, another 40, included a footnote of communications researchers, a splint of foreign aid officers, a puzzle of students, a band of Canadian Indians, a Zimbabwean public service commissioner, and an American TV correspondent who said the one-minute-20-second TV news spot has become "the sonnet of the

20th century."

The main thread of discussion was that Western media cover Third World violence, civil unrest, famine, flood, and earthquake — crisis reporting — and neglect or ignore more positive but less dramatic stories of Third World progress, the so-called "balanced viewpoint."

Reaction came from CBC-TV Washington reporter Joe Schlesinger, 15 years a foreign correspondent, and Mike Nicholson, with reporting experience from Biafra to the Falklands, now anchorman for Britain's Independent Television Network, with assists from Owen James, foreign editor for The Canadian Press.

Schlesinger said, "Nicholson and I are the firemen. You get a phone call. You go. You read the (background) book on the plane. You get bad interpreters. There are grave defects in the system."

He said, "American reporting goes into the lifestyles of political leaders and brings out, say, the funny Cockney accent, the funny Yank. If we did that to the Third World, we'd be condemned as racists."

Nicholson recalled a foreign aid story edited from two hours of video tape to two-minutes-15-seconds when a train crash competed for news-time.

"There simply isn't room in Mr. Everyman's living-room for all this," he said. "There's a limit to his interest, compassion, patience, and generosity."

CP's James said, "What we refer to as 'soft, non-crisis, Third World material' does move on the wire. Most papers use development stuff, though much more is crisis. These countries do produce more than their share of crisis."

IBBO Mandaza, a member of Zimbabwe's public service commission, said Western coverage "fails to bridge the cultural gap" and heavily edited TV news "can't portray reality."

Nicholson said the Third World might not benefit "if the Western press had the guts to report objectively." He went on:

"Reporters find reason to excuse the backwardness and barbarism . . . So you don't report this, or the Bangladesh thefts or the hundreds of pounds worth of whisky going into Ethiopia . . ."

"The more you learn about Africa, the easier it is to understand why the elite do not wish us to report it. Their real grievance is that it (the elite) cannot control the flow of news out of the country . . . A free-wheeling press gets in the way of both corrupt and good government."

Beyond the headlines

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**Population,
the
planet,
and the
press**

Compiled and edited by Dick MacDonald

Nothing new there about the African condition, Mandaza replied.

"Can we expect journalists and journalism to change the world? Unlikely — and given this perspective unlikely even to help change the world. They are out to defend the established type of journalism," Mandaza said.

"I came from Africa because there is something wrong there with the coverage. In general, I think there is a distorted view, but the people of Africa are not worried about how the developed countries see them.

"Joe and Mike have not helped. They are too defensive. If we destroy this image (they present), we might wind up destroying their journalism."

Clifton Segree, assistant news director of Radio Jamaica, told the Encounter delegates that his country was forced to be concerned about foreign reporting when stories of riots and car-burnings last January destroyed the tourist season.

"To counter this, the Jamaica Tourist Board had to spend \$1 million on ads in the same media that reported the riots. But there were no riots, and the burning cars in the TV news pictures were not cars in use, but only the shells of junked, abandoned cars," he said.

Derek Ingram, editor of the London-based Gemini News Service, said it should be remembered that it's only 40 years since the Western nations ended "the most ghastly bloodshed that ever struck the Earth."

Ingram said reporting from developing countries by Third World journalists is improving. He called for "two or three more news agencies" based and operating in the developing world. "The content will be different," he said. "The writing will be the same quality as in the present Big Four agencies."

A somewhat sceptical Schlesinger said, "I doubt it would catch on. Would the Indians have any more faith in its fairness?"

And Ingram said, "It would be just as fair or unfair as the others."

He said current Western agency reporting from the Third World has "a mood of confrontation and a tinge of cynicism." Journalists, he offered, "are conditioned by their own political and cultural environment and Mike Nicholson says we all know this."

Maybe, Ingram went on, "but Western journalists don't usually admit this, but do say that's the trouble with Third World coverage (by Third World reporters). It is this tendency to arrogance toward the Third World that I dislike so much and that the Third World rightly objects to."

A panel of native Canadian journalists found some parallels in the Third World and Indian situations.

Dan David, of CBC Regina, said he refused to cover the "native beat" for fear of being stereotyped as the "Indian Reporter."

Brian Maracle, host of CBC Radio's *Our Native Land*, recently cancelled after 21 years on the air, said the mainstream media cover Indian violence or ceremonies, and "too many times perpetuate the quaint cultural stereotypes about our real people" while ignoring the native push for political independence.

Prof. Marie Riley, of Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax, said seven Canadian daily newspapers she studied over a three-week period in 1984 published 890 stories with Third World placelines. Most (85-95 per cent) was hard news, with little background or analysis, and what analysis there was did not originate in developing countries. More than half the content concerned war or other civil unrest. Economic news, she noted, was sparse.

Researcher Emile McAnany, of the

University of Texas, said, "In all of Central America in 10 years, there were only four stories (on U.S. television) on the economy, yet the economy is crucial to understanding" circumstances in that region.

Prof. Marlene Cuthbert, of the University of Windsor, found Canadian, Caribbean, American, and European newspaper coverage of the 1983 American landings on Grenada varied widely, although each area consistently maintained its own perspective.

Television by satellite has given us a global journalism, eliminated the need for literacy as we have known it, and produced a one-room schoolhouse in which we can all learn at our own levels, according to William Blakemore, a correspondent for the American Broadcasting Company (ABC).

"The one-minute-20-second news spot has become the sonnet of the 20th century," Blakemore announced. ☞

Mack Laing is an associate professor in the Graduate School of Journalism, University of Western Ontario, London.

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Ontario Public Service Employees Union

Censorship is a relative thing, depending on democracy's definition

Despite marked improvement in press freedom in a few Latin American countries over the 18 months ended in mid-1985, news reporting in the region continued to be hazardous and sometimes forbidden activity, according to the third annual Survey on Press Freedom in Latin America conducted by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs (COHA).

The governments of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, each returning to democratic control, led the way in lifting restrictions on the press and in restoring rights of free expression, the report found.

In Chile and Paraguay, meanwhile, opposition cries for democratization have been met with unprecedented "repression of all aspects of civil life." The Newspaper Guild (TNG) President Charles A. Perlik, Jr., said in an introduction to the report.

