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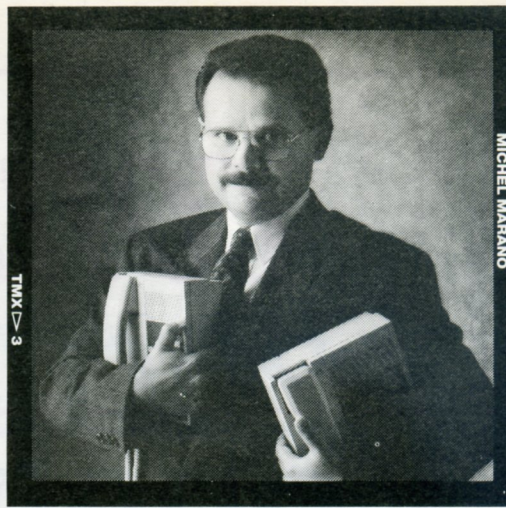
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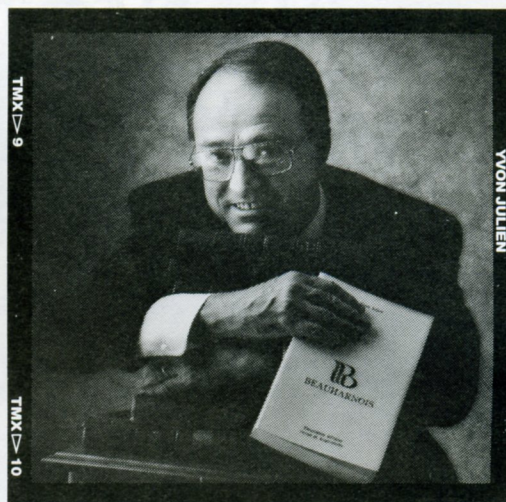
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Suite 602,
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K1S 5B6

Editor

Murray Goldblatt

Managing Editor

Klaus Pohle

Editorial Board

Christopher Dornan

Murray Goldblatt

Catherine McKercher

Klaus Pohle

Anthony Westell

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David Waters, Montreal

Anthony Westell, Ottawa

Ron Verzuh, Ottawa

Business/Advertising Managers

Diane Sims

and Robert Roth

(613) 733-4440

Editorial Office

(613) 788-7434

(613) 788-7404

Fax: (613) 788-5604

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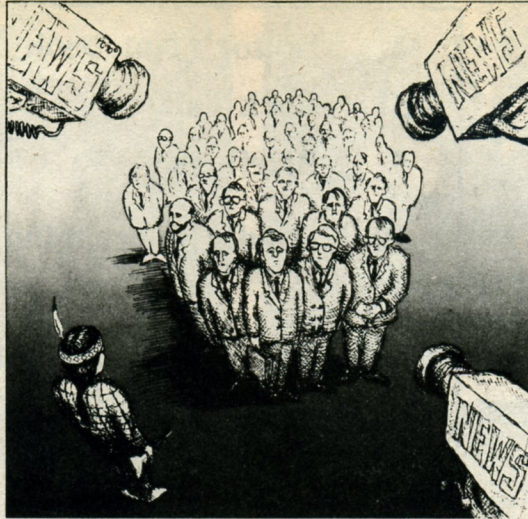
Editor's Notebook

The media has had its own struggle in its painful effort to cover the Mohawk bands arrayed against federal troops and the Quebec Provincial Police.

Should the media attempt to balance its coverage, should it tilt toward one of the warring factions?

Three writers try for answers to these questions. Ross Perigoe, professor of broadcast journalism at Concordia University, spells out the attitudes of the media and argues that they have failed to provide sufficient coverage of the native peoples. Alexander Norris of the *Gazette* explores the Mohawk Warriors and his own embattled experience. Jeff Heinrich, also of the *Gazette*, focuses on the impact of the media.

Elsewhere, the position of the media in the alleged



scandal involving former B.C. Attorney-General Bud Smith is described by Gillian Shaw of the *Vancouver Sun*.

The narrow line between editorial and advertising copy is analyzed by Marina Strauss of the *Globe and Mail*. A profile of the managing editor of the *Halifax Daily News* is sketched by Steward Lewis.

A survey of the content of the three major Toronto dailies is assembled by John Miller, chair of the Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. Trevor Lautens of the *Vancouver Sun* snipes back at the task force of Southam Inc., which has recommended expansion of the role of women in the newsforce. □

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Martin's analysis questioned

To the Editor: In the interests of fair journalistic comment, I wonder if you could be persuaded to print a rebuttal to Lawrence Martin's piece in the May/June issue of *Content*. There is very good reason to question Martin's expertise in commenting on events in the Baltics. (It remains to be seen if he knows anything about Soviet hockey!)

I, and Laas Leivat mentioned in the article, are graduates in Journalism from Ryerson — '67 was our vintage year. Another member of our class was Dale Goldhawk who now trades the journalism trade with CBC Radio...

But "sickening" and "gut wrenching" are the two most immediate reactions one gets reading — again — the apologist-for-Gorby ramblings of Lawrence Martin, this time in the May/June issue of *Content*.

One can only thank — what? — Fate or ancient Baltic gods? — that he's no longer the *Globe's* man in Moscow, and has joined the ranks of those trying to posture themselves as valid Soviet affairs commentators, in spite of the dissolving Soviet tableau. But it is gut-wrenching to contemplate that his analysis was disseminated by Canada's "national newspaper" and that he is still professing his bizarre views. I suppose the real question now is — is that just profound naiveté at work?

More to the point — why would *Content* boost them when the Soviet press, ex-KGB types, ex-army officers, Amnesty International, and members of the Soviet medical establishment, on an almost daily basis now, testify to the continued existence of political prisoners from the Baltics, ongoing and deliberate KGB disinformation campaigns, and cultural-based genocide in the Soviet military?

The Baltic situation ensues from an ongoing, 50-year occupation of the three previously independent countries. While all other countries occupied during World War II are now free, the obvious illegal

exception continues to be Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

During their years of independence, they were active members of the League of Nations; were among the first European countries to eradicate their post-war debts; enjoyed the world's highest per capita university education rate during the late 1920s; won medals at the Olympics; and signed independence pacts with the Soviet Union "in perpetuity" in 1920.

By international law, the Baltic states should not seek independence on Moscow's terms. They are illegally occupied and no more should play it on the Kremlin's terms than Norway or Holland played it by Germany's terms during their occupation. The Baltic states are occupied de facto, not de jure.

The Soviet Army is an army of occupation and as long as the Geneva Convention protocols have existed they have always banned coercing occupied peoples from serving in any army of occupation. Secondly, as far as international law goes, the Soviets forcefully dragging "army deserters" out of Lithuanian hospitals, is the same as the Chinese army in Tibet dragging conscripts back into the ranks. It's the principle, not the "blood spots" at stake here.

"Spin?" ...No — it's cynical equivocation though — everything doesn't depend

on spin... What journalism depends on in the long run, is a search for the truth, elusive or unpleasant as it may be for some.

What is evident is that the emergent truth about what has been going on in the Baltic states since 1945 does not sit well with a certain segment of the Canadian news establishment. One can ask why Martin chose to notably ignore the real Baltic situation when he had a chance to probe.

"Freedom?" ...Freedom, Mr. Martin, is demonstrated when: "collectivized" property is returned to its rightful owners; all former nationals can travel on their own passports; all churches are returned to their congregations; mail and customs services are their own; when countries print and freely exchange their own currency; dictate emigration and immigration policy; have fully empowered foreign embassies; issue their own amateur radio licences; dictate environmental standards; compete as themselves in the Olympics; sit in the United Nations; guard their own borders; and when the armies of occupation depart. None of that, Mr. Martin, has so far happened in the Baltics.

Andy Neimers,
Bowen Island, B.C.

Thomson job claim 'false'

To the Editor: As a former *Brampton Times* editorial staff member I read John Partridge's piece on that paper's demise with interest.

By and large, I think his analysis is correct, but I wish he had questioned one of Thomson's claims more carefully, instead of just repeating it.

Thomson did not find jobs for "most of" the employees affected, inside its empire or out.

Of the 56 employees, fewer than half were in the editorial department. Without

even trying to track everyone down, I know of at least six who were made no offers of any kind and who do not now work for Thomson, myself included. The same seems to be true of the papers's other departments.

To quote Steve Rhodes out of context, quite a few people were told they "don't have a job any more" and that was the end of it.

Marjorie Bentley,
Toronto

Magazine lacks depth

To the Editor: I was more than passingly amused by the criticism that a reader of *Content* directed to you regarding what appears to be an overwhelming and assumingly negative Carleton influence in the magazine. I accept your your response that appearances can be artificial, and I have no personal objections to Carleton's involvement. However, my purpose in corresponding with you is to raise more serious concerns.

I have come to the conclusion that many articles suffer from a lack of in-depth critical analysis and a lack of care in preparation. Since this seems to be prevalent, I have concluded that the editorial board does not want any more than a superficial overview of a subject matter, since the names posted to many of the contributions are serious, well-known Canadian journalists. I believe that a journal which takes itself seriously provides for both thoughtful, critical analysis combined with news, gossip and short features. I am not for a moment suggesting that *Content* resort to the 20 to 25 page articles which can be found in the Canadian Journal of Communication but I have great difficulty accepting what appears to be a 1,000-word limit on articles such as Arch MacKenzie's discussion on Brian Mulroney's "Web of Deceit" in the Sept./Oct. 1989 issue. Reading this article was like licking the cherry off the top of a chocolate sundae only to discover that the ice cream beneath has melted.

David R. Spencer Ph.D,
Graduate School of Journalism,
University of Western Ontario, London

For the record

To the Editor: In the Jan./Feb. issue of *Content*, Ron Verzuh erroneously told your readers that Montreal's French-language alternative newsweekly, *Voir*, "...started about four years ago and has grown ever since. Its success led *NOW* editor Michael Hollett to consider launching a head-on competitor called *ICI* a few years back, but the deal fell through."

This is quite the opposite of what happened. We worked with Pierre Paquet on the start-up of *ICI* for several months in 1985, before *Voir* had even been thought of. When *ICI* didn't work out, we parted amicably and Pierre and his colleagues went to start *Voir*. Neither I, nor any associates at *NOW*, have been involved in launching a competitor for *Voir* and we wish its publishers continued good luck.

Micheal Hollett,
Editor-Publisher, *NOW*,
Toronto

Arithmetic intrudes on democratic principles

To the Editor: I can agree strongly with the main point of Bob Roth's article "Media Treatment of Small Parties" in your last issue. Practice, especially by broadcasters, and especially by the broadcaster most mandated to get it right — the CBC — is simply offensive and unnecessary.

But that doesn't mean they don't have a point, and Roth in his highly tendentious and selective piece, makes no mention of the very serious problems that broadcasters face in trying to treat registered parties equally and official candidates equally. When you have eight registered parties in a situation where only three of them will command the votes, and therefore the viewing interest of about 95 per cent of the voting population, it is tough to demand that they ignore those pressing realities. That situation occurs in leaders' debates, and solutions have been found via reduced time offered to the minor parties. But no formula is satisfactory.

Where you are talking about a finite amount of space (time), the actual number of qualifying parties and candidates is significant. One could easily handle four or five party leaders; but nine? Somewhere in there principles, willy nilly, yield to arithmetic. CRTC regulations are clear and firm about free time and paid time broadcasts. And those are regulations, not guidelines. The latter operate for special election programming, and that is where the broadcasters are both most tortured and most vulnerable. Local candidates, unlike national parties, have only to put up their nomination lists and fees to enter. That fee has not changed nationally for decades and is now a joke, being, at \$200, so low that it's a very cheap way to buy publicity. In this situation, the villain in the local candidate piece is not the broadcaster, but the elections law, which encourages adventurers and souvenir seekers (that ballot with daddy's name on it!) to enter. It is then impossible to be fair

to all. And the attempt to sort out the serious minority candidate from the nuisance candidate requires even higher levels of presumptuousness than does separating the "could wins" from the "never could wins," as they do now.

Then there is the really "tough" journalist who thinks he is not being realistic if he ignores his "professional" instinct that tells him Party X does not have a chance, and therefore should not be treated as respectable. That can happen on routine news broadcasts, and reflects no visible policy on the part of the broadcaster (it may be more related to Schools of Journalism).

There is much more to reform than "getting" the broadcasters, or even all of the media. Why not start with the election laws, and give the people who want to be fair a fighting chance to do so.

Gordon Cullingham,
Ottawa

Western axes native j-program

The University of Western Ontario Graduate School of Journalism has shut down its own journalism program for aboriginal Canadians in the wake of the federal government's decision to cut funding for two successful native media programs.

Peter Desbarats, dean of the journalism school, made the decision because the prospects were poor for getting the necessary \$100,000 in funding from the secretariat of state and the department of Indian affairs and northern development.

"It was shaping up to be three or four months of lobbying with little chance of success," Desbarats says.

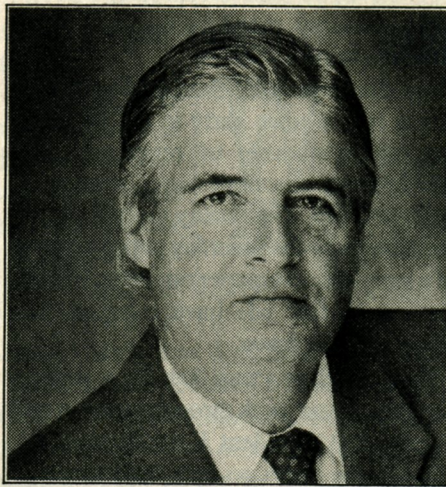
The Program in Journalism for Native People (PJNP) has been plagued with funding problems since its inception 10 years ago. It was proposed and partly funded by the Donner Foundation in 1979, and throughout the years has had the support of the Max Bell Foundation and the Atkinson Foundation. But foundations won't provide large blocks of money for an extended period of time, Desbarats says, and federal money was his only hope.

The federal government has supported the program for the past three years, contributing \$100,000 annually. Even then, it took hard lobbying and last-minute orders from the respective ministers' offices to get money from Ottawa.

Desbarats says the \$5.6 million cuts to the Native Communications Program and the Northern Native Broadcasting Access Program in March meant the end of the road for his program. "When the department of Indian affairs announced it was cancelling funding for native communications, I knew there was no chance."

