Montana Journalism Review

Volume 1
Issue 17 Issue 17, 1974

1974

Montana Journalism Review, 1974

University of Montana (Missoula, Mont. : 1965-1994). School of Journalism

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Press Coverage of Women

Reflections on the Liebling Conferences

A Disturbing Arrogance in the Press

Montana’s Media: Areas for Improvement

Formula News Writing

The United States vs. the AP

Profile of a Wire Editor

The Press and the Constitutional Convention

Carnahan and the Custer Massacre

Ronnene Anderson

John V. Pearson Jr.

Chet Huntley

Jerry Holloron

Don Bloom

Mary Pat Murphy

Steve Smith

Charles S. Johnson

Arthur L. Stone
Early in 1902, Tom Stout, a 22-year-old attorney and former teacher, asked a Hannibal, Missouri, railroad agent how far $25 would take him. The agent said he could travel to Billings, Montana, at the homesteader's fare of $21.85, and on Easter Sunday Mr. Stout stepped off the train at that city in Eastern Montana, where he would become prominent as a newspaperman, historian and politician.

Mr. Stout was born May 20, 1879, in New London, a small county seat in northeastern Missouri. He was graduated from Warrensburg State Normal School and the University of Missouri.

When he arrived in Montana in March, 1902, Mr. Stout "instinctively turned to journalism as a preferred profession," becoming a reporter for the Billings Evening Journal. He became a member of the Montana bar in 1913 but never practiced law in the state.

In November, 1902, Mr. Stout moved to Lewistown, Montana, where he would spend much of the next 44 years.

He helped establish the Lewistown Fergus County Democrat in 1904. One year later he bought out his partner and incorporated the business as the Democrat Publishing Co. and the Democrat-News Publishing Co. He served as editor and publisher of the Democrat-News (now the Lewistown News-Argus) until 1946.

Mr. Stout joined the Billings Gazette in 1947 as an editorial writer, a position he held until he retired in 1960.

He became active in Democratic politics soon after moving to Montana. He served as a state senator in 1911 and 1913, and he introduced a resolution that helped give women the right to vote in Montana.

In 1913, he resigned as state senator to become Montana's representative-at-large in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was elected to the same post in 1914. He did not seek reelection in 1916.

In 1930, he became a member of the Montana Railroad and Public Service Commission, serving until 1932.

At age 63, he again was elected to the Montana Legislature, this time as a representative. He was re-elected in 1944 and 1946.

In 1921, the American Historical Society published its three-volume, 1,449-page Montana, Its History and Biography, which was compiled under Mr. Stout's editorial supervision.

Mr. Stout died in Billings Dec. 26, 1965, at age 86.

Thomas H. Stout
1879-1965
Nineteenth Member

The Montana Newspaper Hall of Fame, established Aug. 16, 1958, is sponsored by the Montana Press Association and the Montana School of Journalism. A committee comprising six members of the Press Association and the dean of the School of Journalism recommends one person for the Hall of Fame each year. A candidate may be nominated five years after his death.
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### No. 17

The first journalism review in the United States—established 1958.

The *Montana Journalism Review* is published annually by the Bureau of Press and Broadcasting Research of the School of Journalism, University of Montana, Missoula, Montana.

Articles in the *Montana Journalism Review* are prepared by faculty members, visiting lecturers and students and graduates of the School of Journalism, but they do not represent official policies of the School or of the University. Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and for the accuracy of statements rests solely with the individual authors.

Office of Publication: Journalism Building
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana 59801

Warren J. Brier, Editor

Received
MAY 6 1974
Press Coverage of Women

By RONNENE ANDERSON

The writer, a 1973 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, has worked as a reporter for the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian. In 1972 she served for a quarter as a Sears Congressional Intern in Washington, D.C. This article is a condensation of a report she submitted for the Senior Seminar.

The contemporary women's movement is about 10 years old. But until about three or four years ago, no one heard, read or talked much about it. Like the leftist movement it grew out of, women's liberation was ignored in its infancy—by educational institutions, government, politics and the press.