"As the iron grip" of military dictators in Chile and Paraguay "begin to slip" they resort to every means "to quell their countries' democratic forces and, in the process, muzzle the press," Perlik wrote.

The 72-page booklet examining the treatment of journalists in 27 Latin

American countries was issued jointly by COHA and TNG. Perlik is chairperson of COHA.

While the regimes in control in Chile and Paraguay were rated by COHA as the "worst transgressors against press freedom" in the hemisphere, COHA also found "reprehensible conditions" in Guatemala, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, and Guyana.

Censorship is but one form of repression of journalists, Perlik said, noting that "economic reprisals and incentives top the list of the quieter gags" on Latin American reporters and publishers.

"Woefully underpaid" Latin American journalists "are often vulnerable to bribes," while many publishers faced with threatened loss of substantial advertising revenue from government sources will veto a worthy story.

Developing tensions between Nicaragua's government and the dissident press are an area of concern, Perlik also said in the report's introduction. He noted that "the jury is still out on the extent to which the leading opposition paper, *La Prensa*, has contributed to the hostility with which it has been treated by the government."

Many outside observers "feel that *La Prensa* has not conducted itself in an entirely ethical manner," accusing it of often engaging in "shabby journalism," Perlik noted. The question of concern focuses, however, on "whether the government can display sufficient judgment and toleration to let the marketplace of ideas rather than the heavy hand of censorship determine the newspaper's fate."

La Prensa is regularly censored by the government. It has twice been ordered closed since 1982 and on 32 occasions its editors have refused to publish in protest over censorship. ☐


Reprinted from The Guild Reporter, published by The Newspaper Guild, Washington. The Council on Hemispheric Affairs is offering free of charge to Guild members its survey of Press Freedom in Latin America. The booklet is regularly \$6.95 per copy. Requests should be addressed to Larry Birns, executive director, COHA, Room 201, 1900 L St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. Guild members should so identify themselves.

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A WORLD OF CANADIAN TECHNOLOGY.

Books

Meeting Harvey, more or less

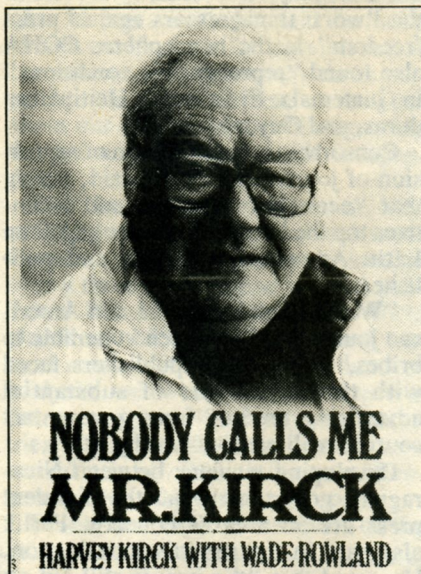
by Bob Carr

The author's most personal remark in *Nobody calls me Mr. Kirck*, the autobiography by a radio announcer-turned-TV-performer with the help of Wade Rowland, newspaperman-turned-TV-performer, may be: "I've never met a woman I didn't like nor had a drink I didn't enjoy."

After reading the book, you're convinced that Harvey Kirck never had a job he didn't like or tell a story he didn't enjoy.

For a quarter-century on the CTV Network, Harvey Kirck has been telling stories while other newscasters only read them. Off-air, though, few people heard the reports of his struggle through three marriages and of his bouts with alcohol that are contained in this book for Collins Publishing. In hindsight, Kirck credits successful wedlock to a former *CFTO* switchboard operator, Brenda Hardy, who is his current companion, and a bottle of Walker's Imperial for the revelation that telling the news is performing.

Certainly, there didn't seem to be much cause for enthusiasm for CTV when it was launched in 1961 among "second TV stations" in eight markets. Initially, the mainstay of its programming was CFL football, the television rights to which were held by John Bassett in Toronto. After two years, the CTV national news at 10.30 was producing unimpressive ratings. When



Kirck debuted in 1963, his job initially was valued at \$11,000 a year compared to \$13,000 in his *CFTO* pay envelope and meant a move to *CJOH* Ottawa.

Eventually, he returned to Toronto where network news chief Peter Reilly asked if he would take over the network newsroom. Once again, Kirck was wearing his lop-sided grin when pay cheques arrived for \$17,500 a year.

Not shoddy at all, compared to \$27.50 a week at *CJIC* Sault Ste. Marie where he began broadcasting in 1948. From there he went to Barrie, Calgary,

and back to Toronto where, in the 1950s, *CHUM* Toronto was still signing off at sunset until Allan Waters bought the station on the installment plan at \$500 a month and began spinning the Top Forty that today is the Music of our Lives.

The station made some people famous as disc jockeys; it was where Kirck abandoned the turntables permanently and became news director. While he succeeded in that transition, he grew restless in the disciplined, exacting Music Machine that built a broadcasting empire.

Kirck was asked if he could read the news with one eye on the little red light over the camera at *CHCH-TV* Hamilton. Confident, he accepted. "Panic had me by the throat," he later wrote. "I took a ragged breath and plunged into the script."

It took him a year to become comfortable on-camera, just in time to be fired during staff cutbacks. The only news that interested him was word of job openings. Where did he look but *CFTO* which also was undergoing staff purges, but not in the newsroom. He discovered Channel Nine, *CFTO* discovered him; the rest is instructive and interesting reading. (30)

Bob Carr, a regular contributor to content, is a Toronto-based broadcaster and head of his own consulting company, Newsroom Two.

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Seeking an alternate source of news and ideas

About 35 writers and editors are manning the lifeboats — building them, even — in the wake of the sinking of *Goodwin's* magazine earlier this year. They hope to revive the idea that began *Goodwin's* last year with such high hopes — that Canada can support a new print voice in which the stress is on honest, deep-digging journalism.

They're digging now — for the kind of financial backing that's needed to produce a high-quality publication and to finance the kind of long-research assignments that the mainline news media are not touching. If they get it — and "it" means something like \$85,000 starting kitty and an annual budget of close to \$300,000 — they're convinced they can reach a circulation of 30,000 within three years. The target for the first year is 15,000.