Miles Morrisseau, a native affairs reporter with CBC radio and a 1986 graduate of the Western program, says he is "very disappointed" by the program's demise.

He says institutions like Western don't



Peter Desbarats

realize how important this kind of program is for natives wanting to break into mainstream professions. "If there was the will on the part of the university to continue the program, they would fund it."

Desbarats says Western's record in educating native journalists is strong. Since 1979, 108 students have entered the program and approximately half have graduated. Seventy-five former students now work in the media, mostly the native media. He says the program was never intended to be permanent. But it was intended to have a major impact on the position of native journalists in the media. "As more native students went into the media, the need would be phased out," he says.

Desbarats adds that the school's resources were already severely taxed by its other programs. "We're getting busier with professional development programs for working journalists and we have had less time for this."

Desbarats acknowledges that there is a continuing need for native education. Cutting funds to programs helps create the tensions that led to situations like the barricades at Oka this summer. The media, lacking a firm grasp on native issues, must play "catch-up."

"I think every major medium realized that it has no expertise in this area," he says.

Morrisseau says he's had a lot of calls from journalists this summer asking for explanations of native concepts.

A one-day symposium held last July brought together former graduates of the Western program to discuss the future of native journalism. One proposal at the symposium was to set up a data base of native journalists for referrals and to encourage others to become journalists.

But Morrisseau says that without solid education programs, "a huge void has been created." He adds, with bitter irony, that a native youth "is more likely to end up in jail than in the media."

Meanwhile, the National Aboriginal Communications Society (NACS) has shut its Ottawa office and laid off its staff following the federal cuts.

NACS is an umbrella organization for native broadcasters and publishers, created by the government to act as lobbyist and marketing agent. It has lost financial support both from the federal government and some of its 21 members. Many member groups, because much of their revenue came from the federal government, can no longer afford to pay their dues.

This has meant moving NACS to Lac Labiche, Alberta, where NACS president Ray Fox administers it part-time. Fox is station manager of CFWE-FM in Lac Labiche, a member radio station. Former NACS executive director Bob Belfry remains in Ottawa as a contact person.

"We've suddenly had to go from non-profit organization to a private business," says Fox. "I only wish we'd had some time to prepare for the transition."

Fox complains that to qualify for federal grants, NACS's structure precluded any extensive business plan. "It was like being on a reservation; you had to act a particular way or you'd lose your status."

Briefings

Now, NACS is trying to reconstitute itself. It plans to approach the Canada Council for a grant to set up a catalogue of native musicians and singers, similar to ACTRA. It is also looking for funds from the Aboriginal Business Assistance Program. Fox says he sees a role for NACS as advertising agent for the native media, but he says he'll need help from the broadcasting and publishing industry to manage the transition.

"Being faced with a need to increase advertising, we're going to have to learn how to deal with whether or not to take beer ads, which pose a special problem for our people," says Fox. "It's things like this we need advice on."

— Michelle Smith and
Scott Whitfield

Michelle Smith is a freelance journalist in Lambeth, Ont. Scott Whitfield is completing his Master of Journalism degree at Carleton University.

Got a job? Hang on to it!

Hiring freezes, cutbacks in staff and an emphasis on attrition: that's the employment situation for journalists in a hurting Canadian media industry as 1990 draws to a close.

Daily newspapers seem to be feeling the sharpest pinch, but broadcasters have not been immune to the economic downturn that has cut into revenue. Commercial sales are reported to be down, although figures for the first half of 1990 are not yet available.

At the *Toronto Star*, Canada's largest and richest daily, assistant managing editor Mary Deanne Shears says, "We don't have a freeze on hiring, but we are cutting back and we are not replacing everybody who leaves."

A number of other dailies are in a similar situation. "We are definitely cutting back," says *Ottawa Citizen* managing editor Scott Honeyman. "We're picking our spots, replacing some people but not

replacing others, and this year we hired one-and-a-half students from our summer program, compared to six last year." *The Citizen* has also offered early retirement to older newsroom employers, a long-term economy move taken by several Southam papers.

The *Kingston Whig-Standard* has had a hiring freeze since early in the year and has lost a number of reporters. The newspaper's economic woes were worsened in May, when many realtors pulled their ads from the Saturday paper because of a story the newspaper ran in the Homes section. A few ads have returned, but levels are still down.

The Canadian Press has been cutting back for a year, both through attrition and layoffs. CP President Keith Kincaid attributes the news co-op's hard times to newspaper closures (Montreal's *Daily News* and the *Brampton Times*), falling circulations and a general malaise in publishing.

There's even a cutback on hiring at the *Vancouver Sun*, although British Columbia and Yukon newspaper ad sales are the only good news in the latest Canadian Daily Newspaper Publishers Association (CDNPA) sales tallies.

The 1990 figures to the end of July show a 2.8 per cent decline in total ad revenue for Canadian dailies over the same period last year. It's the first drop in seven years.

Hurting most are the Quebec dailies, where ad revenue fell by 9.3 per cent, followed by dailies in the Maritimes, which reported a drop of 5.3 per cent.

In Ontario the loss was 2.6 per cent. Papers in the Prairies almost held their own, dropping only by 0.7 per cent. Dailies in B.C. and the Yukon were the only winners in the period, with a 1.3 per cent increase in ad revenue.

Does this mean Canadians are looking away from newspapers for their information, and that advertisers are simply following them? "No," says CDNPA president John E. Foy. "People still look to the newspapers when they want information, and when they want to buy something. You can look at radio, magazines and also television; they are all doing

badly relative to other years."

CDNPA research manager Charles Dunbar says the ad volume decline is a direct result of the country's economic downturn. "It happened in the last recess-

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sion," says Dunbar, "and it's happening again in this one."

He says the largest drop in advertising has been in inserts. Revenue from this form of advertising was down 4.5 per cent in the first half of 1990. Revenue from national advertising was down 3.7 per cent while retail ads were off by 2.6 per cent and classifieds by 1.1 per cent.

Circulation figures, on the other hand, have been relatively stable. The CDNPA reports circulation is down by 27,000, or just under one-half of one per cent nationwide. Taken with population growth, however, this figure suggests that "reach" or market penetration is lower in many markets. □

—Bob Rupert

Bob Rupert teaches at the Carleton University School of Journalism and coordinates the school's apprenticeship and student employment programs.

Media/women conference set for November

A national conference on women and the media will be held in Toronto this fall to give women and men a chance to discuss day-to-day issues and pressures that women face in the newsroom. The conference is being organized by journalists Denise Davy and Anne Bokma in co-operation with the Canadian Association of Journalists, formerly the Centre for Investigative Journalism.

Both Davy, a health and social affairs reporter for the *Hamilton Spectator*, and Bokma, editor of the Maclean Hunter publication *Retail Directions*, say the conference will address issues that affect women journalists directly. These include the coverage of women's issues by the media, sexism in the newsroom, the need for child care in the workplace and the importance of promoting more women to management positions.

Davy says the aim of the conference is

two-fold. In the short term, it's a chance to bring women journalists together to discuss issues. In the longer run, she hopes the conference will create the impetus to form a national or provincial organization of women journalists.

The organizers say the response has been overwhelming. Those asked to sponsor the meeting — the Southam Newspaper

Group, *Hamilton Spectator*, Maclean Hunter and the Ontario Women's Directorate — were enthusiastic and are providing funds to help put on the conference. In addition, even before registration forms were printed, about 50 people said they will be attending.

"The response we've got has told us the timing is right and that there are a lot of other women journalists out there who are also concerned about these kinds of issues," says Davy.

Bokma adds, "The conference is a natural reaction to women's increased awareness of these issues." The organizers stress that men are also invited to attend.

Davy says a conference of this kind is needed, since "most women journalists are educated, competent and experienced and yet we're all sitting in newsrooms across Canada that are completely male-dominated."

CAJ executive director John Stevens, who is helping Davy and Bokma with conference arrangements, says he hopes the session might become an annual event.

Plans for the conference coincide with the recent release of Southam's report on women in newspapers. The report addresses the problem of invisible barriers — the so-called glass ceiling — prohibiting women from advancing into powerful positions in their news organizations.

"One way of getting rid of the glass ceiling is to show examples of women who have made it and set them out as role models," says Stevens.



The conference, to be held at Toronto's Westbury Hotel, begins Friday, Nov. 16 with a reception and an address by Ann Medina, freelance producer and former CBC foreign correspondent. Saturday,

Nov. 17, features three panel discussions. The first includes a handful of women who have broken through the glass ceiling, including Gwen Smith, deputy managing editor of *The Globe*

and *Mail*, and Vivian Macdonald, deputy foreign editor of the *Toronto Star*. Other panels are called "lobbying for change," and "is there room for feminism in the media?"

Key speakers on Saturday are Sheila Copps, Liberal MP and former journalist, and Michele Landsberg, columnist with the *Toronto Star*. Bokma says the conference will end on an upbeat note with a performance by Toronto comedienne Sandra Shamas.

Organizers hope to attract 150 people to the conference. Registration fees vary from \$65 for students to more than \$100 for non-CAJ members. Registration forms are available through the CAJ. □

—Lynda Ceresne

Lynda Ceresne is an Ottawa freelance journalist.

Globe dumps broadcasting ventures

The *Globe and Mail's* dream of becoming the country's only "broadcast newspaper" was hit broadside by economic reality this summer. The newspaper announced on July 27 that due to tough economic times, it was cancelling its television business segments on CBC's *Newsworld* and a successful syndicated radio program.

The Report on Business segments for Newsworld aired for the last time on Aug. 31. The Business Report, which is syndicated to 30 radio stations across the country, will finish on Oct. 31.

"It's no secret that times are tough everywhere and every business must concentrate on its prime base of revenue," says Mike Soliman, director of marketing and corporate development at *The Globe and Mail*. "Our priority is to focus our attention back on the newspaper, which I describe as the core product."

Profits at the newspaper's parent company, the giant Thomson Corp. chain, are reported to be down this year. Ad linage at *The Globe and Mail* is also down — off by 12 per cent in the first half of 1990 compared with the same period last year.

Soliman, who says his budget of \$7 million has been cut drastically, says the television segments have cost his department \$200,000 since their debut in August, 1989. These expenses have included maintaining a broadcast studio in the newspaper's Front Street office building in downtown Toronto and the cost of a contract with Information, a freelance broadcast company which took over the segments in April when newspaper staff found the job too taxing. Newsworld paid *The Globe and Mail* with commercial air-time in return for broadcasting the hourly segments, which were aired between 6 a.m. and noon.

The cancellation of the radio program, which even by Soliman's account was popular and a break-even venture, has surprised those involved in its production.

"We felt there was every indication it would have been making a profit for them (the newspaper) by the end of 1990," says Stuart Allen, one of the principals in Information, which also produces the radio segments. "There were only about three weeks in 1990 when it wasn't fully sponsored."

When the 90-second radio report was launched two years ago its audience was estimated at more than 600,000 listeners, which Allen describes as "one of the most successful syndication launches."

Although *The Globe and Mail* is getting

out of the radio business, the syndication series will continue. Soundsource, the syndication arm of CFRB in Toronto, will take over the business reports with its own Arnis Peterson, a former *Financial Post* radio presenter.

There will also be some production changes. The new reports will be "more current," says general manager Jean-Marie Heimrath, and will use actualities instead of just scripts. The segments will also be personalized for each radio station subscribing.

"Yes, it's a money-maker," says Heimrath, who estimates that the weekly audience for the reports — aired six times a day, five days a week — is 850,000 people.

"From a promotional perspective, *The Globe and Mail* got a really good deal," he says. "Their name was mentioned twice in every report. There's quite a bit of value there."

But according to Soliman, "Money is not the issue. It's a matter of focusing our attention on what's more important in these difficult economic times — and again, that's the core product."

Hardest hit by the newspaper's pullout is Information, a partnership of Allen and two other former CBC staffers, Kevin Marsh and Chris Henry. Allen, a 13-year veteran of CBC network radio news, says that with the worsening of the economy over the last 10 months, businesses have been reluctant to invest in company and training videos. This left the company dependent on *The Globe and Mail* for 65 per cent of its business. The newspaper's decision means the three partners will go their separate ways, although Allen says he'll provide similar services under another company he runs.

In July, *The Globe and Mail* gave Newsworld 90 days notice of its intention to drop the segments on Oct. 31. The CBC decided to end the shows on Aug. 31.

"We have costs involved," says Joan Donaldson, head of Newsworld. "We are talking to other business publications and other people interested in supplying business information. But we thought we'd start fresh on the first of September with

our own people doing the broadcasts until a decision is made."

Heimrath of Soundsource says he was given little time to adjust to the newspaper's change in plans. He was notified one day before the newspaper ran a story on the decision and had to scramble to notify his affiliates.

"I wasn't particularly pleased," he says, "but then again, that's the reality." □

—Carol Phillips

Carol Phillips is a freelance journalist.

Secrecy challenge in limbo

After a two-year legal fight, the *Ottawa Citizen* is back to square one in its constitutional bid to challenge the closed-door hearings of a Senate committee.

In late August, the Federal Court of Appeal threw out the newspaper's lawsuit, ruling it does not have the jurisdiction to hear a challenge to the Senate's powers.

Now, *The Citizen* is considering starting over, launching the identical challenge in the Ontario Court of Justice.

But it is far from certain whether any court has the power to apply the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to the activities of the Senate or its committees.

"It's been two years since we've started this thing and all we've been told is that we were in the wrong court," says *Citizen* lawyer Richard Dearden.

The Citizen launched the court action in 1988 after reporter Charles Rusnell was prevented from attending meetings of the Senate's internal economy committee, which was investigating allegations of wrongdoing by Liberal Senator Hazen Argue.

Argue has since been charged by the RCMP with theft, fraud and breach of trust and is accused of using thousands of dollars in Senate funds and services for his

wife Jean's unsuccessful campaign for the federal Liberal nomination in the riding of Nepean near Ottawa.

The newspaper's challenge claimed that holding the Senate committee hearings in secret violated the charter's guarantee of freedom of expression.

It is the first time journalists have tried to gain access to the closed deliberations of a legislative committee using the charter.