Today, everyone knows, or thinks he or she knows, about women's liberation. The subject of women is studied on hundreds of college campuses. Its popularity even led United Press International to declare: "Women . . . are becoming one of the half-dozen great social issues of our time."1

Despite this dramatic rise in the awareness of women, little has changed in the basic attitudes toward them. A casual glance reveals that a woman's place in American society is still carefully separated from that of a man—and her role is still subservient to him. Despite the law suits, the civil-rights acts and the equal-pay laws, women still suffer increasing job and salary discrimination. Most states still have laws that restrict a married woman's right to buy property, obtain credit, make contracts, serve on juries, retain her own surname—and a host of other rights supposedly assured her by the Constitution. The law virtually defines the husband as the breadwinner and the wife as housekeeper—as it has for centuries.

The press always has reflected the current climate of opinion about women. When society was uninterested in women as equal human beings, the press was uninterested.

When society discovered that women wanted to be liberated and laughed, the media laughed too. When society began to take a serious look at the plight of women, the press began to look too. It is still beginning to look.

The following is a study of women as they were treated in January and February, 1973, in five daily newspapers—the New York Times, Washington Post, San Francisco Chronicle, Chicago Tribune and Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Each looks at women differently, but they share similarities. All five have noticed that women are changing, and they have begun to respond to that change. They are quick to pick up the abundance of stories—almost daily—about the first woman Navy pilot trainee, the first woman airline pilot or the first woman subway engineer. Some of their "women's sections" are slowly becoming "people sections" or forums for the changing woman. Those pages often carry special reports about sex discrimination and changing sexual roles.

But it appears that the newspapers still cover those trends and issues as disjointed events without acknowledging their significance to society. Subjects such as changing sex roles, childless families, birth control and "liberated marriage" all point to a possible revolution of conventional life styles. However, the five newspapers do not recognize such a possibility. They report the facts and conduct the interviews but rarely mention women in their news columns or editorial pages. They continue with their sexist cartoons, cheesecake photographs and glorification of a woman's bust, waist and...

1In 1963, Betty Friedan wrote The Feminine Mystique, which became the bible of the movement.

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hip measurements. Reporters still describe women according to physical appearance. The women’s movement is frequently not treated with respect but with ridicule and lack of seriousness. Some of the papers describe in sexist terms the very women who made the news because they were challenging sexism. The women’s pages, as a rule, still insist on pushing spring and fall fashion shows, announcing club meetings and printing make-up tips. The mere existence of “women’s pages” implies that a woman’s field of interest is very narrow.

In short, the five newspapers have reported a change in women, but they cling in many ways to the traditional views of women as housewives, mothers, ornaments and sexpots. They are caught between a policy of always treating women differently from men and the task of reporting on women entering a man’s world. The five newspapers are schizophrenic: They really do not know how to treat women anymore.

Here is a minor, but significant, example of this schizophrenia:

All five newspapers address women as Miss or Mrs. None uses the surname only. None consistently uses Ms.—a prefix that does not indicate marital status and is preferred by many women. Yet, Ms. did appear occasionally. In each case, the women addressed as Ms. were in some way involved in women’s liberation. For instance, the San Francisco Chronicle addressed Gloria Steinem as Ms., but everybody else as Miss or Mrs. One Chronicle story reported that a feminist named Charlotte Krause condemned the Mill Valley, Calif., city council for its treatment of that city’s female mayor, Jean Barnard. The newspaper used Ms. Krause, but Mrs. Barnard.7

The Seattle P-I used Ms. as a prefix for four claimants in a sex-bias suit,8 the organizer of a women’s employment agency,9 members of an abortion-referral service10 and a representative of the National Organization for Women.11 The Chicago Tribune addressed early feminist Simone de Beauvoir as Ms., but every other woman was strictly Miss or Mrs.12

Evidently, some newspapers believe Ms. has become an acceptable prefix for active feminists but not for other women. (It is possible, but not probable, that the newspaper asked the woman for her preference in each case.) Hundreds of businesses and governmental agencies have recognized the sexism of addressing women, and not men, according to their marital status. These five newspapers, however, persist in doing so.

sexism and racism

Most of the sexual discrimination is not as easy to distinguish as the above example. In fact, most sexism in the press is difficult to describe as sexism because the reader is so accustomed to the differential, or preferential, treatment of women in all areas. For this reason, sexism often will be compared with racism in this study. Because racism is more familiar and unacceptable than sexism in American society, the plight of women becomes more vivid when compared with the plight of blacks and other minorities. And there is no doubt that sexism easily can be equated with racism; indeed, some feminists insist racism was based on that first alienating act—the subjugation of one half of the human race by the other half.