Letterhead names are June Callwood, journalist, author; Mark Dowie, *Mother Jones* editor helping hand from the U.S.; Jock Ferguson, investigative journalist; Nick Fillmore, president of the Centre for Investigative Journalism; Ann Pappert, freelance journalist; John Sawatsky, journalist, author; Walter Stewart,

educator, journalist, author; Ron Verzuh, *Goodwin's* founder. They have a flock of well-known bylines across the country supporting their efforts, and have hired Harvey MacKinnon, on leave from Oxfam, to organize a fund-raising campaign.

"The mass media churn out unrelated, unexplained, chunks of information. (They claim) to have no point of view. Overloaded with thousands of bits of information that are never put into context, people become confused about the issues that affect their lives. Our magazine will put things in a perspective that can be clearly understood."

There have been — and still are — a number of publications in Canada with a progressive alternate voice, but they've missed reaching a broad general readership, the new group contends. "This is a vital task at a time when the conservative movement grows stronger in Canada and the United States."

Those across Canada interested in helping to build or maybe even man the lifeboats can get involved via 97 Oakcrest Ave., Toronto, M4C 1B4, telephone 416-690-6445. ☎

Editor:

Recently I had the pleasure of reading the September-October issue.

Unfortunately, I was misquoted on page 35 and as written it contradicts my beliefs and recent actions. It should have read that the *FM Policy* and not Canadian content was "introduced in the 1960s by intellectual gargoyles."

The *FM Policy* is the CRTC detailed guidebook requiring radio stations to adhere rigidly to requirements involving program sources, scheduling, pacing, length, promotion, form, content, purpose, proportion, music, style, use of equipment, technology, and administrative procedures.

Programming involves a complex web of mathematical checks and balances and formulae for both the "enriched" talk requirements and music portions, all of which must be adhered to with absolute exactitude.

Remember the late 1960s? Students were rioting and dropping acid while interventionist, bearded, and sandalled bureaucrats were given a place of choice on the towers of our institutions. The *FM Policy* remains, today, an inviolate monument to that era.

Pierre Nadeau
Vice-President
Government Relations and
Public Policy
The Canadian Association
of Broadcasters
Ottawa

Editor:

Hadn't been paying close attention, or would have noticed my subscription was expiring in June and sent renewal sooner.

So, belatedly, here it is . . . with best wishes for keeping up your standards in a most useful publication.

Frank Moritsugu
Willowdale, Ont.

Editor:

Keep up the good work; it's an inspiration to young journalists everywhere.

Adam Corelli
Toronto

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Joys of self-employment

No matter how tough freelancing may be, "It sure beats working in a pickle factory."

by Helen Frayne

Most freelance writers in this country will tell you it's either feast or famine.

Feast — if you have mastered your craft, if you write quickly, if you're a superb organizer of time, if you have excellent contacts, if you're full of energy and keep healthy, if you look ahead and organize upcoming work, if you're an attractive self-promoter, and if you have a whiz-bang accountant. You can charge \$400 a day as a political speechwriter or financial specialist.

But, it also may be famine or the spectre of famine. Even if you're an excellent writer, times may be lean during periods of government or private sector cutbacks. Markets may not be there. Or fees offered in some areas may be laughable.

One thing most freelancers have in common is that if you take an extra half-hour for lunch, you think you're starving to death. You feel behind the gun all the time. You have to keep at it. Long hours. No benefits. It's especially hard for the unemployed freelancer who is a sole support parent or one who lives alone and whose only income comes from freelance writing. It takes a great deal of determination, persistence, optimism, and shoe leather for even the experienced freelancer to make a decent living.


Some people believe freelancers in Canada are exploited. An arts writer with four years' experience as a correspondent for the *Ottawa Citizen* — a first-rate writer — until recently received only \$175 for a major feature article, full-page spread. *Ottawa Magazine* is a little better — \$500 to \$700 for a full-length story. I talked with an organizer at The Newspaper Guild who said, baldly, "Freelance writers get screwed." And the Guild has gone to bat for them, putting pressure on management, coaching freelancers what to say in a bid for a staff job. Sometimes the Guild is successful.

Another thing: Freelancers often complain they spend three-quarters of their time drumming up business, preparing proposals, paying for expensive photocopying, supplies, perhaps a word processor, keeping records straight.

In a discussion on how freelance writers fare, one should think of other than strictly monetary factors. Many freelancers *choose* to be freelance. They like the independence, setting their own hours, working at a variety of projects, meeting different people, working flat-out for several months, then working in the garden or going on a trip. They may want to write about the world as they see it, rather than the world as seen through the eyes of others.

Still . . . there are freelance writers who deserve more than they receive. Is there help for them? Even with limited resources, there are grant-giving organizations. And such groups as the Ottawa Independent Writers, the Periodical Writers Association, and ACTRA have (or are preparing) direc-

tories of writers' names for possible engagers. There's a developing militancy in organizations established for writers — working toward gaining fair treatment, even striking for it.

There are so many variables in this field. Being a freelance writer may be considered a jobette by an indulgent spouse or co-vivant, or it may be serious business. But no matter how tough it may be, as Morley Callaghan once said, "It sure beats working in a pickle factory." 

Helen Frayne is an Ottawa freelance writer and broadcaster. The foregoing was adapted from remarks she made to the Ottawa branch of the Media Club of Canada, a more complete version of which was published in newspaper, the MCC newspaper.

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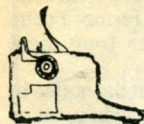
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Short takes



After four years, at least two false starts, and a lot of unsuccessful bargaining, the Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild (SONG) hopes to organize the Toronto-area Metroland group of community newspapers. SONG filed its petition to the Ontario Labor Relations Board Oct. 4 to represent all 140 or so editorial employees in the chain of 17 papers owned by Torstar, parent company of the Toronto *Star*. Metroland apparently is arguing for individual bargaining units — the union calls that a “divide-and-rule” tactic — and the Board has people looking over the situation. A decision could take weeks.

According to SONG organizer **Gail Lem**, this thing has been festering for a long time. The Guild organized *Oshawa This Week* and the *Burlington Post*, both members of the group, in 1981. The company “played hardball,” she says, and although the units were certified, a contract never was finalized. So the whole thing died with its boots on.

“We are not prepared to put anyone in that position again,” Lem told *Short takes*. So this time out, they’re pulling out all stops to get a chain-wide bargaining unit.