But rather than defend the case on its merits, lawyers for the Senate and the federal government tried to have the lawsuit dismissed on the grounds the Federal Court had no jurisdiction to hear the challenge.

The government lawyers also argued that the upper chamber is immune from review by the courts because of the tradi-

tion of Parliamentary privilege.

But in June 1989, Mr. Justice Barry Strayer of the Federal Court ruled the lawsuit could proceed and said the activities of the Senate were no longer immune from review by the courts because the charter had "fundamentally altered" the Canadian Constitution.

"Other branches of government have had to accept the consequence of the charter and so must parliamentary committees," Strayer ruled.

The Senate appealed and in August the Federal Court of Appeal said the Senate was not a "federal board, commission or other tribunal" and therefore not within the jurisdiction of the Federal Court.

"To treat the Senate as though it were a federal board, commission or tribunal not

only belittles its role, but also goes beyond the ordinary meaning of those terms," wrote Chief Justice Frank Iacobucci.

But as to the central question of whether the activities of Parliament are subject to review under the charter, the appeal court said, "There are questions and arguments to the contrary."

Dearden called the suggestion that the Senate may be charter-proof "shocking."

"If the cabinet is governed by the charter, I fail to see why the Senate wouldn't be."

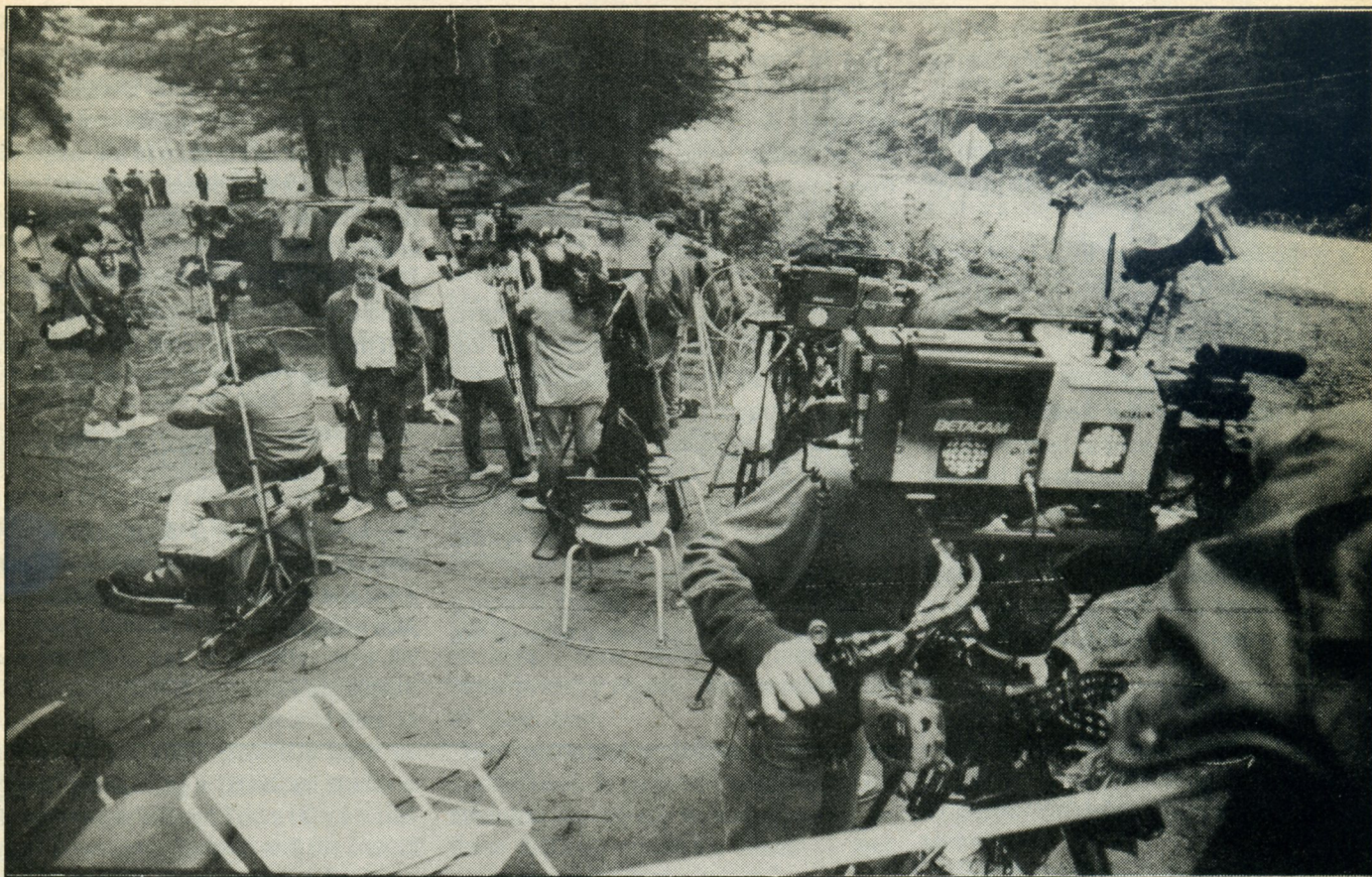
—Stephen Bindman

Stephen Bindman is legal affairs correspondent for Southam News and past president of the Canadian Association of Journalists.



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The media and minorities

Native concerns
ignored unless
there's a conflict

by Ross Perigo e

It shouldn't come as a surprise that native issues have dominated our newspapers and television screens for the past six months. For years the native leadership predicted civil disobedience or worse if the federal government continued to ignore their claims. What is surprising is the fact that the media and the Canadian people should be surprised at all.

Even the present coverage of native conflicts reflects an inadequate attention to claims in places other than Montreal. Spontaneous demonstrations of solidarity with the Mohawk in Kanesatake have seemed to pop up like dandelions in spring in British Columbia, Ontario and other regions of Quebec. These demonstrations of power have suddenly catapulted native issues from a position where they languished for decades to the top of the agenda.

It would be convenient to say that Elijah Harper's refusal to allow debate in the Manitoba Legislature on the Meech Lake Accord has produced an impasse between the federal government and the natives. But that would be simplistic.

The ignoring of native land claims or issues related to self-government has not simply been an unwritten

policy of the federal government. It applies to the electronic media as well. A content analysis of Canadian national television news coverage suggests that television news does not handle native issues to the degree that their numbers in society warrant either.

Last summer, a content analysis was jointly conducted by Montreal broadcast consultant Barry Lazar and the Journalism Department of Concordia University. The analysis was focused on the participants in news coverage to see what we could learn about visible minorities as portrayed in news stories. We were not interested in the ethnicity of the news reporters or news anchors, but rather the participants in the stories themselves — how they were shown within videotaped reporter packages.

A total of 55 programs of CTV's National Evening News (at 11 p.m.) and CBC's The National (at 10 p.m.) were taped from August 9 to September 9, 1989. These provided 718 stories. Of this number, 213 met our criteria. The remainder were stories whose participants were non-Canadian or the stories were read by the announcer and no participants were shown talking about the issue. One hundred and one stories or 47.8 per cent were CBC's and one hundred and twelve or 52.5 per cent were CTV's.

We screened all the programs, including weekends, coding stories which either occurred in Canada or involved Canadians abroad. The identity and length of time accorded to each speaker was recorded. We also identified the role of each speaker in doing this.

We used a technique previously employed by Generations Research Incorporated in their study for the Secretary of State in a May 1988 paper called The Portrayal of Canadian Cultural Diversity on Canadian Network Television.

It was determined that natives and visible minorities did appear to closely reflect their real population in Canada. Of 756 interview subjects, 702 were white (92.9%), 30 were members of visible minorities (4.0%) and 21 were natives (3.1%). Just slightly more than 7 per cent of all the subjects interviewed were members of visible minorities.

Insensitive media understand conflict only in terms of barricades and rifles

Data from Statistics Canada suggests that roughly 6.4 per cent of the population is comprised of visible minorities (3.6%) and native or aboriginal peoples (2.8%).

Perhaps what was most striking was the fact that, at the time of the survey, there was an unusually high number of ongoing stories where native issues were addressed.

These included the hearing into the death of Helen Betty Osborne in The Pas, Manitoba, the Donald Marshall inquiry in Nova Scotia, and a native justice inquiry in Alberta. Given these events, natives still appeared in 3.1 per cent of all the stories — just slightly above their actual numbers in society.

We also analyzed the type of role participants played, categorizing those who appeared on screen into three groups. They were either (1) a participant in the news story; (2) an authority on the subject of the news story but not directly involved; (3) an interested observer without special qualifications. The latter group would consist of "man in the street" interviews that news rooms use as an attempt to feel the pulse of the region.

Natives were participants in 2.2 per cent

of all the eligible stories covered. They were called on for their expertise in 7.2 per cent of the stories. And when it came to conducting man in the street interviews, natives appeared 2.4 per cent of the time.

The data suggest that even with the number of native-related inquiries going on during the survey, the television news media still under-represented native issues relative to their numerical size in the country. Natives were over-represented only in the "authority" grouping. This may be due to the fact that a great many authority figures were called to attend the judicial inquiries referred to earlier.

Why do the media tend not to reflect native concerns? There appear to be at least three reasons.

The most compelling is simply the nature of news coverage. The news media follow ebbs and flows in power. When a bridge is closed, or a rail line blocked, it's a demonstration of power. When the Quebec minister responsible for negotiations with the Oka Mohawks at Kanesatake signs an agreement to start discussions with armed, masked natives standing behind him, it's another demonstration of power. The second reason may be because of conscious or unconscious racism. Dan David is a freelance broadcaster and a Mohawk native living in Maniwaki, Quebec. He was hired by CBC television in Regina to be a reporter between December of 1983 and June of 1986. He told an insightful story to a group of journalism students earlier this spring. When he was conducting the man in the street interviews for the local station his camera operators were consistently finding him white men and women. It didn't pass unnoticed. Indeed, in his last weeks as a general reporter, David was told he would be shifted to cover the native beat. It was the principal reason he left in 1986.

A third reason for this neglect may be that natives are largely congregated in two areas: the reservations — most of which are located far from centres of population where the media congregate — and areas of the city where they may tend to blend in.

Let me conclude by sharing an anecdote

that journalists and media watchers might do well to remember.

Concordia University's Journalism Department held a public forum this spring to discuss the portrayal of visible minorities in the media. We invited the news directors from the local CBC and CTV stations and both attended. The program was broadcast on CBC TV's Newsworld in April.

What was particularly memorable about that evening was the speech by two members of the Oka Mohawks at Kanesatake. At the time, very few people in the room knew that there was even a problem concerning the proposed expansion of a golf course. What the speakers had to say to the two local television news directors was instructive.

According to the speakers, whenever they called the local television news rooms to tell them about a planned protest, the question always came back, "Will there be any guns?" The media, in other words, were saying, "We'll only cover you if there is the possibility of violence." In some ways one might even conclude that the media were, by inference, counselling the Mohawks that violence or the threat of violence gets attention.

It was a poignant moment, watching these people wrestle with insensitive media that understood conflict only in terms of barricades and rifles.

Both news directors expressed concern that legitimate protest was being censored by assignment editors who were only looking for the sensational. But they went on to say that, given the circumstances of trying to get stories that affected the local community, sometimes there are errors in judgement. One of them asked to be kept personally informed of developments. The initiative was obviously too little, too late. Within a couple of weeks, the barricades were up and the dialogue had given way to the rabble of extremists. □

Ross Perigoe is a professor of broadcast journalism at Montreal's Concordia University.

Gazette reporter singled out for abuse

by Alexander Norris

In the midst of this summer's stand-offs at Kahnawake and Oka, leaders of the Mohawk Warrior Society announced they were barring Montreal *Gazette* reporters from areas controlled by their armed men.

The main reason for this order, the Warriors later explained, was me.

"The *Gazette* is barred from both Kahnawake and Kanesatake," said a statement issued Aug. 2 by the pro-Warrior Mohawk Nation Office, "as a result of the racist editorial policies of the newspaper, expressed in editorials, and in the writing of one reporter in particular, Alexander Norris."

The Warrior communique accused me of writing nothing but "distortions, half-truths and fabrications." Subsequent communiques sent to newsrooms throughout Quebec stated that I was "under investigation for links to CSIS and the RCMP" and, worse, that my reporting was intentionally crafted to fan racial hatred.

All of this was rather nasty, coming as it did from a heavily armed organization that had been involved in two gunbattles which left three people dead in recent months.

Still, it came as no surprise.

For in the two years I've been covering Mohawk politics, the Warriors have done everything they can to discredit my reporting.

They've singled me out and physically ejected me from a news conference. They've fired off statements to Montreal's main French-language newsrooms suggesting that my "inflammatory reporting" is an attempt to crush Mohawk nationalism "in the same way" the *Gazette* once tried to destroy Quebec nationalism. In the spring of 1989, the Warriors even made the preposterous claim that I was trying to start a war: "He

would start the war so he could report it," they said in a complaint to the Quebec Press Council. "Your people would die. Our people would die. Alex Norris would thrive."

What have I done to earn such a bad name with the Mohawk Warrior Society?

Well, despite the rhetoric, the group has yet to identify actual errors in my stories. And I'm still on good enough terms with other native leaders and anti-racism activists not to be too concerned by the Warriors' frequent charges that I'm a hate-mongering bigot. If I have a bias it's in support of the struggle for native rights.

So as far as I can tell, my main sin in the Warriors' eyes has been to report that there is a diversity of views among Mohawks about the merits and legitimacy of the Warriors; that the Warrior militia is by no means unanimously accepted among Mohawks as the "army of the Mohawk Nation" which it claims to be; and that some, if not all, members of the group are paid to protect casinos and cut-rate cigarette vendors from police.

Stories I've written quoting traditional Iroquois chiefs denouncing the Warriors as criminals who are using the rhetoric of Mohawk traditionalism to line their own pockets haven't particularly pleased the Warriors either.

It's not as though I haven't given extensive coverage to the Warriors' views, or failed to try to convey to readers that the group has sincere, well-meaning followers.

But then, as John Mohawk, an Iroquois delegate to this summer's talks with Quebec and federal negotiators, put it: "The Warriors have not mastered the art of political pluralism."

There is, of course, a good and rather simple explanation for this intolerance of competing views: The Warriors'

legitimacy depends on the perception that they are the unchallenged defenders of the Mohawk people.