Gunnar Myrdal in An American Dilemma declares:

As in the Negro problem, most men have accepted as self-evident, until recently, the doctrine that women had inferior endowments in most of those respects which carry prestige, power, and advantages in society, but that they were, at the same time, superior in some other respects. The arguments, when arguments were used, have been about the same: smaller brains, scarcity of geniuses and so on. The study of women’s intelligence and personality has had broadly the same history as the one we record for Negroes. As in the case of the Negro, women themselves have often been brought to believe in their inferiority of endowment. As the Negro was awarded his “place” in society, so there was a “woman’s place.” In both cases the rationalization was strongly believed that men, in confining them to this place, did not act against the true interest of the subordinate groups. The myth of the “contented woman,” who did not want suffrage or other civil rights and equal opportunities, had the same social function as the myth of the contented Negro.13

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer’s attitude toward women was mixed. A glance at one section might lead a reader to believe women do not exist except as insignificant and childlike objects. The same section on another day might reveal women as active, independent, newsworthy people with important interests and problems.

The treatment of women in the P-I’s news pages generally amounted to a hodgepodge of short, trivial wire stories, many reinforcing the stereotype of women as simple-minded, as unimportant or as sex objects.

Examples:

—“Woman Legislator Keeps a Jar of Candy Handy”—a six-column headline for an Associated Press report about Rep. Grace Peck, an Oregon legislator who keeps a jar of candy on her desk for visitors.

—Pat Nixon gave this advice to football widows in another AP story: “They should get right in there and join him—that’s what I’d do.”

—A woman named Susan Snyder was photographed dancing with President Nixon at an inaugural ball in January. The following UPI account was given 17 inches on page one: “The 27-year-old blonde beauty caused a sensation when the newspapers [including the P-I] carried photographs in their late editions showing her and President

—Ibid., Jan. 28, 1973, p. 9A.

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Nixon dancing Saturday night. . . . Mrs. Snyder was wearing a low-cut purple gown which clung to her 5 foot 8, 38-inch-bustline figure when she danced with the President. . . ." The P-I published a page-five picture showing the couple dancing and revealing Snyder's remarkable cleavage.

Nevertheless, the P-I news department was not totally insensitive to the current drive toward sexual equality, and a few of its local stories and wire copy reflected that concern.

On February 1, the P-I printed a UPI report about a 76-year-old single woman who was assured of congressional support for her long crusade to give single persons the same tax breaks the government gives married persons. The story said she had to pay an extra $100,000 in taxes "just because I don't have a husband."

An excellent local article appeared February 12. Headlined "Divorce—Washington Style," the 50-inch story reported on three divorce bills that "attempt to update state law to match current trends in marriages and the changing roles of men and women." The bills would adjust custody and alimony so men have equal opportunity for both. The P-I quoted a lawyer: "Alimony has a punitive connotation. The idea of a woman getting even with a husband by laying alimony on him. We want to think of it as a problem-sharing device meant to get each person up to a decent earning capacity." Another attorney declared: "Alimony puts a woman in the position of parasite with the man as benefactor."

Aside from those few worthwhile articles, news about women and the women's movement was infrequent in P-I news columns.

In contrast to the news sections, the P-I women's section, "Lifestyle," appeals almost completely to women in its content and advertisements. "Lifestyle" offers a deluge of women's club news, advice columns and recipes. During January, "Lifestyle" printed stories and pictures on "The 10 Best Coiffured Women of 1972." It also included a UPI article about the "10 Most Watchable Women of the World," chosen by the International Society of Girl Watchers. The article quoted the society's president: "The selections were based on appearance and accomplishments."

Dozens of fashion and beauty features reinforced the idea that women are appearance-oriented. "'Look' Counts More Than Fine Details," "What the World's Wealthiest Women Wear," "New Perfume Kits Make Scents"—such stories were common in "Lifestyle."

Because of this conventional orientation of "Lifestyle," few men are likely to read the section's many solid, important articles about women. In between the mindless articles were several probing, fascinating features that explored special problems of women today. In fact, "Lifestyle" was the only place in the paper one could read about the women's movement.

A splendid AP story on women's credit problems appeared January 2. It reported that women were becoming "increasingly militant in demanding equal rights to credit cards and loans." In response, many companies and banks were changing their policies and even actively pursuing the business of women. Protests over credit discrimination increased after the National Committee on Consumer Finance held widely publicized hearings on the subject of women and credit, according to one AP source. Witnesses at the hearings told stories about women whose credit accounts were immediately closed on marriage, divorce or death of a husband.