John Baxter, president of Metroland’s printing and publishing division, insists that the only logical arrangement is for each paper to be organized separately. “Each paper is a profit centre, and they have their own staff,” he said. “The decisions are made at the paper: hiring, firing, setting rates. Each paper is entirely local in its editorial content.” He also said that if an individual paper lacks enough support for Guild certification, they should not be certified at that paper.

It’s hard to know how many papers lack the support. Lem says there are only two, won’t say which ones they are, and claims their insistence on one big unit is not a ploy to foist the Guild on unwilling people. She refuses to say what percentage of people signed up, but it’s thought to be high.

An employee who helped mastermind the drive says: “The company wants to break the union down into individual papers, and that seems like a lot of bull to me. They’re trying to argue that they are not a company.” And another union person, who predicts a bitter fight, said: “It is definitely going down weird.”

Baxter has a theory of the whole affair. He said that the young journalists at Metroland want to belong to the Guild because it makes them feel closer to the daily papers, where their ambitions lie. “It’s almost a status symbol,” he said. Stay tuned for developments. . . .

While on union matters, I should note that **Lee Clifford** of the Canadian Wire Service Guild is one of the winners of three contested regional vice-presidential seats in The Newspaper Guild. The others are **Richard Peery** of Cleveland and **Faye McCracken** of Memphis. And at the October meeting of the Canadian District Council in Victoria, they formed a standing committee to co-ordinate ways and means of “organizing the unorganized” on any turf the Guild claims.

Elsewhere in B.C., there is a little personnel movement at the Vancouver *Sun*. **Scott Macrae**, a long-time editor in features, is the new city editor. He replaces **Ian Haysom**, who becomes assistant managing editor (nights). Award-winning *Sun* reporter **Rick Ouston** goes to the CBC, as a TV reporter. **Peter Comparelli** leaves the legislative bureau in Victoria for a leave of absence.

At the Calgary *Sun*, **Mary Jane Kletke** goes from TV columnist to lifestyle editor; former lifestyle editor **Linda Slobodian** goes to reinforce city hall coverage.

The Edmonton *Journal* has a little movement, too. **Linda Goyette**, who was on maternity leave, now is freelancing in Edmonton. **Dene Creswell** was fired in a cloud of smoke after a story about someone finding a mouse in food at a supermarket turned out to be faked. (We regret a planned story on the matter in this issue of *content* didn’t materialize by press-time.) Former legislative bureau chief **Kristin Goff** is back in general reporting; the new bureau chief is **Bill Sass**.

A couple of items about professional development: First, the World Press Institute provides fellowships for 10-15 journalists to work, study, and travel in the United States for seven months,

beginning in May, 1986. Applications from Canadians are welcomed. Contact: WPI, Macalester College, 1600 Grand Ave., St. Paul, MN 55105. Deadline for applications is Feb. 1.

Second, the Journalists in Europe program, run from the French journalism school, *Centre de formation et de perfectionnement des journalistes* in Paris, gives 30 journalists around the world a chance to live and work in Europe for eight months. It’s a hands-on education about events affecting the European community and includes lectures and seminars. The winners contribute to the house magazine, *Europ*, and can freelance back to their home bases. The deadline for applications for the 1986-87 session is Feb. 1. Write: Journalists in Europe, c/o Joanna Morgan, 67 Lawlor Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4E 3L8. Include a stamped and self-addressed envelope.

Interwest Publications Ltd., of Edmonton, is going to launch a weekly newsmagazine for Western Canada. It already publishes *Alberta Report* and the new one will probably be called *Western Report*.

In the east, the Periodical Writers Association of Canada informs us that *Atlantic Insight* just bumped its freelance rates up eight per cent for short features of about 1,000 words and up to the \$600 to \$800 range for longer stories than that. Publisher **James Lorimer** said he would review the fees with PWAC in July, and agreed to consider “higher than standard” (according to a PWAC news release) fees for writers who were sometimes poorly paid by the former publishers. The tone of the release was approving...but PWAC’s preferred rate for freelancers is still \$365 a day....

A new Atlantic regional magazine called *Eastern Woods and Waters* is on the newsstands. Published bimonthly by James Publications of Dartmouth. Editor is **Jim Gourlay**; publisher is former *Atlantic Insight* circulation manager **Neville Gilfoxy**.

Harry Bruce has had two collections of his magazine pieces published by Methuen Publishing: *Each Moment As It Flies* and *Movin’ East*.

Halifax *Daily News* entertainment editor **Grant MacGillivray** left the paper and was last seen headed toward Ontario. The paper was purchased earlier this year by former airline mogul Harry Steele.

Publishers, editors, and reporters continue to come and go with the seasons at Saint John’s weekly, the *Citizen*. Since the paper first appeared in March, it changed publishers three times and is about to change editors for the third time. Same kind of turnover among reporters. **Stephen Cook**, former publisher of *Atlantic Business*, is the new publisher. No replacement named yet for editor **Marg Keast**, who returned to Ontario. In the newsroom, **Joanne Cadogan** returned to the *Miramachi Leader*, **James Latter** went to the Annapolis Valley bureau of the *Halifax Chronicle-Herald* and **Cathy O’Connel** just plain left.

In Toronto, *Connexions*, a networking group for publications and activists of the political left, is looking for volunteers. They publish a quarterly digest of resources and activist groups, and are working on a national directory of left-wing periodicals. Anyone in the Toronto area who wants to help out can contact **Ulli Diemer** at *Connexions*, 427 Bloor St. West, Toronto, M5S 1X7. . . . Another publication, whose birth announcement recently arrived, is called *Transformation*, a “new Canadian publication which dares to tell the truth about the left, the women’s movement, the peace movement, environmental groups, unions...” Write to Transformation, P.O. Box 1983, Saskatoon, Sask., S7K 3S5. . . .

At *Maclean’s* it looks like some major changes in the offing in the next month or so. For now, just a few announcements: New to the research department is **Augusta Dwyer**, whose track record includes freelancing from Central America. Researcher **Andrew Bilski** takes a jump up the ladder to assistant editor on the World section. A native of Cincinnati, he was a globetrotting freelancer before he joined the *Maclean’s* research staff in Dec., 1983.

New in research is **Cynthia Brouse**, a one-time production editor at *Media Week* in London, England, and former associate editor at *Canadian Business*. **Sharon Doyle Driedger** moves from researcher to senior researcher, of which there is only one at any one time, and the former senior researcher, **Jane Mingay**, is now chief of research.