Write enough stories quoting credible Mohawk leaders — traditionalist and elected — who object to that self-appointed role, and you'll soon earn the Warriors' wrath. (Mohawk reporters at the *Akwesasne Notes* newspaper and CKRK radio in Kahnawake have had experiences similar to mine.)

Since I had been covering Mohawk politics for longer than most mainstream reporters when the Warriors threw up roadblocks in Oka and Kahnawake last July 11, I had a bit of a head start in writing the kind of stories the Warriors don't like.

Still, my experience isn't enough to explain the extent to which the Warriors were able to single out my reporting.

A mere four months earlier in Akwesasne, Warriors had shot up a peaceful roadblock manned by anti-gambling Mohawks, set their cars afire, then waged gunbattles that left two Mohawks dead — prompting hundreds of Mohawks to flee Akwesasne and its Warriors' "reign of terror."

And if that wasn't enough to make reporters wonder about the Warriors' relationship to their communities, perhaps Kahnawake's recent experiences might have raised some questions. Less than a year before the roadblocks went up, Warrior Society leaders had pushed ahead and opened a high-stakes gaming house in Kahnawake — against the wishes of local Mohawks who rejected the scheme by a 3-2 margin in a referendum.

More recently, two leading Warrior Society figures — Louis Hall and Francis Boots — had called publicly for the execution of a group of Iroquois traditionalist chiefs who dared to criticize them.

Now, we were told, the Warriors had thrown up roadblocks in Kahnawake and Oka without seeking the communities' consent.

Despite all the evidence, however, many news organizations — especially TV networks in the English Canadian media — never learned or bothered to make the

"...the Warriors have done everything to discredit my reporting."

crucial distinction between "the Warrior Society" and their backers, and "the Mohawk people" in general.

Stories quoted "spokesmen for the Mohawk Nation" without ever bothering to clarify that these self-proclaimed spokesmen were pro-Warrior activists whose legitimacy was hotly contested among Mohawks.

It was particularly galling when — even after all but 300 of the community's 1,600 natives had fled the settlement, even after moderate Mohawk leaders formed a broad coalition to prevent the Warriors from monopolizing their land-claim talks — reporters insisted on calling Warrior Society activists and their sympathizers "Mohawk spokesmen."

Such reports generalized about a whole ethnic group, uncritically accepting the credentials of any member of that group who proclaimed himself a spokesman.

And by equating the widely-hated Warriors with the entire Mohawk people, they did little to dispel the climate of anti-native racism in Quebec that was rising at the time.

By ignoring the internal politics of the Mohawk people, much of the reporting ended up delivering an inexcusably shallow and, sometimes, downright misleading account of the situation.

True, the most vocal Mohawk critics of the Warriors weren't keen to be interviewed at the beginning of the crisis. But that didn't mean that all Mohawks were united behind the group.

In a tightly-knit, patriotic minority community with a strong tradition of nationalism, it can be frightening to voice open criticism of a heavily armed group whose leaders have labelled their critics "traitors" and called for them to be executed.

I encountered many examples of such fear while covering the standoffs, but one example stands out in my mind. Midway through the crisis, I got a desperate call from a well-known Mohawk leader. He was begging me not to publish the angry comments he had made hours earlier about the Warriors, saying he feared for his family's safety.

Among some progressive journalists, it's sometimes considered counterproductive to emphasize the internal divisions within any movement for social change — be it the union movement, feminism or the native rights struggle.

But the fear in that man's voice reinforced my hunch that the aboriginal-rights movement will not be well served in the long run by journalists who ignore native peoples' internal debates about the Warrior Society and its violent tactics — or by reporters who pretend there is unity among natives on the issue when, clearly, there is not. □

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Media solidarity?

Not when there's a good story to be had

by Jeff Heinrich

Nothing personal. You get used to a line like that at the Mohawk barricades. A line spoken by armed Warriors hustling you out because you're no longer welcome.

"Nothing personal, it's just *The Gazette*, you know."

I knew. It happened to me two, almost three times since the July 11 standoff between Mohawks and Québec Provincial Police (and later Canadian soldiers) at the Kahnawake reserve south of Montréal and the Kanesatake settlement near Oka.

Each time, it was "nothing personal."

July 13, Day 3 of what the newspaper was calling "Police, Mohawks In Standoff": I had made it to the blockaded Mercier Bridge, through forest and along railway tracks in a friendly Mohawk's car. No journalist had been up there yet. I didn't last long. The Warriors ordered me off, drove me off in fact, right back to their barricade at Chateauguay. Then, the unpredictable: the police wouldn't let me through, perhaps fearing for my safety with the mob that had gathered. Eventually Mohawks took me out across the river by boat, and I wrote a first-person piece. Much ado about nothing, really: a media adventure in the midst of a crisis.

Aug. 1, Day 22 of what the newspaper was now calling "The Mohawk Crisis": I was barely behind the barricades at Oka when a Warrior asked me what news outlet I belonged to. I assumed they all knew I was with *The Gazette*. I'd become a familiar face there since the conflict began. I also knew we weren't too welcome because of our coverage and that week I had taken the precaution not to sign in on the log the Warriors were keeping of reporters' comings and goings. Now I was confronted, and I told the truth. A Warrior calling himself Can-Can and carrying a walkie-talkie hustled me out through the forest. "Nothing personal," he said.

Aug. 28, Day 48, the day the army played its video about the Warrior encampments and firepower: The Warriors must have been getting tired. One wanted to throw me out, along with *Gazette* colleagues Hubert Bauch, who was preparing a weekend feature, and Ingrid Peritz, who was working on the next day's story with me. But big surprise, he relented when Hubie and I coaxed him out of it. "All right, but just give us some good press for a change, all right?" the Warrior said wearily. "We need it."

All of which was probably par for the course of covering any tense conflict, where guns are the best defence against the press always getting what it wants. But there was an unusual twist in all of this and it happened on that second day I've mentioned, the day the entire news corps up the Oka hill decided to walk out in solidarity with me.

If *The Gazette* was excluded, they said, so were they — and before dusk on what, admittedly, was a slow news day in Oka,

they all walked down through the forest and started interviewing me and each other and a handful of other reporters who had been given the boot.

This is what happened after Can-Can led me away. Two French-language radio reporters started a petition among the press corps complaining against my expulsion and against Warrior harassment and restriction on our movements within Kanesatake. The Warriors thought this rather impudent of them, and they were kicked out. Then everyone left. The next day, the media were back, talks were held with Mohawks and an imperfect truce established.

Imperfect, because rather than stick to their guns, the media grudgingly accepted the fact that *The Gazette* still wouldn't be allowed in. (As it turned out, the Warriors often turned a blind eye once our reporters began trickling back in, although the threat of expulsion was always real.)

Five weeks after that episode, I talked to *La Presse's* André Noel, president of the Québec Federation of Journalists and one of the reporters who pleaded the media's case in the aftermath of my expulsion. I wanted to know why he agreed to the Mohawks' ban on me and my *Gazette* colleagues.

My interest was sparked by a copy of a note that Jean Paré, director of the French-language Québec magazine *L'Actualité*, had sent to our editor-in-chief, Norman Webster, two days after I was expelled. The original had been addressed to Noel. Paré said it was "scandalous" that the federation had agreed to exclude my newspaper, something he suggested it would never have done to a francophone newspaper. I talked to Paré about it. "They had a choice and they chose badly," he said. I thanked him for his support.

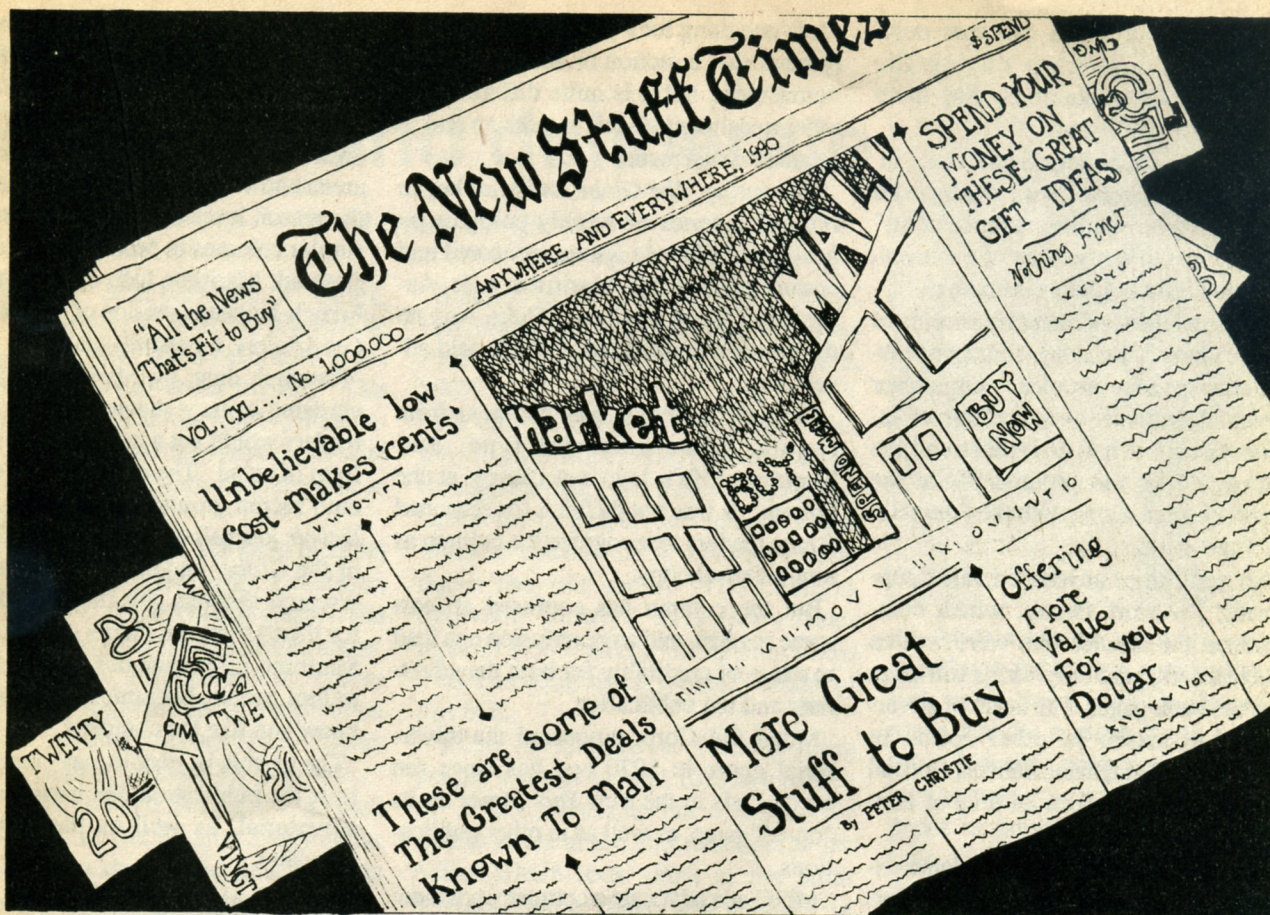
When I talked to Noel, he explained the difference of opinion. Journalists had no choice but to stay with the Oka story, and if that meant some journalists were excluded, so be it, he said.

"You can't have the same ethical criteria when you're dealing with a bunch of bandits," he said. He added no one agreed to our being excluded as a price for access. It just seemed a continued boycott would have been impossible and at any rate counterproductive, he said.

So when do we stand up for each other and when don't we? Is it normal that in war zones the rules of the media game are different? I think so.

I got kicked out or threatened enough to know that in times like we've lived through this Indian summer, you play more by your wits than by your idea of the rules. □

Jeff Heinrich is a reporter for The Montreal Gazette assigned to the Mohawk story.



Buying 'news'

Advertorials invade editorial departments

by Marina Strauss

Pity the poor reader these days. It's getting more and more difficult to distinguish between editorial copy and advertisements.

A case in point was an article (or was it really an article?) in a recent issue of the *Lawyer's Weekly*. The four-page centre pullout, highlighted with the title "Profile" and the heading "A patently excellent firm," was a positive description of the Toronto law firm Rogers, Bereskin and Parr. But the tabloid didn't explain to the reader that this was a paid announcement. It was laid out on the pages much like an editorial feature.

Such is the nature of "advertorials," a relatively new breed of advertising that is

creeping slowly into newspapers and magazines.

The danger of advertorials is that they can erode faith in a publication. Readers may feel duped, misled — a feeling that the write-up was falsely presented as an objective account by a disinterested party. Nevertheless, Michael Fitz-James, editor of *Lawyer's Weekly*, insists the Rogers, Bereskin ad — written by *Lawyer's Weekly* staff with no byline — didn't compromise the tabloid at all.

"We are even-handed and balanced and we don't take sides," Fitz-James says of the newspaper's editorial content. As for its advertising, "We are always happy to help our advertisers prepare their adver-

tisements."

These are dangerous times for journalism. Ad revenues are getting tougher to find, with the heated competition from direct-mail promotions and a host of other new marketing tools.

In a faltering economy, publishers tend to give in more to advertisers. The advertisers, in turn, are discovering advertorials as a way to get their message across, uncensored. It is a way of achieving a measure of credibility by camouflaging the paid announcement as objective editorial writing.

There may well come a time when readers, not knowing whether they're reading an ad or a piece of journalism,

won't believe anything. At that point some people may stop buying the newspapers or magazines that have caused all the confusion.

Consider the following advertorial: in August the *Financial Post* published a 12-page "joint venture supplement," saluting the 50th anniversary of the Investors Group mutual funds company.

The supplement undoubtedly perplexed some readers. The copy could be mistaken for regular articles. On closer scrutiny, the articles — supportive of Investors Group — had no bylines and the company's logo ran prominently at the top of each page, along with the *Financial Post* logo.

Other companies advertised in the supplement; Investors Group, which commissioned the articles that were written by freelancers, paid only for its full-page ad on the back page. The issue of advertorials has arisen in other forms in newspaper and magazine offices. Special sections have long been an area of controversy.

Too many of them have been a lame excuse to please advertisers, with soft articles crooning about the subject at hand. These supplements weigh down the publications with material that is not of general interest to readers.