The AP story quoted Rep. Martha Griffiths: "The idea that wives of childbearing age are unreliable is a myth. . . . Most women have control over whether they'll become pregnant and all women have control over whether they'll quit their jobs."

This 38-inch article was not found in the four other newspapers.

On January 21, "Lifestyle" published an interview with local representatives of the National Organization for Women. They discussed job sharing in the home and the goals of NOW, and the P-I included this comment about credit:

> If you’re single you don’t get credit because you supposedly are irresponsible. If you’re married, you don’t get credit because this is your husband’s responsibility.

> If you’re divorced, you’ve proved you’re irresponsible. And if you’re widowed, all the credit was in your husband’s name.

A UPI story headlined "College Campuses Cater to Changing Women" appeared January 11 in "Lifestyle." The article attributed the emphasis on women's studies and counseling centers to the women's liberation movement. It also mentioned a survey by the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities that criticized the prevailing attitude toward female students:

> The report argued that the first and most important step in achieving equal education for women is that of overcoming the negative self-image of the female produced by years of conditioning by family, peers and teachers. Too often the fundamental block to learning and ambition is the deep-seated, perhaps unconscious belief that her intellectual pursuits are antagonistic to her possible role as housewife and mother."

### importance of placement

"Lifestyle" displayed on January 14 a feature article about a Seattle woman who sued her employer on grounds of sex discrimination. She had a problem that thousands of women must fight constantly: She received half the salary that a man did for the same job because her job had a different title. Certainly this article deserved to be in the news col-

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14As long ago as 1963, Betty Friedan stated: "Even at coed colleges, very few girls get the same education as boys. Instead of stimulating what psychologists have suggested might be 'latent' desire for autonomy in the girls, the sex-directed educators stimulated their sexual fantasy of fulfilling all desire for achievement, status, and identity vicariously through a man. Instead of challenging the girls' childish, rigid, parochial preconception of woman's role, they cater to it by offering them a potpourri of liberal-arts courses . . . or narrow programs such as 'institutional dietetics,' well beneath their abilities and suitable only for a 'stopgap' between college and marriage." Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1963), p. 15.
The P-I constantly treated women differently from men in news articles.

women instead of the "women's page." If the P-I used its women's section as a constant forum for the changing woman, this story might have been appropriate. But in this case, the article's placement indicates that it lacks importance, since it is surrounded by recipes, fashion pictures, club news and other light material.

Another superb local feature appeared January 16. Headlined "Finding Execs in the Steno Pool," it examined a new women's career-counseling center that recently added a "talent bank"—a computerized clearinghouse of women qualified for high-level jobs. The bank helps talented women find jobs and accommodates companies and governmental agencies "feeling the pinch of affirmative-action programs." The story explained that many employers had difficulty finding talented women "because so many natural leaders and graduate-degree holders remain obscured in the ranks of the typing pool." Employment agencies do not help matters, the story said. The P-I quoted a counselor at the Individual Development Center: "Many employment agencies never have seriously considered a woman's role in upper management.... They still view women as secretaries, regardless of talent."

"Women Alone," a weekly syndicated column in "Lifestyle," is written by Isabella Taves, who answers letters from widows, divorcees and other women. Taves' advice is often rather male-oriented, and she stresses that "the eligible males grow few and far between as we grow older." However, Taves is beginning to encourage more and more "women alone" to seek fulfillment without men, if necessary. She warns widows and divorcees against the despairing notion that "any man is better than no man." In one column, she wrote: "Living alone, without a man in the house, is not as difficult as living with a man who rejects you sexually."

She has discussed the special financial problems of women who are alone, encouraged older couples to engage in premarital sex to assure compatibility—and approved the use of Ms. Generally, "Women Alone" provides an important service for "Lifestyle" readers. The column is one more indication that "Lifestyle," at least in some articles, is interested in women as whole, independent human beings.

In "Lifestyle" on February 18 and 19 an extraordinary story indicated how far the P-I's women's section had gone in recognizing women who have chosen radically different modes of living. The story was a two-part feature on two Seattle-area lesbians awarded child custody in a landmark divorce-custody case. The headline: "The Lord and Lesbians, Strange Mix for Half-Victory in Court."