Mary McIver, formerly assistant managing editor at *Canadian Living*, joins as an associate editor. She was once assistant managing editor at *Toronto Life*. **Val Ross** moves from front section editor to entertainment editor. And writer **Bette Laderoute** left to accompany husband/CBC producer **Robert Sampson** to Calgary, for his new job as director of ceremonies at the 1988 Winter Olympics. Finally at *Maclean's*, **Ross Laver** moves to London to be co-correspondent with David North. . . .

At the *Windsor Star*, freelancer **Alan Abrams** joined the reporting staff. And some sad news: Managing editor **Bob McAleer**, 54, underwent surgery in Toronto, then returned to Windsor for further treatment. The word is he's resting and in good spirits. McAleer is a past president of the Canadian Managing Editors Conference. . . .

At the *Toronto Sun*, homes editor **Rob Mitchell** left to become press secretary to Ontario NDP leader Bob Rae. **Marilyn Linton** is the new lifestyles editor; she comes from *Homemaker's* magazine where she was food editor. And **Bob Vezina** is now special events and political editor. . . .

Former *Toronto Star* editor-in-chief **George Radwanski** will be paid \$80,000 by the Ontario Liberals to report, after a year of investigation, on ways to generate jobs in the service industry. Radwanski resigned from the *Star* last June.

Also at the *Star*, copy editor **Peter Bailey** left, **Phil Johnson** returns to the position of news editor from assistant city editor, and four summer students graduate to full-time: **Paula Todd**, **Damien Cox**, **Kevin Donovan** and **Bob Brehl**, who is *Toronto Star* man **John Brehl's** son. And **Kelly McParland**, who was on leave of absence in England, has officially resigned. **Bill Bragg** took early retirement. Former columnist **Lynda Hurst** now is on features. And **William Harper** goes from copy editor to assistant city editor.

Reg Smith starts as a copy editor at the *Hamilton Spectator* and **Beth Marlin** joins from the *Winnipeg Free Press* as a general reporter. Also at the *Spectator*, freelancer **Andrew Dreschel** is now full-time staff. *Toronto Star* summer student **Jane Coutts** now is a general reporter for the *Spectator*.

Ray Di Gregorio, now with the *Burlington Gazette*, comes aboard as a district reporter. **Gary Hall** goes from metro editor to assistant managing editor. **Jerry Nott** goes from night metro editor to day metro editor. The new night metro editor is former district reporter **Doug Foley**. The new night news editor is former Focus section editor **Ken Kilpatrick**. **Dan Kislenko** goes from night page one editor to night design editor. . . .

The *Short takes* Attaboy Award goes to whoever put the notice in last month's old-age pension cheques sent out to Canada's senior citizens. It said, "Plan For Your Future With Canada Savings Bonds." . . .

The *Globe and Mail* has a hiring freeze on, but **Matt Fraser** is moving from entertainment reporting in Toronto to culture reporting in Montreal. New editor of the *Report on Business Magazine* is **Rae Mason**, who had been with the paper's City Living section. Her managing editor is **Tom Hopkins**, who had been freelancing following a Southam Fellowship.

The *Globe* announced it's quitting the Audit Bureau of Circulation, after 70 years. The paper's vice-president and general manager, **Doug Evans**, was quoted saying that it's not relevant in this day and age. He was particularly critical of ABC for including papers delivered to mental institutions and prisons in their tallies. ABC president and general manager David Keil said those are a very small part of the tallies...but this could be the start of a trend. I also hear that Bureau of Broadcast Measurement ratings for radio stations don't carry the clout they used to, because advertisers target their buying to the outlets that reach the audience they're selling to, and aren't so interested in total audience/circulation because it doesn't tell enough of the total story. Similarly, if you're selling BMWs or IBM computers, you don't need the ABC to tell you that an ad in the *Globe* is a must. . . .

At the *Ottawa Sunday Herald*, former news editor **John Morrissey** has left the paper. He is replaced by former sports editor **Mike Hayes**. Reporters **Mark Dunne** and **Karen McCarthy** left and are replaced by newcomers **Jennifer Tiller** and **Meg Milne**. McCarthy now is an information officer with the Ottawa Separate School Board.

The Arms Race

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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 used to using the telephone to assemble the nuggets of information contained in this regular content feature. They cannot do the whole task, largely for reasons of time, yet we want to be as comprehensive and current as possible, within the confines of publishing deadlines. So your contributions will be welcomed. Other than items about people on the move — historically a popular element of this magazine — *Short takes* consists of information that might not, or not yet, justify longer treatment. With broadcast tidbits, contact Bob Carr, 494 Richmond St. East, Toronto, Ont. M5A 1R3, telephone (416) 366-6306. With print news of any kind, contact Dave Silburt, 1154 Alexandra Ave., Mississauga, Ont., L5E 2A5, telephone (416) 271-5448.

Also in Ottawa, Peter Maser takes over the labor beat at Southam News, replacing Dave Todd, who is off to Southam's Latin American bureau. Germain Dion, *Le Droit's* long-time city hall reporter moves to Parliament Hill. And the new president and CEO at Southam Inc. is John Fisher, 58, younger brother of the late Gordon Fisher.

At the Ottawa *Citizen*, former Queen's Park reporter Susan Hannah leaves the paper but not Queen's Park. She now is working in PR for Ontario Minister of Education Sean Conway, replaced at Queen's Park by former general reporter Mark Kennedy.

New corporate editorial director at Comac Communications Ltd. in Toronto is David B. Scott. He was editorial director at Saturday Night Publishing Services, and now will be the captain of Comac's editorial ship. He has been editor of *The City* and managing editor of the late *Quest*, among other high-level jobs.

The *Barrie Examiner* has a new lifestyle and entertainment editor, Kathy Stunden, formerly a reporter in the same department. Her predecessor, Susan Glasgow moved to Windsor, where she will freelance. Gave up her seat on the Ontario Press Council, though. Student's old job now goes to former freelancer Donna Barsky.

Regis Yaworski, a journalism instructor at Georgian College in Barrie for the last few years, returns to the craft in a more direct way with a weekly column in the *Examiner*. The paper's city hall reporter is Mark Hall.

The *Barrie Banner* has a new sports and entertainment reporter, John Devine, formerly from Toronto's *Link*. Gail Swainson moves to the general reporting slot, replacing Michele DeLorenzo, who is off to the Newmarket *Independent News*.