There are other areas of concern, such as when a single advertiser sponsors part of a publication, as is happening in *Saturday Night* magazine.

And *Metropolis*, a Toronto-based weekly newspaper, has been accused by its critics of forfeiting its editorial autonomy (and "selling its soul") in exchange for a distribution deal with the Pizza Pizza chain.

Earlier this year, *Metropolis* started to appear on top of Pizza Pizza boxes with home delivery every Thursday through Sunday. As a result, editorial copy has become more mainstream, dictated by the wishes of Pizza Pizza to appeal to its family market.

All these are disturbing developments that come back to a key threat: the loss of editorial independence to a sponsor or advertiser.

It is one thing for a publication to clearly mark that a section or ad is a paid advertisement, but it is quite different and more treacherous to fail to mark an article as an advertisement.

This spring, *The Globe and Mail* began running a series of weekly columns on health and lifestyle issues sponsored and commissioned by Maritime Life Assurance Co. of Halifax. There was no designation that the pieces were paid advertising.

Sure, the typestyle was different from regular *Globe* editorial type, and Maritime Life's logo ran clearly at the bottom. It was not difficult for seasoned *Globe* readers to recognize the column as non-editorial copy.

But the column has confused at least some readers, and any confusion can lead to a loss of credibility for both the advertiser and the publication.

Mobil Oil Corp. pioneered the advertorial genre in 1970 and has since run regular ads in the *New York Times* on its "op-ed" page, as well as in other publications.

Mobil ads advocate a company position; the Maritime Life ads, on the other hand, are more like a public service message than advocacy advertising. Of course, the

public service will often serve the company's interest as well: if people are in good physical and mental health, they are better insurance risks.

Maritime Life entered the advertorial arena knowing the risks. Indeed, that was the reason it rejected the idea of running similar columns in Montréal's *Le Devoir*. (Instead, Maritime Life opted to run the French-language version of the column in *Les Affaires*, a business tabloid.)

Research done by Maritime Life's advertising agency showed that *Le Devoir* readers would not accept a column in the form of an ad. The readers felt it crossed onto sacred ground upon which only *Le Devoir* journalists should tread. Readers of the *Globe* and other newspapers, the research showed, felt they could assess for themselves the merits of the column. Maritime Life maintains its aim was not to fool people, but simply to get them to know and like the company.

The trouble is, people may come to distrust the publication that carries such an advertorial, as well as the sponsoring company. □

Marina Strauss is the marketing columnist for The Globe and Mail.

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Doug MacKay

Sensible and deliberate

by Stewart Lewis

Doug MacKay is a quiet, "deliberate" man. He is a terrible interview, and admits it. "I'm not a good storyteller about myself." This betrays the fact that MacKay is Editor-in-Chief of a Canadian daily newspaper with one of the most colorful reputations in journalistic history.

MacKay, a trim man, stands at medium height. His face often wears a cautious, boyish grin, covered by large glasses. His dress is always the same: sensible shoes, business slacks, a dress shirt with sleeves rolled up to the wrist and the top button undone. The only evidence of his 41 years is a full head of prematurely gray hair.

His office is small and narrow, located to the side of the *Halifax Daily News* newsroom. Although the door is often open, those seeking attention must announce their presence. His desk sits facing the wall opposite the door, and MacKay is usually found working, with his back to his guests.

But it all fits: MacKay was brought to the helm of *The Daily News* for a reason. "He put a face of respectability on the paper," says Jamie Lipsit, assignment editor at CBC-TV in Halifax. Lipsit worked under MacKay's predecessor and quit. He returned MacKay's first day at *The Daily News*. The paper's publisher, Newfoundland's Capital Corporation, a.k.a. media baron Harry Steele, says he "could trust MacKay in public," says Lipsit. He does not characterize the former Editor-in-Chief, Lyndon Watkins, quite as kindly.

Watkin's newest project is the inimitable *Frank* magazine, a gossip sheet appearing at news stands in Halifax and Ottawa. Under Watkin's tutelage, admit some of the reporters, stories in *the News* were often fleshed out with a bit of fiction. It made the "old" *Daily News* an interesting read.

MacKay left a 17-year career as Assistant Managing Editor at the *Winnipeg Free Press* to edit *The Daily News* in 1987.

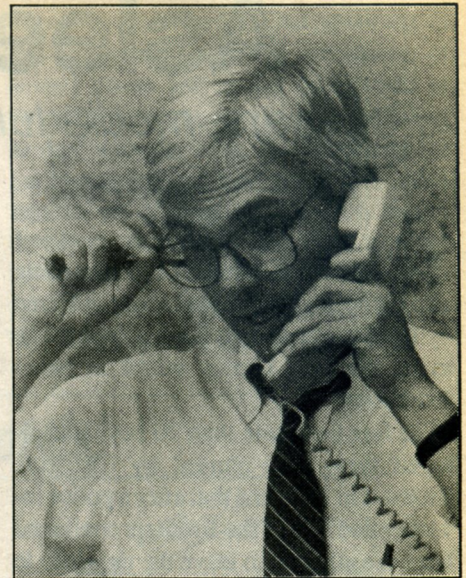
He did not overhaul *The Daily News* overnight. Many staffers remained through the change of leadership, but few can point to a specific incident where MacKay voiced a strong opinion, tearing down the old order. "The changes evolved... slowly," says *Daily News* reporter Rob Roberts. "Doug didn't hold a staff meeting and say, O.K., enough of this bull.

"First, he stopped us from printing people's names in bold. (See any edition of *Frank*.) Then he put a stop to the snarky notes at the end of letters to the editor which took shots at the letter writers. Then there was change in design." *The Daily News* is tabloid-size with a colorful front, taken up mostly by a topical color news photo.

The old *Daily News* was "an exciting, British-style tabloid," says MacKay. "But circulation got stuck at that level." MacKay's job was to "recast the paper... move it more into the mainstream by changing its content."

Many people suspected the paper would hit the stands under a new name. That didn't happen. "I toned it down a lot, but tried to keep its strengths. People trusted the paper to tell it news the other paper (the *Halifax Herald Limited's* cautious and conservative *Chronicle-Herald*) wasn't telling them." The *News* has introduced provocative columnists, writing about feminist and Black issues. And there are columnists of varying political stripes. MacKay refuses to have paper slotted as politically "left of centre" or "the working man's paper," common descriptions of the former *Daily News*.

These moves, along with introducing the *Sunday Daily News* and *Seven Days*,



an entertainment weekly, have put MacKay's paper in a competitive position with the *Chronicle-Herald*, and made Halifax a more lively newspaper town. MacKay, pointing to figures which he had neatly written down on a pad of paper in preparation for his interview, says according to the latest circulation figures for the six-month period ending March 31, *The Daily News* is 4,500 papers ahead of the competition within Halifax County.

But *The Daily News* budget sheet still shows red. The latest report about the financial health of its publisher says NewCap Corp., which owns and operates several radio stations and newspapers, lost over \$5 million during the first half of 1990. MacKay says that hasn't affected his operation. He says the publisher has been "generous" in supporting his new projects. And although MacKay says he might like to try something different someday, he will lead *The Daily News* until it is "fully established as the major newspaper in Halifax. We can do it." □

Stewart Lewis works part-time for CBC-TV in Halifax and is a part-time student at Dalhousie Law School. He has reported for both Halifax dailies, and has been a reporter and producer for CBC Radio and TV throughout the Maritimes.

Asleep at the wheel

For years, media turned blind eye to Mount Cashel allegations

by Kevin Fox

For more than 14 years the media of St. John's allowed the sickening physical and sexual abuse suffered by the boys at Mount Cashel orphanage to be the best known secret in Newfoundland.

The fact that more than 20 boys had alleged they were abused by Christian Brothers in 1975 and that after a police investigation two of the Brothers confessed but were allowed to leave the province to avoid criminal charges, was widely known in legal, political and police circles.

But until the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary re-opened its investigation of the case in 1989 and the provincial government announced a public inquiry into the case, the agony of the orphans at Mount Cashel was compounded by the fact that no one, including the media, believed them.

The Evening Telegram of St. John's had first chance to put the case before the public. In December 1975, within days of the opening of the police investigation into abuse at the orphanage, the mother of a resident of Mount Cashel told reporters from the *Telegram* that boys had been abused at the orphanage.

William Kelly, then news editor, told a recently-completed royal commission into the Mount Cashel affair that the woman told him that two Christian Brothers had been sent out of the province after the police investigation concluded.

Receiving the usual "no comment" from the police and a Department of Justice statement that there were no grounds for criminal charges arising out of the police probe, Kelly then joined forces with reporter Robert Wakeham, who contacted the Christian Brothers, a revered order of Roman Catholic educators known for administering strict discipline.

Gabriel McHugh, then Canadian Super-

ior of the Christian Brothers, confirmed the story that two Brothers had used too much force in corporal punishment and had fondled boys. McHugh confirmed the Brothers had been sent out of the province for treatment.

He begged the two reporters not to use the story, claiming it could cause irreparable harm to the orphanage and its residents.

Wakeham believed the material the reporters had was "sufficient for a front page story."

Publisher Stephen Herder decided it wasn't a story at all.

"In many ways he took the same view as Mr. McHugh," Kelly testified. "This was over and done with; the Brothers had dealt with it and his position was that we could undo the good the Brothers had done for 80 or 90 years with one news story."

Kelly added that he and Wakeham had no idea how widespread the abuse was or of the detailed allegations that were contained in police reports on the matter.

"We believed we were dealing with an isolated incident involving two Brothers," Kelly said. Since the investigation was re-opened in 1989, 88 charges have been laid in connection with abuse at the orphanage.

While Wakeham was incensed at the story being killed, both he and Kelly ac-

cepted that decision.

Ironically, 14 years later, both men are working at CBC in St. John's. It was a CBC lawyer, Thomas Kendall, who used the anecdote of the killed story to urge the head of the royal commission, Samuel Hughes, not to hear witnesses behind closed doors.

"The rallying cry of the public and press should be never again," Kendall said. "Never again should we allow the press to sleep at the wheel."

Kelly takes exception to that remark.

"I resent very much the suggestion that we were part of a cover-up. We weren't part of a cover up, we were victims of a cover-up," Kelly said. "McHugh misled us and deceived us. The Justice Department said there was no grounds for a criminal charge and that was obviously not true."

If *The Evening Telegram* had reported the story, one wonders what other information might have surfaced. Perhaps the strongly worded police reports written by former RNC detective Robert Hiller in March, 1976 would not have been quickly sent to gather dust in a filing cabinet in the Justice Department.

No living witnesses, including Justice Minister T. Alex Hickman and then Chief of Police John Lawlor, are willing to admit they ever saw the reports, one of which was headed "the corruption of children at Mount Cashel."

The issue would return to the public spotlight in 1979, when an RNC detective, Arthur Pike, told a judicial inquiry he had leaked a police report on a fire in the apartment of a prominent politician to the media because he didn't want the case to end up like Mount Cashel.

Pike's testimony was in camera, but it became public when the inquiry headed by Mr. Justice P. Lloyd Soper tabled its report in 1979.

*The publisher
decided it wasn't
a story*

Pike told the inquiry that American Christian Brothers had been involved in improper behavior at Mount Cashel and as a result one was sent to a psychiatric unit and others were sent back to the U.S.

Dermot Nash, then head of the Christian Brothers in Newfoundland, wrote to Canadian Superior McHugh in 1979, warning that the case was going to shock and embarrass the order.

"CBC Radio repeated the item (from Pike's testimony) verbatim, the *Telegram* edited it circumspectly to render it harmless, but the *Daily News* quite clearly reported it unchanged," Nash wrote.

But Nash need not have worried. Until late 1988, when stories of sexual misconduct by Roman Catholic priests were rampant, no media organization even bothered to look into Pike's allegations.

A call to a radio talk show by Stephen Neary, a provincial Liberal politician, in February, 1989, sparked the re-opening of the police investigation and the calling of the judicial inquiry.

The call was heard by the wife of Justice John Mahoney of the Supreme Court of Newfoundland, who called him to ask if he knew anything about a cover-up at Mount Cashel. Justice Mahoney apparently telephoned Robert Hyslop, then Director of Public Prosecutions. Hyslop, who had received another call about Mount Cashel a day earlier, pulled the two police reports from RNC files, talked to then Justice Minister Lynn Verge and the police investigation was ordered reopened. The inquiry was set up shortly after.

It was not until late February that the first in-depth look at the allegations of sexual abuse actually appeared in *The Sunday Express*, the provocative weekly rival of *The Evening Telegram*. The *Express* carried a lengthy series of well-researched articles about the history of abuse at Mount Cashel.

Once the media spotlight turned to the alleged sins of the Brothers, it was only a matter of time before the orphanage was closed, its name synonymous with past crimes. But, would the abuse have gone on so long if the public had known about

it sooner?

In Newfoundland, the focus has been on the social workers, senior police and Justice Department officials and politicians who ignored the orphans' pleas for help. When the media are blamed for their silence, the common response from journalists is that the case happened in another era when the power of the Roman Catholic Church, to which about half the province's population belong, could

silence even the media. That power has all but disappeared after the allegations of sexual abuse led to the resignation of Archbishop Alphonsus Penney for failing to deal with the case. The challenge for the Newfoundland media now is to prove that the era of shameful silence is finally behind them. □

Kevin Cox is the Atlantic Bureau chief for The Globe & Mail based in Halifax.

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British Journalism Review**Conscience-pricker or rubbish?**

By Ron Verzuh

Rubbish," says Tim Gopsill, editor of the National Union of Journalists' newspaper. "Patronizing . . . snobberish rubbish."

The subject of this invective is the quarterly *British Journalism Review* (BJR). Launched in October, 1989 with a \$32,000 Rowntree Trust grant, its stated goal was to "raise the flag of insurrection against the advance of those poisonous weeds that are now choking the life-blood out of British journalism."

Gopsill was not impressed and quickly published a stinging critique. He didn't like the academic format, nor the "poorly reproduced" pictures. In fact he didn't see the point of publishing BJR at all.

It "doesn't go much further than the media pages of the heavy papers," like *The Guardian*, said Gopsill's article.

BJR founding editor Geoffrey Goodman, retired assistant editor of the *Daily Mirror*, counters that Gopsill and the NUJ may be self-conscious "of what it hasn't done to raise the flag of quality, standards and values in the trade."