In a tasteful yet matter-of-fact manner, the P-I writer described the almost bizarre backgrounds, feelings and troubles of the two mothers who have six children between them and strong fundamentalist religious beliefs: "Like other lesbians, they lived in fear a court would take their families from them."

The court allowed the women to keep their children, although both fathers were seeking custody, after reviewing the "happy, well-organized, creative" family atmosphere of the mothers' combined home. However, the judge stipulated that the two families had to live separately.

The P-I quoted a court-appointed psychiatrist: "The children are certainly getting good physical and emotional care, are being loved and show love in return... no one can state that a child's free choice of homosexual or heterosexual identification in adult life can be influenced greater in one model or another where the atmosphere is healthy...."

The story also described the open behavior of the women: "The women don't 'accept' or 'admit' their relationship or their religion. They declare them, in and out of court. They literally light up when they talk about either, as if they didn't know the one shocks people and the other embarrasses."

The P-I quoted one woman as she explained how they reconciled lesbianism with orthodox religion: "In the Bible God disapproves of lust between people of the same sex or of opposite sexes," Sandy said. "But he doesn't disapprove of love."

Two other "Lifestyle" articles in February were directed especially to the active, interested woman.

—"Welfare Mother Tells How it Really Is"—a special P-I article that described the troubles of and discriminations against welfare women and divorcees whose ex-husbands are not paying alimony.

—"The Republican Gloria Steinem"—a Washington Star-News article that reported Jill Ruckelshaus' speech to college alumnae at the all-male Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. In her speech, entitled "The Emerging Role of Women," Ruckelshaus described her job as the token feminist in the Nixon Administration, her fight for women's rights—and a conversation with Walter Cronkite, who told her there were "lots of women in communication." His statistics were impressive, she said, until she discovered he was including telephone operators.

The P-I did not display any consistent, overtly sexist policies. In fact, the P-I used Ms. more often than any of the other newspapers did—which is a start, at least. Nevertheless, the P-I was guilty of the sexism in writing style that was so prevalent in all five newspapers. The P-I constantly treated women differently from men in news articles. This sexism was apparent in the choice of articles, in the writing style and in the questions asked by reporters. Occasionally, the P-I reduced the importance or seriousness of events and people associated with the women's movement. For instance, one of Seattle's first female police officers was asked...
by a reporter, "Should a male officer hold the door open for a woman officer on the job?" An AP story reported that Air Force women were put on KP duty with men to eliminate inequality. The headline: "Get a Load of the Air Force Dishes, huh?" The pun is obvious, whether intentional or not.

Perhaps the most depressing article during January and February was a half-page interview with a prostitute, headlined "An Old Fashioned Girl in World's Oldest Profession." The writer, Dick Clever, began: "Celeste was dazzling in her emerald green pantsuit with matching wide-brimmed hat, the white blouse plunging to reveal an abundant bosom, her sticky-wet lipstick, the beauty mark...."

The story related Celeste's account of life on the street and in bed. Clever concluded: "Ah, Celeste, the star, mistress of fantasy, the dream, the emerald-green queen of delight."

The story was accompanied by a four-column cartoon showing three men waiting in line for a turn at Celeste and engaging in this creative dialogue: "I was driven here by wimmen's lib. . . ." "My wife understands me perfectly well. . . ." A sign announcing "No Peeky" hung near Celeste's door.

The tone of the article, with the cartoon, is unmistakable. It is one of amusement and almost perverted curiosity and pleasure. The writer presumably was attempting to display his liberal open-mindedness by writing so flippantly about prostitution. Instead, the story and cartoon displayed a puritanical, adolescent awe about the profession of prostitution—a profession demanded by men.

San Francisco Chronicle

The San Francisco Chronicle, in contrast to the four other newspapers, is almost a radical women's liberation manifesto. No Chronicle reader could be unaware of the women's movement. The abundance of news and feature stories about women indicates the Chronicle is not only aware of but very interested in women who are challenging the myths about women's roles. The newspaper is a daily forum for sex-bias suits, birth-control news, women in traditionally male jobs and the evils of sexism. It printed twice as many articles—both special and news service—about women than did any of the other newspapers. The Chronicle was the only paper that actually treated women for what they really are—52 per cent of the U.S. population. (The two San Francisco dailies appear as the Sunday Examiner & Chronicle.)

the "people" section

The most startling example of the Chronicle's emphasis on women is its "People" section, which is definitely for women. Its advertisements are directed exclusively to women, as are most of its columns, news and features. It is not without the tedious society and fashion displays that characterize the typical women's page. But unlike traditional women's sections that appeal to a woman only as a homemaker, mother or beauty object, "People" vigorously attempts to address itself to the changing woman. Women today are constantly bombarded with new questions about their roles in the family and society. Whether all women approve of the women's liberation movement or not, they all are concerned with these problems, and the Chronicle reflects that concern.