Meanwhile, back in Winnipeg, a national journal for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada will launch Jan. 1, under the name *Canada Lutheran*.

Canada News Wire announced the appointment of David S. Milliken as its new vice-president for Toronto. He was director of client services for the last three years, and has a long career in journalism with such papers as the *Ottawa Journal*, *Calgary Sun*, and *Calgary Herald*.

The Canadian Centre for Arms Control and Disarmament has established a media fellowship. It's the brainchild of Toronto *Star* publisher Beland Honderich, a founding director of the centre. The first winner is the *Globe and Mail's* Jeff Sallot. The fellowship's stated purpose is to "enable Canadian journalists to study arms control issues under the guidance of the Centre's staff of specialists."

Britt Jessup, now retired as managing editor of the North Bay *Nugget*, passes along word that the School of Journalism at Ottawa's Carleton University has selected student Murdock Thompson of Tiverton, Ont., as this year's recipient of the Bob Farquharson Memorial Award in Journalism. Jessup chaired the committee of the Canadian Managing Editors Conference which created the award in the memory of long-time ME and CMEC pioneer Farquharson.

And Andrew MacFarlane, professor in and a former dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at London's University of Western

Ontario advises that Methuen Publications, which brought out his first two volumes of *Byline*, the valuable collections based on National Newspaper Award winners, has waived copyright to allow the entire series to be microfiched and accessible through the Eric database, whose computer index and files are available worldwide. In the meantime, MacFarlane's third volume in the NNA series is to be released by Ampersand Publishing, presumably about mid-1986.

It's almost old news by now, but Lise Bissonnette has resigned as editor-in-chief of Montreal's *Le Devoir*, to take up other duties at the paper. Paul-Andre Comeau, a former European correspondent for Radio-Canada, was named to succeed her. Publisher Jean-Louis Roy said Bissonnette "leaves a political, intellectual, and professional heritage of exceptional quality."

Cold Heaven by Brian Moore (Penguin Books) and *Sea of Slaughter* by Farley Mowat (Seal Books) have been recognized as Canada's outstanding English-language paperback books for 1985. The ninth annual Author's Awards ceremony was held in Ottawa in early November. Periodical Distributors of Canada, the association of book and magazine distributors, sponsors the awards program through its Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Letters. Moore won in the fiction category, Mowat in the non-fiction field. The Book of the Year, a category recognizing works that receive both critical acclaim and substantial sales, was awarded to *The Game*, by Ken Dryden.

— Dave Silburt



A new book arrived at *content's* office just as this issue was ready to be put to bed, so there was no time for a proper review or commentary. One is scheduled for the January-February issue, but we'd like to draw attention to the book now. (Actually, a piece in the next issue will be a useful follow to the lead pieces in this one.) It's titled *Jolts* and sub-titled *The TV Wasteland and the Canadian Oasis* and comes from the pen of Morris Wolfe, former TV critic for *Saturday Night*, book editor, and film history teacher at the Ontario College of Art in Toronto.

Wolfe sets out to examine the differences between English-Canadian and American culture as one can perceive them simply by looking at TV. He offers, he says, a kind of counter-report in advance to the Caplan-Sauvageau federal broadcasting task force report — which is expected in early 1986. He reminds us that perhaps the single most important statement to emerge from the sundry inquiries of the past two decades came from the Fowler Committee in 1965: "The only thing that really matters in broadcasting is program content; all the rest is housekeeping." That statement, Wolfe says, has frequently been repeated, "but its argument has never been followed." 'Tis hard to disagree.

The chief ingredient of much North American television, Wolfe contends, is what he calls JPMs (Jolts Per Minute): violence, verbal abuse, car chases, jiggling bodies, and endless bits of news and information that numb the appetites of "infomaniacs" without really telling them anything.

He laments that the place of the CBC in Canadian cultural life has been permitted to erode. "In the absence of a clear direction from Parliament, the CRTC has attempted to fill the policy vacuum. It has failed." Wolfe says the quality of Canadian television is "invisible" to most Canadians and that the CBC has become a national whipping boy (girl?), overmandated and underfunded.

Jolts is published by James Lorimer & Company and sells for \$9.95, paper, and \$16.95, cloth. Watch our next issue for a fuller assessment.

Mike Wallace, veteran of the CBS current affairs program *60 Minutes*, told a Toronto audience that "sometimes a reporter has to . . . role-play, occasionally masquerade to cover an important story." His example was an interview with the chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission over reports of safety hazards at Three Mile Island before the partial meltdown in 1979 at Harrisburg, Pa.

At the time, William Anders was not aware that a safety engineer planned to resign over those concerns. "We were able to film him — live, so to speak, an . . . unvarnished response," Wallace boasted.

While Anders certainly should have been aware of safety measures and concerns, is it reasonable that a commission chairman could be expected to know about everybody joining and leaving such a massive operation? A lot of people would have refused to discuss personnel movements, if only out of respect for the engineer's privacy. But, Wallace told his 500 listeners, "What we got was some drama, some conflict, but most important, exposure."

Wallace and his audience were discussing credibility and ethics in the media

CBC Radio is pleading with any former performers or staff who may have 16-inch transcriptions made before 1966, when audiotape came into use. The network will make a tape cassette copy, since the owners can't play the old softcuts on regular turntables. The discs are needed to help celebrate the network's 50th anniversary in 1986 Speaking of the anniversary, former CRTC chairman, author, and long-time CBC man **Harry J. Boyle** is at work on a history of the corporation. Hard to think of someone better qualified to handle the enormous and essential task

Still with the CBC: If you haven't yet caught the radio network's new weekly half-hour program *The Media File*, you should. It's broadcast Tuesdays at 7.30 p.m., 8 in Newfoundland. **Vince Carlin**, chief correspondent for National Radio News, is the program host and **Stu Allen**, whose credits include crisis specials, is senior editor. The CBC describes the program as "a public conduit for concerns and questions that relate to the national and international media — newspapers, magazines, television, and radio. Its premise is to examine what we in the media do, and, in a way, hold the media to account, not excluding the CBC itself."