Of course not all critics have been so hard on BJR, and few journalists would disagree with Goodman's call for a halt to the deterioration of British media.

"Despised by the public and assailed by government, journalism is in danger of finding itself in a vicious downward cycle, against which its own sometimes insufferable self-esteem could prove an inadequate defence," wrote *Guardian* columnist Hugo Young.

"It would be idle to pretend that a small periodical can change this part of Britain's political culture," he continued. "But it can make a start, by showing that journalists are alive to the problems and interested in addressing them." (Young is on the BJR board.)

The Times said the BJR would "act as a mirror and conscience-pricker to every British journalist." and claimed it would "look at the Press, applaud its excellence and hold its black spots up to criticism."

The Independent ran a piece announcing the new review, accompanied by a cartoon showing the British tabloid or 'gutter' press, especially the hated, but well-read, *Sun*, lying in wait to pounce on BJR defenders of quality journalism.

Whatever the critics say, BJR's chances of survival in Britain's media market seem tenuous. Eschewing the gimmickery of Channel 4 TV's "Hard News," a show which examines how major stories

are covered, Goodman opted for a staid format which will not appeal to newsstand browsers, especially given the \$6 cover price. Although he adopted the *Columbia Journalism Review* as his editorial model, he rejected its glossy, colorful design. Even with the CJR as its model, there remain some truths to the NUJ's critique. BJR has failed in its first three issues to produce anything as good as the American magazine or remarkably better than what is in the daily media.

Unless Goodman can produce some blockbuster stories in the four issues that remain before funding ends, he may have to go upscale. That would mean competing with a multitude of trade magazines led by the weekly *U.K. Press Gazette* and its competitor, *Journalist's Week*.

Far from being rubbish, BJR is an honorable attempt to pull British journalism back from the yellow abyss of the popular press. But it needs to find its legs quickly before the critical journalistic community dismisses it as irrelevant. □

Ron Verzuh is content's Little Media columnist. Research for this article was partially funded by a grant from the Commonwealth Relations Trust in London.

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Rethinking old methods

by John Miller

Where do newspapers look for news? Do they largely follow their own agendas, as some critics say, or are they instead willing slaves to "media events," usually staged by powerful vested interests? Does the content of the press reflect its role as vigorous watchdog on society, bringing forward a wide range of ideas to be debated in a democratic system? Or is it a narrower mirror on reality, focussed largely on press conferences, formal public meetings, legislative sessions, court proceedings and the police blotter?

These are important questions. Newspapers have had to face up to the fact that they now penetrate only about 50 per cent of households in North America (down from 85 per cent 25 years ago).

Television has supplanted newspapers as the primary source of news for most Canadian — and, in a 1988 Environics Poll, surpassed them in perceived accuracy and even as a source of in-depth analysis.

The press has responded to these alarming trends by embarking on an orgy of redesign and by embracing marketing techniques to cater to readers who say they don't have enough time to read the news. But, so far, little thought has been given to rethinking the lock-step conventions of the newsgathering process itself.

Perhaps such a re-examination is overdue. James Reston, who was the eminent political analyst for the *New York Times* when he wrote *The Artillery of the Press* in 1966, criticized his profession for being "fascinated by events, but not by the things that cause events." He added: "Tending the machinery is the main thing for most editors and this usually means (covering) what happened or what somebody said rather than whether it is important in the relationship of today to tomorrow ... The conflict of approach and philosophy must be resolved if the newspaper is to attain the level of intellectual excellence it needs in order to compete in the future."

That was 24 years ago. Little has changed since. An article by Walther

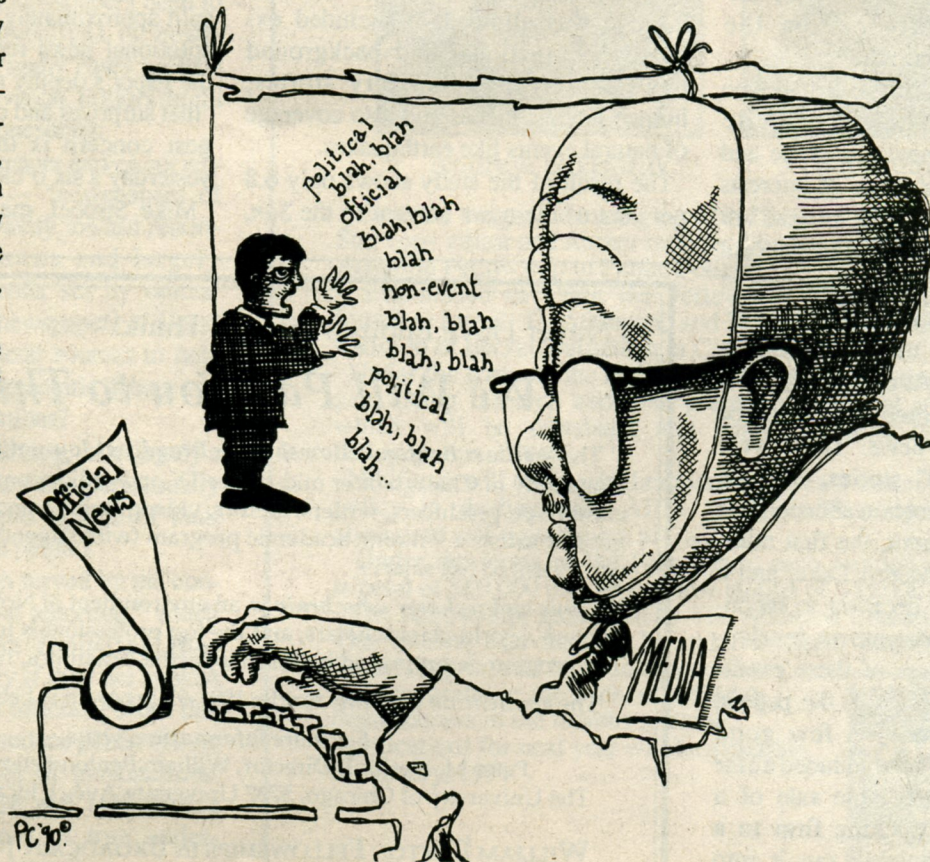
Karp in the July, 1989, issue of *Harper's* magazine, examined political coverage in Washington and concluded that the press, by following the conventions of "objective" journalism and flocking en masse to staged events, is being manipulated to follow a news agenda set by others for their own narrow purposes.

"So pervasive is the passivity of the press," writes Karp, "that when a reporter actually looks for news on his or her own it is given a special name — "investigative journalism" — to distinguish it from routine, passive "source journalism."

The dangers of such passivity are documented by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman in *Manufacturing Consent*, a 1988 study of how the economics of publishing and the institutional bias of

editors shape the news to "marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their message across to the public... Non-routine (news) sources must struggle for access, and may be ignored by the arbitrary decision of the gatekeepers."

It is not hard to see why this is so. Simple economics dictate that editors will send reporters to where important news is most likely to happen — to legislatures, to speeches and press conferences, to public meetings, to courts and to the police station. It is



relatively easy to cover such events, as opposed to the more tedious and chancy task of wringing news out of more enterprising pursuits such as poring over documents, following up tips, covering non-agenda news of the community or interviewing ordinary people.

First we should examine whether Chomsky and Karp and Reston are right; does the news content of our press reflect this institutional bias? Then we must ask if it is smart for newspapers to operate this way, considering that television covers the same agenda and can deliver it to viewers more rapidly.

The news content of three competing papers — the *Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Sun* — was analyzed during the week of May 28 to June 3, 1990. Stories were categorized as either "official news" (institutional news on the public agenda, like coverage of government, press conferences, speeches, press releases, crime and the courts), or as "unofficial news" (meaning coverage that did not stem from a staged event or announcement but rather from the newspaper's own initiative).

The results should alarm those of us who believe our newspapers are quite enterprising in their news coverage and cover a much broader range of interests than, say, television. In fact, "official" or institutional news made up 93.2 per cent of the content of the *Sun*, 84.5 per cent of the *Star*, and 80.2 per cent of the *Globe*. In other words, they used most of their resources to react to planned events.

The week studied could be considered an average one for news. There were several big "official" stories, like the House of Commons vote on abortion, the Gorbachev-Bush summit, the first ministers conference on Meech Lake, and a Toronto city council decision to reconsider a controversial downtown development project. Coverage of these events tended to dominate space in the papers, leaving room for only a few good "enterprise" stories. These included a *Star* probe into the questionable sale of a Crown corporation trucking firm to a businessman who quickly ran it into

bankruptcy, a *Globe* report citing evidence that a Toronto housing project could be a financial and environmental disaster, and a *Star* series on East German athletes after the fall of the wall.

The content study had certain limitations. It considered only the quantity of the news stories, not their length or play in the paper. So a one-paragraph story on a ferry crash in Indonesia was given equal weight with a long analysis of the political situation in Czechoslovakia. Only local, national and international news coverage was included — not opinion columns, op-ed page material, sports, entertainment, lifestyle or business page content. Our concern was to see what kind of news judgment was used to fill the news pages of these three papers.

"Official" news was easier to identify, since the three papers generally indicate where their news stories originate by saying "told the House of Commons" or "told a press conference" or "testified in court." Unofficial news was harder to categorize, and for that reason wide latitude was allowed. It included exclusives, situational and background news features, explanatory stories, human interest pieces and also coverage of natural events like earthquakes.

The result of the study shows only 6.8 per cent of the news content in the *Sun*,

15.6 per cent in the *Star* and 19.8 per cent in the *Globe* could be classified as "unofficial," meaning it demonstrated the newspaper's own initiative. The most popular source of news in the three papers was press conferences, press releases or public non-governmental meetings or speeches — between 33 and 37 per cent of the total content. This was closely followed by crime and court news — between 25.5 and 43.8 per cent of total content. Direct coverage of government meetings was relatively low, many news stories about government fell into the "press conferences" category, when politicians were interviewed outside formal meetings.

The low percentage of "unofficial" or original reporting surprised news executives from the three papers who were asked for their estimates. All overestimated — in one case by 30 per cent — the amount of original reporting their papers did.

When he was told the study results, showing the *Toronto Star's* news content split approximately 85-15 in favor of institutional news reporting, Lou Clancy, the paper's deputy managing editor, said "that surprises and concerns me. My biggest concern is that we're too much yesterday's six o'clock television news."

Mike Strobel, managing editor of the

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WILLIAM BENTON FELLOWSHIPS IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM
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Sun, questioned the study, saying that even institutional stories contain some background and reaction that demonstrate initiative. But he said "I'm not surprised that most news originates with an announcement — if 10 per cent of a newspaper's stories are digging up goop on someone, that would be a fairly high success rate." The *Sun's* split was 93.2 per cent official, 6.8 per cent unofficial.

Tim Pritchard, managing editor of *The Globe and Mail*, was surprised by his paper's percentage of official news, although he said the paper's news managers "have talked about doing more, especially in Ottawa, to act on the newspaper's agenda instead of going along with everyone else."

Although Pritchard had estimated his paper carried a "rough 50-50 split" of official and unofficial news, he cautioned that "I might be completely wrong. I've never measured it." In fact, the *Globe's* percentage of 19.8 unofficial news was higher than the other two papers.

The study suggests newspapers need to re-examine the conventions of news-gathering, which in many cases predate the popularity of television. Editors might pose the following questions:

What kind of newspaper serves society best in the 1990s — "newspapers of record" weighted heavily toward reporting institutional news and largely prisoners of an agenda set by others' vested interests, or "newspapers of ideas" seeking out non-official sources to help set the agenda for democratic debate and point the way to solutions?

If the press is a watchdog, is it largely a watchdog over events that others, usually with a public relations agenda of their own, choose to make public?

Are we well enough served by the conventions of "objective reporting," which has come to mean reporting that legitimates ideas only if they are spoken in public by suitable officials? Does this type of reporting not reduce public debate to rhetorical contests of personalities, filled with imprecise and self-serving "sound bites" instead of true understanding of complex issues?

Would we not be better served by our press if, instead of assigning reporters to scrum a politician with 50 other reporters in the foyer of Parliament, they assigned some of those reporters to investigate how government spends our money? If, instead of just covering board of education meetings, they devoted resources to reporting first-hand what is being taught in our classrooms, and why?

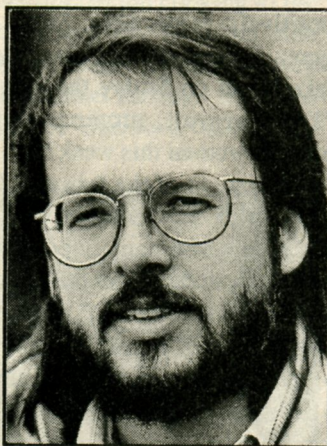
The big question is how can anything

change when even those in charge of newsgathering underestimate the extent of the problem?

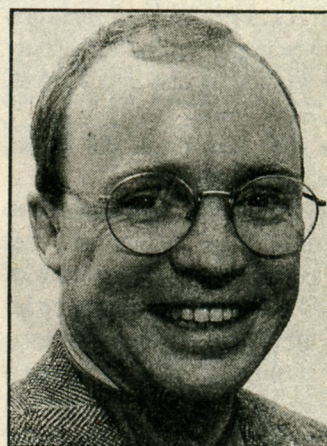
Faced with declining readership and competition from television, our newspapers have a lot to think about as they begin the 1990s. □

John Miller is chairman of the Ryerson School of Journalism and former deputy managing editor of the Toronto Star.

Atkinson Fellowship 1990 Winners



Andrew Nikiforuk



Dan Smith

Equinox magazine managing editor Andrew Nikiforuk and Toronto Star copy editor and former reporter Dan Smith have been awarded an Atkinson Fellowship in Public Policy.

Established in 1988, the Fellowship is named after The Star's founder, Joseph E. Atkinson, and is designed to further Atkinson's tradition of liberal journalism in Canada.

Under the terms of the Fellowship, Nikiforuk and Smith will spend a year doing research and then prepare a series of in-depth articles, which will be translated and made available to all Canadian newspapers next year.

Nikiforuk will study whether there has been a failure in public health policy in dealing with AIDS. Smith will analyze the issue of aboriginal self-government in Canada.