"People" featured these subjects, among many others, during January and February (all were special to the Chronicle): Job tips for the woman with special employment problems, women pitching in for prison reform, a diary of an older woman, an interview with Gloria Steinem, Billie Jean King encouraging young women to disregard the "athlete means masculine" myth and enter sports, why women are the best playwrights, a female architect, and a congresswoman who serves two houses.

"People" frequently described local women's groups that challenge many female stereotypes. On February 5 it carried a 40-inch feature, headlined "Alyssum—An Alternative to Male-Ruled Therapy," that told about a Bay Area counseling service that encourages women to change an unhappy situation instead of adjusting to it as often recommended by traditional psychotherapy. The Chronicle interviewed an Alyssum teacher who explained that a housewife who goes to a traditional therapist because she is unhappy is encouraged to "find happiness with the dishes and children and her husband coming home at 6 p.m." At Alyssum, the teacher said, the housewife is offered "help and support in telling her husband she has had it with her housewifely duties."

A psychologist interviewed by the Chronicle said: "I think it would be a mistake to construe what we do here as therapy. We are helping women to take responsibility back for themselves, so they no longer are stuck in the poor-little-me, I'm-only-a-female role."

An article entitled "A New Meaning to Nurse" in the February 4 "People" section described a new nursing program at the University of California, San Francisco. The program had begun to train maternity and pediatrics "nurse practitioners," and the Chronicle article said: "The handmaiden syndrome' is the way some nurses are characterizing the traditional nurse-doctor relationship and they're tired of it. They prefer to be treated as colleagues and are anxious to take on more responsibility for patient care."

The "People" reporters did interview wives of famous men but tended to avoid the "wife of" story (indicating that the Chronicle knows there are many women who are interesting and newsworthy in their own right). Although Eleonor Coppola was interviewed because she is the wife of movie director Francis Coppola ("The Godfather," "Patton"), the story emphasized: "Eleonor does not want to bask in her husband's reflected glory. . . . What is more important to her right now is developing her own talent as an artist."

"People" emphasized the special consumer interests of women—the necessity for them to become educated about issues they were not expected to know about before. For
instance, a UPI story contained a researcher’s warning about contaminated eye make-up: More than half the eye make-up used by American women may be contaminated by bacteria and fungus that can cause infection and, in some cases, severe loss of vision. Several other consumer-oriented reports about cosmetics appeared in the Chronicle, although it continued to advertise the stuff regularly.

A local article in “People” February 16 reported the remarks of a physician who questioned the use of ovulation inducers. He said such drugs could interfere with a physiologic lock that nature has imposed on the hormone system possibly because the woman did not really want a baby.

“People” carried an excellent three-part series, excerpted from Ellen Frankfurt’s Vaginal Politics, about women’s health problems. The first part discussed the woman who must have a mastectomy and often is denied her choice of procedure. The second examined the advertising “conspiracy” of women’s beauty products and vaginal sprays and deodorants. Frankfurt said: “How many men, do you suppose, would douche their genitals with benzethonium chloride even if advertisers had convinced them they were smelly?” She explained that women are persuaded to use feminine hygiene sprays by advertisements that appeal to sexual insecurities and that many of the products are harmful.

“Vaginal sprays and douches are not the only products women purchase on the blind assumption that the federal government wouldn’t let them be sold if they were unsafe,” Frankfurt said in the Chronicle. “According to a 1970 report of the National Commission on Public Safety, 60,000 people were injured by cosmetics. Most of the injured were women.”

The third excerpt urged women to buy a pamphlet called “The Gynecological Examination,” which would help them understand the doctor’s procedures, encourage them to ask questions and insist on thorough exams.

“People” also used an impressive number of articles from wire services, news services and other outlets; most never appeared in the four other newspapers.