The CBC FM network celebrated its 10th anniversary Nov. 3, having grown from eight transmitters to 21 plus cable distribution, reaching 75 per cent of us

The president of Canwest Broadcasting says a CRTC review of the decision in favor of a third English-language TV service for Saskatchewan could delay opening of stations in Saskatoon and Regina. **Donald Brinton** commented after the federal Cabinet's priorities and planning committee was told by five other private

broadcasters that the CRTC had not considered adequately whether the cities were one market or two and, therefore, whether advertising revenues would be sufficient for new stations.

A subsidiary of Canwest won a license Sept. 12, beating competing bids by Harvard Developments Ltd. of Regina and Allarcam Ltd. of Edmonton. Canwest is controlled by Liberal **Izzy Asper**, Harvard by Conservative **Paul Hill**. Harvard said its **CKCK** Regina station would lose money in the third year that a new station was in operation. The turn of events begs questions about political considerations, at least to this sceptical observer

Some people-on-the-move: **Eric Sorenson**, formerly anchor with London's **CFPL-TV**, now is reporter/anchor at Toronto's **CFTO**, and newscaster **Ric Wellwood** has switched from mornings to afternoons at **CFPL** Radio The country's pay-TV sports service has added **Vic Rauter**, formerly with Global and CBC in Toronto. He's replaced on **CBLT** by **Bruce Dowbiggin** of CBC Radio. Already on board from CBC are **John Wells** and **Steve Cooney**.

In Ottawa, **Laurie Long** left **CJSB** to become writer/broadcaster for the afternoon show on **CBO**. And **Rick Grant** left his position as **CBO's** senior news editor, while **Kathryn O'Hara** now is consumer commentator for the **Newsday** program on **CBOT**.

In Kitchener, **Frank Lynn** joined **CKCO-TV** from **CHYM** while **Ron Shaw** moved eastward to **ATV** Charlottetown The national editor now at Broadcast News is **Alec Stewart**, while **Donna Maloney**, CP desk writer, moved a couple of floors at Toronto headquarters to become a BN wire editor. BN's **Heather Boyd** left the legislative bureau in Fredericton to become supervising editor for Western Canada, based in Edmonton

Jonathan Mann, who gained some distinction for reporting from India, moved to CBC Regina, while **Jane Chalmers**, who had been with the CBC in Calgary, has been made a national reporter in Winnipeg. Former CBC national assignment editor **Kelly Crichton** is reporting for *The Journal* from London, England Formerly with CTV national news in Toronto, **Mark Sikstrum** now is Edmonton bureau chief for the network

A little more Black unloading

by Henry Mietkiewicz

CFRB and **CKFM**, two of Canada's oldest, richest, and most popular radio stations, finally belong to Allan Slaight.

The \$10 million sale of the two Toronto stations was approved by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) in a decision that also saw ownership of Slaight's **Q107** and **CFGM** transferred to Westcom Radio Group of Vancouver.

The decision came six months after tycoons Conrad and Montagu Black offered to sell Standard Broadcasting, corporate parent of family station **CFRB**, pop station **CKFM**, radio stations in St. Catherines, Ottawa, and Montreal, and other media holdings.

Since Slaight Communications is not allowed to own two AM or FM stations in the same city, hard rocker **Q107** and country station **CFGM** have been sold to Westcom, owner of seven radio stations in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, and Hamilton.

While the CRTC decision means major boardroom shuffles, listeners

should hear no on-air changes, since Slaight and Westcom have agreed to maintain the existing style and approach at all stations.

Westcom will even retain Slaight's son, Gary, as manager of **Q107** and another son, Greg, as manager of **CFGM**.

In its statement, the CRTC said it is "satisfied that the overall benefits accruing from this transaction to the communities and broadcasting undertakings concerned — and to the Canadian broadcasting system as a whole — are significant and that approval of the transaction is in the public interest."

Slaight and Westcom president J.R. Peters said they are satisfied with the decision and promised to press ahead with commitments made at hearings earlier this fall.

Slaight will increase Standard's financial support for development and promotion of the Canadian recording industry and will spend \$150,000 to computerize **CFRB's** newsroom and \$15,000 at **CKFM** to sponsor Canadian musicians.

Westcom will spend at least \$135,000 a year (up from \$40,000) to give national scope to the Home-grown talent development project and will introduce annual playwriting and comedy competitions. The company also must give more immediacy to local news coverage, with \$75,000 to be spent on a mobile control centre to provide live coverage of community events.

However, in a dissenting opinion, CRTC commissioner Jean-Pierre Mongeau said the applications "are seriously deficient" in providing proof that the transaction will result in significant benefits to the Canadian broadcasting system.

Commissioner Monique Coupal added: "The financing proposed is so closely budgeted that it will be almost impossible for the applicant to maintain the present level of service; it is even less likely that improvements will be instituted." ☐

Henry Mietkiewicz writes, among other things, on broadcasting for the Toronto Star, from which the foregoing is reprinted.

Deputy press secretary for Ontario Premier David Peterson is former Press Gallery vice-president Guy Cote from Radio-Canada Communications co-ordinator for Canadian Occidental Petroleum is Bill Wheeler, former energy reporter at *CFCN-TV* in Calgary Dana Lewis, formerly of *CFTR* in Toronto now is news anchor at CBC-TV in Edmonton Out of the business is Mark Gillin from *CHYM* in Kitchener and back in the business is Gary Byers at *CFOS* in Owen Sound

Gayle Woods of *CFPL* Radio in London is planning a reunion for Apr. 19 of Fanshawe College students and instructors, circa 1974-76 Cable operators and programmers are reminded that the 29th CCTA convention and CABLEXPO are set for May 13-15 in Vancouver At a directors meeting of the Canadian Cable Television Association, Diane Legris of CF Cable Ltd. in Montreal was elected the first Quebec vice-chairperson The four recipients of RTNDA Foundation scholarships this year were all women: Ingrid Clark of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto; Gillian Bracking-Murphy of Lakehead University, Thunder Bay; and Heather Mitchell and Maureen Golovenko of Fanshawe College, London

After a decade of thinking out loud, the Ontario Legislature seems willing to move on broadcast facilities for the Chamber and one committee room, although stunned by estimated costs. Consultants said proceedings could be broadcast by November, 1986, a year later than hoped, and at a cost of \$7.3 million, almost three times earlier forecasts. It's said a staff of 13 will be needed, including five to make the broadcasts understandable for francophones and for the deaf

After reading a study by BBM on the impact of videocassette recorders on TV viewing, an official of McKim Advertising Ltd. said, "The major conclusion we draw . . . is that advertisers and broadcasters have very little to worry about." McCann-Erickson Advertising noted that 75 per cent of all VCR usage is for watching movies, either rented or recorded off TV. Media Buying Services Ltd. said that 30 per cent of recordings are viewed the same day and a further 46 per cent within seven days. McKim calculated that less than one per cent of all television viewing is affected by zipping and zapping (30)

— Bob Carr

The Schlunk Project: News by computer

Voice training courses are not likely to be abandoned just yet, but there were hints of Stanley Kubrick's *2001* when a computer voice synthesizer delivered the news over Carleton University's *CKCU-FM* radio station in mid-November.