Under the terms of the Fellowship, each journalist will receive a stipend of \$60,000 plus an expense budget of \$25,000.

The Fellowship, sponsored by The Atkinson Charitable Foundation, The Toronto Star and the Beland Honderich family, is open to all Canadian print and broadcast journalists.

We congratulate the winners and wish them success in the months to come. Applications for next year will be available in January, 1991.

**THE
TORONTO
STAR**
Now that's a newspaper!

Shades of Kafka

by Trevor Lautens

I knew there were feminist bigots in the trenches of the newsrooms. Now they have captured the generals.

The Southam papers have produced a report from a task force on women's opportunities. You would fall over dead if the report concluded: Yeah, women have got about enough opportunities in our papers.

Your health is safe.

Because, of course, the report says: Oh no, women need more opportunities. (Never mind H.L. Mencken's observation that in the newspaper business the only good job is the boss's, and it is terrible. Wrong, H.L., but witty.)

Here's the stenchiest bit of the report, one of 10 recommendations:

"To give force to the commitment to equal opportunity, we recommend that the annual performance assessments of all publishers and senior managers be influenced by the degree to which they have recruited, promoted and developed women. This should be part of each manager's yearly objectives, and a factor in determining compensation."

Now that is cute. The task force (15 women, three men) doesn't propose anything so crude as quotas or the weasel-worded "affirmative action" — the species of sexual discrimination that feminist ideologues love. Indeed, the company specifically rejects such instruments. But the implementation of this recommendation would be worse, more Kafkaesque.

Quotas by any name are abominable. They put woolly group interests over concrete individual rights. Until the ever-elusive "balance" is reached, they'll promote Jane Doaks over a better-qualified Joe Doaks, who carries the can personally for the perceived accumulated sins of the fathers for thousands of years — even if Joe is gnawed by a shame of this chauvinist past.

The task force recommendation, however, makes affirmative action look

This article is a response to a recent report by the Southam Newspaper Group's task force on women's opportunities in newspaper journalism. A main recommendation of the task force was to tie the salaries and opportunities for advancement of senior managers to their efforts in recruiting and promoting women.

positively respectable. Since no actual quota figures are set, the manager can take home on Friday the haunting fear: "Did I recruit, promote and develop enough women this week?"

It's right out of the Prisoner. I expect to see Patrick McGoohan trying to escape from the Southam papers' executive suites, shouting: "I am not a number. I am a free human being!" Followed by a sinister peal of girlish — oops, womanish — laughter. An insult to women.

It's straight from Big Sister's manual. No thumbscrews. No electrodes on the genitals. Just a smile, a kindly hand on the manager's shoulder, and a reminder that if he or she doesn't go along, it'll cost them — in withheld raises, in withheld promotions.

Wish I could write: "I'd like to send a message to these guys: do us all — men and women alike — a favor, and stop this lunacy."

But I'd be plagiarizing. Those are the words of Karen Selick, a columnist for *The Canadian Lawyer*, commenting in a June 27 *Globe and Mail* article on the Southam report.

"As a reader, I want to buy the best newspaper that can be produced, and I really don't care whether it's produced by men or women," she writes.

"Frankly, the Southam report's recommendations are insulting... I don't want charity from anyone. I resent the continual efforts to bludgeon white males

into giving me and other women advantages that, as individuals, we have not earned.

Men, if you still have any good will at all toward women, don't patronize us. Deal with us on the basis of our merits. Don't let the genuine achievements of some be devalued by the counterfeit currency that affirmative-action groups are trying to force into circulation."

As one awed and intimidated by the talents of a hotshot named Beryl Brown when I became a reporter in 1956, and by the skill of several female colleagues today — probably in numbers proportionate to their newsroom representation compared with men — I applaud Selick unreservedly. □

Trevor Lautens is a columnist with the Vancouver Sun.



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Muddled, shallow critique

Freeing the Whales: How the Media Created the World's Greatest Non-Event

by Tom Rose
Birch Lane Press
318 pp., \$18.95

Reviewed by Rick Boychuk

Make sense of the subtitle of this 318-page account of the great whale rescue of 1988 and you'll free yourself to enjoy the remainder of the book.

Author Tom Rose, an independent, New Jersey-based TV news reporter, covered for a Japanese television network the rescue of three Gray whales trapped in arctic ice off Barrow, Alaska. Awed by the spectacle of media coverage of the rescue, Rose returned to Barrow some months later to write a book about it.

Like most experienced reporters, he's a terrific storyteller. The story in the opening chapter of the taking of a 40-ton Bowhead whale by seven men in an aluminum dinghy is riveting. Rose's description of the mechanics of killing such a large beast and the daring it entails is handled with sensitivity and an appreciation of the importance of the whale hunt to the Eskimo economy and culture.

From there the book

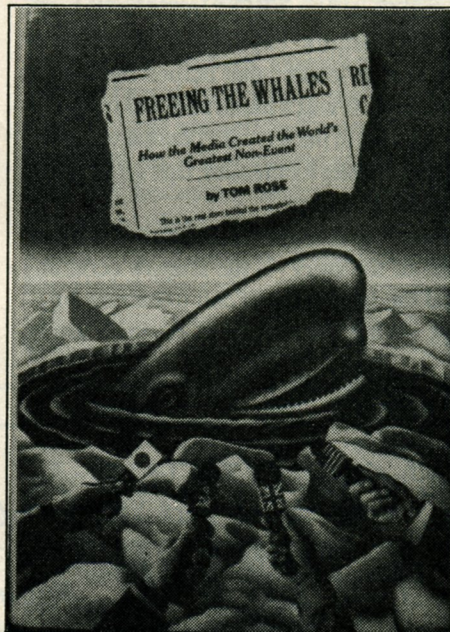
launches into an Eskimo hunter's discovery on October 7 of the three Gray whales trapped in rapidly thickening ice. The community learned of the plight of the whales and a number of local hunters considered harvesting them for sale. It is, apparently, not uncommon for Gray whales, who migrate to California in the fall, to become trapped under the ice and perish.

What's different about these whales is that they were discovered clinging to life in a small breathing hole 20 miles from Barrow, which boasts an ultramodern satellite transmission facility. So when the manager of Barrow's community

television station videotaped the trapped whales, he was able to transmit the tape, with the flick of a couple of switches, to an NBC affiliate in Anchorage. A reporter at the affiliate had read about the whales in an AP report published in the *Anchorage Daily News*. And the AP reporter had picked up the story during a routine news check with the Coast Guard.

When the Barrow station manager bounced his footage to Anchorage, another NBC affiliate in Seattle decided to "downlink the feed for their news." From Seattle, NBC beamed the footage to New York for a touching kicker to close Tom Brokaw's nightly news package. That's how it all began.

Rose then devotes most of the remainder of the book to documenting the number and character of the media types who descended on Barrow, the agencies that were obliged by the resulting public pressure to get involved in saving the whales and the reaction of the locals. Aside from his awkward use of the language — e.g. "would he peak (sic) in..." , "They wanted to built (sic) as large a buffer..." , "This spectacle delighted increasingly (sic) numbers of tourists..." — Rose does a competent job of narrating the story of the rescue. His research is thorough and his descriptions are loaded with telling detail. We learn that a pizza in Barrow, 320 miles north of the Arctic Circle, costs \$50, indoor plumbing adds another \$400,000 to the price of a home and that royalty payments from the



"The fun ends when Rose gets serious about criticizing the spectacle."

oil being pumped out of Prudhoe Bay amount to more than \$90,000 per Barrow resident per year. In 1988, in a place where corn flakes cost \$7 a box, the royalty payments allow the locals to enjoy a lifestyle no more lavish than that of an average middle-class North American family.

All of this is entertaining. The fun ends when Rose gets serious about criticizing the spectacle and makes several mercifully brief and muddled attempts to explain his thesis, which is summed up in the subtitle. He says the rescue was a non-event because whales perish every year under similar circumstances. Rose also suggests that the real news was how the whales became news, and that the rescue was an artificial enterprise created for the media.

Let's back that up a minute. It was television news reporters and editors who, upon seeing the initial footage, understood that viewers would be taken by the plight of the whales. When oil companies and U.S. government agencies saw the reaction of Americans to the footage, they all raced to participate in the rescue, hoping that they would bask in the glow that they knew would surround the rescuers. The media then had an ongoing story to cover in the rescue.

So how does any of this fit the descrip-

tion of a non-story? Perhaps for the first time in history, a mass audience was given a view of how whales could become trapped in ice and die. I personally had never seen anything like it and was as fascinated and moved as millions of others. Granted, if the satellite transmission facilities had not been available in Barrow, the whales would not have made it onto the little screen every night. The fact that they did says that the electronic news agenda is technology driven. That's hardly an original critique of television news. I find it hard to fault the television networks for realizing that the whales were a great television story.

Sure, the rescue operation mounted by an Alaska oil company and dozens of agencies of the U.S. government ended up costing millions that could have been better spent elsewhere. But the fact is that it wasn't the sky cranes of the Alaska National Guard or VECO Inc.'s hoverbarge or the scientific expertise marshalled by the rescue leaders that helped the whales to safety. It was a handful of Eskimos cutting holes in the ice with chainsaws, along with a Soviet icebreaker, that allowed the whales to escape.

It may be that the media ignored the context of the story — the Barrow economy and the international call to halt all whaling — but the failure of rescuers armed

with latest technology and scientific expertise as well as bumbling of the federal bureaucracy is in itself instructive.

If Rose's purpose was to criticize the media's role in the rescue, he should have begun by asking what it was about whales that triggered such mass sympathy and concern. Rose does mention in passing that it wasn't just television viewers who were overwhelmed by the sight of the whales. Virtually everyone who visited the scene, from cynical journalists to red-neck oilmen, experienced a sort of "in-describable revelation, an epiphany." Did we all identify with the whales as victims? Or is it a more primordial connection we felt with creatures who inhabit a world from which we have isolated ourselves? However you frame the question, it is impossible to think of the discovery of the whales as a non-event. Understanding it, however, demands a good deal more reflection than Rose offers readers of this book.

As an account of the spectacle, *Freeing the Whales* is an entertaining read. As a critique of the media, it is about as nourishing as a \$50 pizza. □

Rick Boychuk won a 1989 National Magazine Award for a Harrowsmith article on the Beluga whales of the St. Lawrence.

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Required reading for journalists and politicians

The Newsmakers: The Media's Influence on Canadian Politics

by David Taras

Nelson Canada, 248 pp., \$19.95

Reviewed by Catherine Ford

Of the many jobs which require — nay, demand — a modicum of passion in their execution, politics and journalism lead the list. How disappointing, then, that a book dealing exclusively with the relationship between the two should be so devoid of the very passions which drive us into the service of either.

Disappointing, but not strange and certainly not unwelcome. Indeed, David Taras' dispassionate and academic treatment of the symbiotic relationship between media and politics should be essential reading for both. (Maybe we'd both clean up our acts and remember that the people most affected by our mistakes, our vanities and our egos are those who buy newspapers, watch television, listen to the radio — and vote.)

But damning as Taras' indictment of the foibles of both press and politics is, *The Newsmakers* should sit right next to Paul Rutherford's *The Making of the Canadian Media* on bookshelves in newsrooms and media libraries across the country. Rutherford's book offers the history; Taras' offers the result of that history. Both should be required reading before the first byline is recorded, or the first foray into politics contemplated.

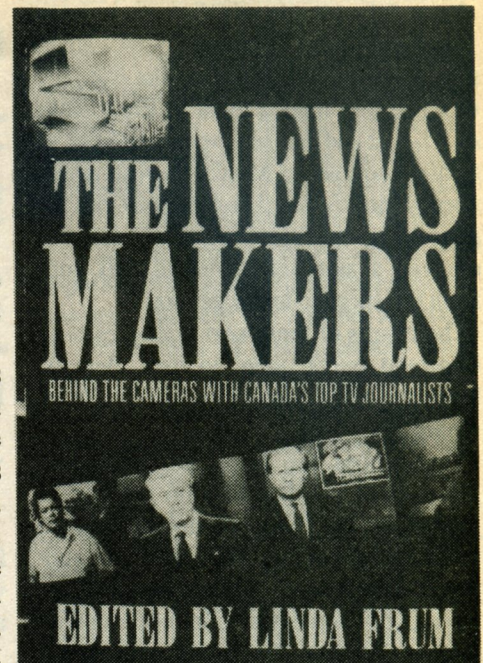
Whether his intimation in this treatise is correct — that the media have influenced Canadian politics to its detriment — is moot. Suffice it to say that his main argument — "That news in Canada is to some extent the product of an on-going struggle

for power and control" between journalists and politicians — is one that can fuel many a late-night argument.

Personally, I'd change the subtitle of the book to read: *The Politicians' Influence on the Media*, but that probably arises from my being firmly placed in the latter's camp and decidedly unwilling to even consider the former, even though the cross-over from journalism to politics is so common as to be beyond comment. Not, necessarily, beyond contempt, however. It's as if journalism was the training ground for politics in Canada, unlike the United States, where the cross-over more frequently goes the opposite way. Go figure. It's not as if politics in Canada is an attractive job, given the blood-lust of current journalism. Writes Taras: "One wonders how many people would go into journalism if journalists had to endure the same intense scrutiny that they put politicians under, where their financial affairs, medical history, and sexual relationships could become public knowledge, their physical characteristics and mannerisms open to ridicule and where every mistake is likely to be pounced upon. People with a sense of dignity and need for privacy would go elsewhere. The 'chilling' effect of negative reporting may well have had an important impact on Canadian political life."

But no one belonging to either estate can look herself in the mirror and not wince at the University of Calgary professor's indictment of pack journalism, pre-packaged news, stage-managed photo ops, and the trite, bright and light fodder of-

*Damning indictment
of the foibles of both
press and politics*



ferred to the reading and watching public.

We argue the public doesn't want in-depth analysis; the electronic media insist nobody would stay awake for a trenchant half-hour on the ramifications of the federal day care policy. On the other side, the politicians complain their pearls of wisdom are savaged and they're always photographed from the wrong angle.

Taras, who teaches Canadian studies, plays no favorites in his analysis. And the conclusion is that neither press nor politicians can take any pride in what we've done to the political process and to journalism. Particularly when it comes to the process of covering an election campaign, Taras' research — well-documented and coming from both sides — is devastating.