Birth-control news was frequent. A Reuters story reported on an old problem in a fascinating, modern version. The half-page feature told about the Emory University Family Planning Program in Atlanta, Ga., where staff members decided in 1970 they were not reaching the low-income women who most needed birth-control information. The staff realized conventional birth-control information was too dry and technical for these women, and they did not read it. So the family-planning office designed a “confessional type” magazine, like the ones read almost exclusively by the lower socio-economic groups, that camouflaged birth-control information in romantic stories.

The Chronicle news columns also carried an abundance of stories concerning women. Most were local, concerning newsworthy women in the area or recent sex-bias suits. The Chronicle included several nationally oriented news-service stories about the changing woman—few of which were found in the four other newspapers. Headlines from some of these stories: “Women Conductors Still Can’t Get Work” (Washington Post News Service); “Women’s Lib Rejects Freud” (Chicago Daily News); “Paul—a Saint or the First MCP” (UPI); “Steel Firm Told to End Job Bias” (New York Times News Service); “Women Rap Nixon Economic Report” (New York Times News Service); “Women Still Get the Short End on Jobs” (Washington Post News Service); “Limited Appeal of Ms.” (George Gallup); “Paradise for the Male Chauvinist” (AP); “Lesbians and Child Custody” (AP).

A Chronicle story headlined “Natural Birth and the Return to Midwifery” (UPI) attributed the growing popularity of natural childbirth and midwives to the shortage of doctors and “the wish of some women’s liberationists to avoid male obstetricians.” The article included the comments of a Los Angeles County physician who said 75 per cent of all births are uncomplicated and could be handled by midwives.

In a local article January 5, the Chronicle interviewed a Santa Cruz midwife who criticized male-run hospitals for their insensitivity. She urged the return to midwifery because “women can take another woman by the hand and say ‘I know what’s happening and it’s all right.’ A male doctor can’t.”

Women always have been expected to have children, but the “compulsory motherhood” myth also is changing, as another Chronicle story indicated. In this New York Times News Service story about a childless couple, the writer concluded: “Whatever else they disagree on, the experts all seem to be saying that it’s not whether you have children that matters; what matters is that you are comfortable about what you do. . . . The point seems to be to know yourself, to accept your deeper feelings and not make such an important life decision because it’s the thing to do. . . .”

On February 18 the “Sunday Scene” printed a local feature about a female ex-convict who established the first halfway house for women in the San Francisco Bay area. The woman, Reka Wagner, observed that 40 or 50 women ex-offenders arrive in the city each month and “absolutely nothing is done for them.”

The same “Sunday Scene” section contained a 25-inch local article headlined “A Feminist Breakthrough in TV,” which described a feminist television series called “Women: Ode to Artemis.” The series covered subjects such as male liberation, socialization of children and women in literature, history and business. It was written, directed and produced by women associated with the Women’s Communications Workshop Inc.

The Chronicle quoted a director: “Now we are breaking down the myth that television production is too complicated and too technical for women as we show women’s intellect and creativity. . . . Through television—where the women in the audience could not be called typical feminists, to say the least—we can explain what has happened to women in the past, today’s transition and the future potential as they achieve equal rights.”
"The Last Tango in Paris" was mentioned, at least in passing, by most of the newspapers. Some reviews remarked that feminists objected to the treatment of women, but only one newspaper provided an actual sexist critique—the San Francisco Chronicle, in which reviewer Stanley Eichelbaum panned the film and included these two rare paragraphs:

> Never have I witnessed such debasing of the female. It wrecks any arguments that "Last Tango's" depraved love-making by a pathological widower and an unprincipled young Bohemian is a valid comment on exterior events in the 1970s.

> It's an over-rated, distasteful work that's really a throwback to the sick machismo of the Marquis de Sade, Henry Miller and Norman Mailer.

The Chronicle printed an excellent front-page series January 15 and 16 on sexual massage parlors in the San Francisco Bay Area. The feature emphasized the exploitation of female employees:

> There are plenty of horror stories... about women employees—some of them as young as 16—who have been exploited. Although some can make good money under the 30 to 40 percent commission arrangements that prevail, the average pay for most is around $80 a week, insiders say. For many it is sweatshop work, with long hours and little or no income during bad weeks. The managers of certain East Bay parlors have reportedly fired and even threatened violence against masseuses who refused to indulge in sex.