The computer HAL in Kubrick's classic film sounded unnervingly human; Carleton's Schlunk Project, while still experimental, is aiming for a similar quality.

Schlunk? Is this April 1? A student hoax? A practical joke?

Nothing of the sort, except perhaps for Schlunk, a pseudonym for John Doe that broadcaster George Frajkor uses to describe an ordinary person in his teaching at Carleton's School of Journalism in Ottawa.

Frajkor and a team of journalism students brought Joe (or Josephine, for that matter) Schlunk to life, in a manner of speaking, at 9 a.m., Nov. 14, with a 10-minute report on *CKCU-FM*. They called it "the world's first radio newscast voiced entirely by a computer."

"The idea is simple," says Frajkor. "Write all your news stories on a computer using a word-processing program. Instead of printing out the stories and giving them to an announcer to read on the air, feed them through a computer voice synthesizer that is hooked up to a radio transmitter."

He goes on: "The emphasis in a newscast using a computer voice is on the quality of the news, not on the voice of some high-priced announcer. The newsreader can be replaced by anyone, by Joe or Josephine Schlunk, putting the newscast back into the hands of the real working journalists who write it."

The project has been assisted by the Digital Equipment Corp. of Kanata, which supplied by the DECTalk voice synthesizer. Computers for word-processing are on loan from Carleton's Science and Technology Centre.

Students participating in the program are Jill Vardy, Allan Thompson, Darlene Small, Laurie LeBlanc, and James Hrynyshyn.

According to Frajkor, the DECTalk voice synthesizer used in the Schlunk Project can speak in a variety of tones that sound "remarkably human." There are seven different selectable voices that can be adjusted according to the resonance or pitch desired. The voice can be commanded to read as slowly as 120 words or as quickly as 300 words per minute.

Frajkor explains: "In simple terms, the DECTalk goes through three stages to convert written text into speech. First the text leaves the word processor and goes to the DECTalk to be converted in a phonemic code. The phonemic code is a sort of alphabet of all the sounds that go together to make words. In

English, there are 36 different 'phonemes' that when mixed and matched make up the words we speak.

"Once the text has been converted to the basic sounds that will have to be simulated to make words, the DECTalk sets the frequency, bandwidth, and amplitude of the filters that will create the voice. A message is generated every 6.4 milliseconds. In the final stage the filters synthesize a speech waveform and, voila, the computer speaks."

Apart from freeing journalists to concentrate on writing the news, Frajkor says, a computer voice synthesizer such as the DECTalk "could also free the budgets of many smaller stations to hire more working journalists instead of high-priced newsreaders."

He sees other uses for the system. "Blind or visually impaired people who now use voice synthesizers with scanning devices that read books for them could use DECTalks with a home computer. The Schlunk Project is the first to seriously look at converting text to speech through a home computer. Material could be published on floppy disk instead of on paper."

Computer voice synthesis, still within the realm of science fiction for many people, has "endless possibilities," says Frajkor. The purpose of the Schlunk Project "is to wake people up" to those. (30)

What's ahead

As *content* continues to survey the state of journalism in Canada, and by implication to put forward ideas for raising professional standards, we've a number of features planned for coming issues.

We plan to offer stories about the craft that you indicated you wanted to see through our readership survey earlier this year. And we'll carry stories about journalism here — and abroad — that we think are important in our collective understanding of our role in society.

Here's an excerpt from the January-February issue:

From David Waters, senior producer of public affairs with CBC in Montreal: As I write this, the latest BBM has just established that the translated version of *Dynasty* attracted 793,000 viewers — or about one in every seven Quebecers. This despite the fact that they are watching last season's episodes. So much for the bad news.

1985-in-review

What happened in journalism during the past year? David Estok, a Hamilton-based reporter, provides a summary of developments in such diverse areas as ownership concentration, radio journalism, magazines and newspapers, labor and the media, the press and the law . . . and more.

And we'll cover business writing, again, and industrial relations in the industry, again, and ethics and credibility, again, the law, and a host of other topics that amount to a seminar on professional development every two months.

So if you've just borrowed this copy, subscribe now to ensure you get these and other stories about journalism. And if your subscription is about to expire (check the date on your mailing label), it's time to make sure you continue to receive Canada's only magazine for and about and by journalists.



University of Toronto Southam Fellowships for Journalists 1986-87

The objective of these Fellowships is to encourage improvement in journalism by offering qualified men and women an opportunity to broaden their knowledge by study in a university setting.

For the academic year at the University of Toronto, from September, 1986 to May, 1987, five Canadian journalists will be chosen from the applicants by the selection committee next spring.

The successful candidates will be able to study in any field of their choice. Graduate or undergraduate courses at the University's schools and departments are open to them. A typical Southam plan of study combines general education with concentration in one or two areas. The program is based at Massey College, the graduate school in the University.

A parallel, extra-curricular activity is arranged, where Southam Fellows meet regularly in informal seminars to discuss contemporary issues off the record with distinguished figures from journalism, business, education, and other professions, as well as

from the art, public service, and academic disciplines.

Applicants must ordinarily be full-time news or editorial employees with newspapers, news services, radio, television, or magazines with at least five years' experience.

The Fellowships, for which there are no educational prerequisites, have been financed by Southam Inc. since 1962. For the eight-month university year, they pay two-thirds of the Fellow's regular gross salary at the time of selection up to a specified maximum; all university fees; travel expenses to and from Toronto; and a living allowance for out-of-town Fellows.

Applications will be available soon, with details of the program, from: Southam Fellowships, University of Toronto, Koffler Student Services Centre, 214 College St., Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1.

Deadline is March 1, 1986, and early application is advised. Selections are announced in late April.



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