The media cover polls instead of policy; the politicians manipulate the media. From *The Globe and Mail's* Jeffrey Simpson: "Many journalists, including those who write about political matters, are unschooled in Canadian history, in polling methodology, in an understanding of any part of the country but their own. Yet the beguiling simplicity and easy accessibility of polling data embolden all journalists to become instant pundits, or worse still, experts."

From Elly Alboim of CBC: "Television ... communicates... through personalization of issues, the ability to take complex thoughts and reduce them to the mouths of 47-year-old housewives in Halifax or farming couples in Manitoba. And where normal intellectual thought goes from the general to the specific, television has evolved a storytelling model that goes from the specific to the general."

The results of these two examples is an ill-served public who, in turn, demand black and white; winner vs. loser; right vs. wrong.

Throughout the book are hints and glimpses of political bias on the part of journalists; the charge of stories adjusted to fit the prevailing prejudice; the supposed conventional wisdom that data are taken out of context to fit in preconceived notions. Perhaps. Too many years in the business mean I don't discount Taras' hypothesis. Neither do I buy much of it. And, by the by, the good professor himself isn't above a little out-of-context supporting argument. I don't know Taras personally, but I am familiar with one of the academic theses he uses to support his argument: that done by *Calgary Herald* reporter Bob Bergen in 1987 for his master's degree in Communication Studies. Bergen's 1987 project, entitled "A Profile of Canada's Major Daily Newspaper Men and Women," postulated that pack journalism and political bias exist, but not nearly to the extent that had been assumed. Taras uses Bergen's research to support the opposite premise.

I'm not exactly thrilled with Taras' condemnations, and take them with the healthy dose of skepticism journalists reserve for academics who put them under a microscope, but all that being equal, I have to admit Taras is right. And if he's also read — by the very people he is examining — maybe we can do something about it.

Don't hold your breath, though. When you've created a monster, sometimes it takes on a life of its own. □

Catherine Ford is Associate Editor of the Calgary Herald.

Getting to know you

The Newsmakers: Behind the Cameras with Canada's Top TV Journalists

edited by Linda Frum
Key Books, 228 pp, \$26.95

Reviewed by Yvan Huneault

You have to feed the goat," says Global TV reporter Doug Small. There's always a peg — an angle for a story. Pressure doesn't come from worrying about having something to say, according to Doug.

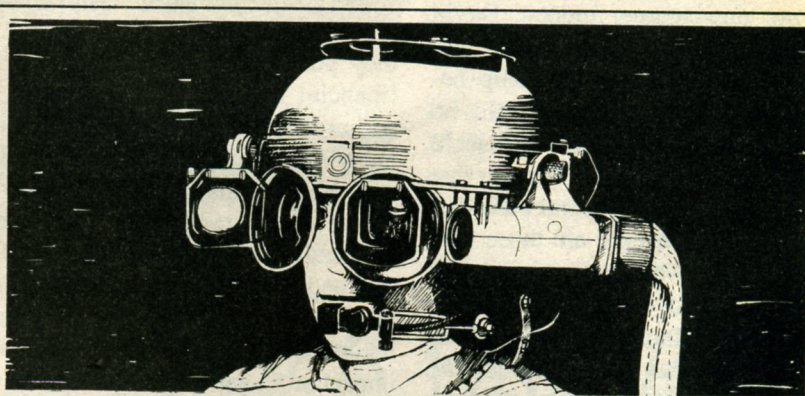
All right, here we go, the story of a journeyman reporter, who like hundreds of others across the country, is out there slogging every day. Speak to us, Doug. What

do you do when there's no story and your assignment desk wants a 90-second Mc-Nugget on "something?" With people in it. Moving around. Preferably in color. Time's up. Now let's hear from a former BBC correspondent.

The Newsmakers is assembled like a television script. Edited transcripts or "clips" of interviews with reporters, producers and technical people are bundled under various chapter headings.

The editor, Linda Frum, provides bridges to open chapters, introduce the storytellers and set up the pieces. Some stories make up a couple of sentences. Others cover several pages. Doug Small gets about 30 seconds for his first hit. If you don't move your lips. He will be back later to talk about budget leaks.

Frum interviewed more than 70 people



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for the book. Forty-nine of them appear in *The Newsmakers*. More than two-thirds of the contributors are, or were once, employed by the CBC. The book is dedicated to Jean-Guy Nault, a CBC cameraman. Sales proceeds will benefit a fund for Nault who suffered a debilitating injury while on assignment.

Editor Frum does not clearly explain her role. No word on how the contributors were selected. The presentation of the stories is uneven. Some pieces appear to be transcripts complete with mispronunciations; the word scavenging becomes "scavaging" in one instance. Other sections appear to have been carefully edited.

Frum acknowledges that television covers "floods in Flin Flon" and "mud slides in Moncton" most of the time, but this serves only as a vehicle for alliteration. That's not what this book is about.

It's obvious that the editor is exuberantly fascinated by foreign beat reporting. Interview questions include: "Which were the worst war zones?" and "What did you eat when you travelled with the mujahideen?" That last one is funny in a naively human way but it's smothered by a style which appears overworked and cloying: "...the test is knowing the difference between Pulitzer Prize proximity and imminent extinction."

Where performers are concerned, the way the stories are told (presumably in their own words) often reflects the TV persona we are used to seeing. Some of the material is predictable and sophomoric. Other pieces confirm that there are some articulate and talented people at work in the television business in this country.

Bill Cameron of CBC's *The Journal* is witty and dry in his candour. He provides what could be called the foreign correspondent's "credo of rationalization." How does a comfortable, well-fed human being keep a sense of perspective in the midst of squalor and death?

Cameron cuts to the quick. Yes, it's horrible, but it makes for good television. No smugness there, but there is guilt and Cameron can't leave it at that: "The professional is the human being who

These are people we know and we seldom get a chance to get into their heads.

doesn't let his humanity distract him from his job."

CTV anchor Lloyd Robertson appears in a brief piece entitled, "Don't take drugs." The man whose voice still stirs the CBC-weaned baby-boomer psyche to its most Canadian depths talking about consuming controlled substances? No. An allergic reaction to ear drops. "Always read the labels," says Lloyd. An ignominious selection of material for a man who has been a fixture in TV news in this country for more than 20 years.

Then there's Elly Alboim, Ottawa bureau chief for CBC's *The National*. The "eminence grise" of federal political reporting. People at the CBC speak of him in hushed tones. It is said he has drunk the mead of political clairvoyance. He knows what policy makers will do before they know it themselves. He can hear grass grow. He has connections.

Alboim is given several pages to question the usefulness of so-called "people stories." Heresy. News directors and/or executive producers have for years been telling us to get that "human angle" on the air. Alboim says the need for good pictures is an overstated excuse for a lack of content. He suggests deliberate analysis of political policies or social trends is more valuable than random pictures of events or happenstance. Forget the cinema verité. Better to inform the masses than to provide them with an idea of what some people think they understand.

Alboim makes a convincing case, but in *The Newsmakers* he stands alone.

Barbara Frum of CBC's *The Journal* is featured in a chapter entitled, "Close encounters." Ms. Frum has interviewed hundreds of people since *The Journal* was born about eight years ago. She has seen very few of them face-to-face. The interviews are performed via live link or via telephone with a remote crew where questions and answers are spliced together. Ms. Frum tells of her meetings with Jimmy Carter, Jeane Kirkpatrick, Paul McCartney and Paul Simon. Again, a curious collection for someone who has been in the business for some time and has interviewed many luminaries. It's just that Ms. Frum doesn't get out much — literally.

Some tell a harrowing, often crack-jawed tale. CBC reporter Linden MacIntyre on trying to get those good action shots in a war zone: "(We tried but) people refused to shoot at us." MacIntyre talks about a zealous producer who's out for gore.

Perhaps the most touching story-telling in the book comes from CBC reporter Brian Stewart. Descriptive, carefully-crafted prose on war and famine. I recall meeting Stewart at a press club not long after he returned from Ethiopia a few years ago. He was pale, emaciated. His eyes were sunken as if they had sought to retreat from what they had seen. At the time, he couldn't begin to describe much of anything but his pieces in *The Newsmakers* paint a vivid picture.

It's difficult to dislike *The Newsmakers* because these are people we know and we seldom get a chance to get into their heads when they are not performing or producing.

It's difficult to like *The Newsmakers* because of the feeling that what is not prominent or foreign is given short shrift. The CBC looms large with serious essays while private broadcasters seem to be relegated to the mundane. I'd run it past the goat one more time. □

Yvan Huneault is news anchor for CBC television news in Montréal.

Cameraman/reporter **Dan MacIntosh** came up with the big catch this year as Maritime journalists went fishing for that region's top media awards.

The New Glasgow-based journalist with ATV was named Journalist of the Year in this year's Atlantic Journalism Awards. He also netted first place in spot news television camera work for his filming of a Westville hostage-taking involving four women and eight children. In addition, he hauled in runner-up honors in spot news television reporting.

Winners of the newspaper spot news category were **Peter McGuire** and **Barbara Whalen** of *The Saint John Telegraph-Journal* for their reporting of a tragic hayride in N.B. **Pat Foran** of ASN landed first prize in television spot news for his story on the same tragedy.

Chris Green of CFCB, Corner Brook, Newfoundland, took the top award in

radio spot news for his report on a hostage-taking of a grade nine class.

Parker Barss Donham, who writes for *The Halifax Daily News* and seven Nova Scotia weeklies, hooked the newspaper enterprise reporting award for coverage of the Nova Scotia child welfare bureaucracy.

Claude Vickery of CBHT, Halifax, won the television enterprise reporting award for a story on what life is like when drugs overwhelm a community.

Kevin MacDonald of ASN reeled in the enterprise reporting prize for television camera work for a video essay on street people of Halifax.

In the same category for radio, the winners were **John Doyle**, **Steven Palmer** and **Ed Riche** of CBN, St. John's, for a documentary marking the 40th anniversary of the union between Newfoundland and Canada.

Fred Hazel of the *Saint John Telegraph-*

Journal took the commentary award for columns on language tensions in New Brunswick.

The awards were a family affair for a married couple at the *Yarmouth Vanguard*. The award for best magazine/feature writing went to **Belle Hatfield** for her examination of child sexual abuse. **Fred Hatfield** won the top prize in photojournalism for his photo of the crew of a sinking vessel scrambling to safety.

For the third year in a row, **Bruce MacKinnon** of the *Halifax Herald* received top honors in editorial cartooning, this time for a take-off on the 'Captain Highliner and Billy' commercials.

In other developments across the country, *The Toronto Star* is moving its eastern Europe bureau to Berlin and appointing new correspondents in three other foreign bureaus.

Linda Diebel leaves the Ottawa bureau to become Washington correspondent. Diebel was in Ottawa for two and a half years for *The Star* and previously three years for the *Montreal Gazette*. She replaces **Bob Hepburn** who has covered Washington for the past four years. Hepburn moves to Jerusalem where he will succeed **Gordon Barthos** as Middle East correspondent.

David Israelson, who has specialized in environmental reporting for the past four and a half years, moves to the London, England, news bureau.

Alan Ferguson, who has reported throughout eastern Europe, changes his base from Budapest to Berlin. He is a

John Marshall dies

John Marshall, a vigorous and independent-minded writer, died in Toronto after a 40-year career in journalism.

He was a reporter, author and teacher — first for Northern Ontario papers, then for the three major Toronto papers, *The Telegram*, the *Toronto Star* and the *Globe and Mail*.

Marshall was a strong critic of the growing influence of the monopoly papers — he wrote extensively in this area.

He was a major force in *Content*, Canada's oldest journalism review. He lectured at the University of Western Ontario and in journalism ethics at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto. □

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Short Takes

former national editor, Saturday editor and assistant managing editor.

Michael Posner recently left his position as managing editor of *The Financial Times of Canada*.

The editor of *Canadian Business* resigned in June, and earlier this year, *The Financial Post Magazine* fired its editor.

On a brighter note, a couple of radio jockeys have made the jump from sound to sight. The new faces at Sudbury's MCTV belong to **Terry Dyni** and **Carol Bond**. Both left radio stations to work as anchors/reporters for the CTV and CBC affiliates operated by MCTV. Dyni came from CFYN in Sault Ste. Marie. Bond came from CJRQ in Sudbury.

There has also been some internal shuffling within the CBC. **Phil Jenkins** has moved to an editor's position at CBOT in Ottawa and **Margo McDiarmid** has left the northern service to join the station as a reporter. **Ken Nyhuus** has left western Canada to join CBOT as a reporter.

At the *Edmonton Journal*, two summer interns have been put on the full-time payroll. **Marina Jimenez** and **Helen Plischke** will work as city-side reporters. Part-time children's page editor **Liane Faulder** will be taking on extra hours as a family columnist. Meanwhile, reporter **David Holehouse** has left the paper to pursue other interests.

A lot of hats were traded at *The Calgary Herald* recently. **Barb Livingstone** moves from life writer to assistant entertainment editor. **Kathy Kerr**, former assistant entertainment editor, moves to wire editor. **Susan Scott** is now Sunday editor, and former weekend editor **Dave Pommer** is day news coordinator, a new position. **Tony McAuley** comes from the wire desk to fill the new position of special projects editor. Former city editor **Gary Park** is now Sunday assistant M.E. Replacing Park is former sports editor **Ken Hull**. **Dave Obee** who was assistant city editor is now the special sections

editor. He replaces **Margaret Sharp** who becomes a senior writer in special sections.

At *The Edmonton Sun*, two former staffers have left for far away places. Reporter **Mindy Jacobs** is going to spend a year in Israel, while **Tony Blais** has left to take a world tour. Meanwhile, **Glenn Kubish** has left *Alberta Report* to join *The Sun* as a reporter.

A lot of new titles have appeared at *The Vancouver Province*. **Brian Butters**, former head of communications with Southam in Toronto, is filling the new position of executive editor. The paper has also created the title of deputy managing editor to replace the assistant managing editor. Former city editor **Neil Graham** and former news editor **Mike Graham** (unrelated) each carry the new handle. Former assistant news editor **Joy Jones** becomes news editor, while former Sunday editor **Stephen Carlman** fills the new position of associate editor. □

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