Despite its seemingly enlightened attitude toward women, the Chronicle often indulges in various subtle and not-so-subtle forms of sexism. For instance, only 10 days after the massage-parlor story pointed out injustices to women, the Chronicle ran a typical male account of police raids at several area parlors. The writer's flippant style made a spectacle of the raids. He treated his readers to this description of police headquarters: "[The special vice investigator] . . . crisply told his fellow officers what he wanted: 'This evening you're going to the parlors in plain clothes as customers. . . . Your job, posing as clients, is to give the masseuses an opportunity to solicit you for lewd acts.' There was a ripple of laughter in the room. . . ."

Several women were arrested. A follow-up article printed the names of some of the masseuses.

**men not identified**

The joke, unfortunately, was on the female employees and not on the men who operated or patronized the parlors and were breaking the law as much as the women were. Naturally, the Chronicle could not report arrests of owners or patrons if no arrests were made. The point is, the Chronicle did not mention the owners or patrons, after telling its readers only a few days before how the employers often exploit the women who work for them. And to increase the "spectacle" tone of the article, the Chronicle published a two-column, six-inch picture of a masseuse, wearing short shorts and handcuffs, leaving for jail.

Ironically, the women always are punished for engaging in services demanded by men. (The massage parlors certainly can be likened to houses of prostitution because they offer men sexual services in exchange for money; many parlors offer sexual intercourse as blatantly as does any brothel.)

Other sexist habits of the Chronicle are equally as annoying. On January 11 the Chronicle carried a story and picture of the Navy's first female pilot—Joellen Drag of the Alameda, Calif., Naval Base. Joellen was young, shapely and clad in the skimpiest of miniskirts. The story and picture were on page one.

The Chronicle reported: "She pulled a flight helmet over her shoulder-length blonde hair and blinked blue eyes at the battery of cameras peering in at her. . . . She wore a mini-dress and boots while solemnly swearing 'to defend the constitution of the United States. . . .''

The reader is given the distinct impression that the Chronicle is less interested in the fact that a woman has finally broken into a field previously withheld from her than it is in her young, pretty little body. Presumably, the newspaper would not have given front-page coverage to the Navy's first woman pilot if she had been a 56-year-old, 160-pound grandmother.

Women were frequently described by their physical appearance. Men never were given such treatment, unless a peculiar characteristic warranted such description. "The pert Concord coed was graduated from the University of California. . . ." "Miss Johnstone, a poised and intelligent young woman" (referring to Janet Johnstone, new co-chairperson of the Republican National committee). It is unthinkable that the Chronicle would describe a male national committeeman as "intelligent," for such an adjective is condescending. The implication is that intelligence is an unusual virtue in women.

Another example of the separate journalistic treatment of women is this sentence in a story about a Bay Area woman in the Coast Guard: "The rigorous 17-week course begins Monday when the girls will join 31 aspiring male officers for intensive training." Adult males never are called boys, but adult females still can be called girls.

The Chronicle seemed to delight in displaying this story with great ceremony and deliberation: "Brandy, the Pop-up Girl"—the tale of a 32-year-old "girl" who had revived the art of jumping nude out of birthday cakes. A large box on the front page notified the reader of the delections on the inside. The 16-inch article was accompanied by a five-inch-by-two-column picture of Brandy with her hair conveniently covering her bare breasts: "The lady causes . . ."

Kate Millet in Sexual Politics declares: "Whatever society's official attitude may be, the demand for prostitution continues with the male supremacist culture." She quotes Friedrich Engels: "Prostitution continues the old sexual freedom—for the benefit of men. In reality not only permitted, but also assiduously practiced by the ruling class, it is denounced only nominally. Still in practice, this denunciation strikes by no means the men who indulge in it, but only the women. These are ostracized and cast out of society in order to proclaim once more the fundamental law of unconditional male supremacy over the female sex." Kate Millet, Sexual Politics (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1969), p. 123.

Montana Journalism Review
The chauvinistic, pathetically misogynistic Count Marcos.

In addition to Count Marcos, the proliferation of fashion pictures and articles is a peculiar contradiction to the feminist tendencies of "People." Some headlines and cutlines: "Yve's Pro-Girl Spring Clothes;" "Soft Clothes by the Star's Designer;" "20s Love—20s Styles;" "Sexy but Tailored." Certainly a few fashion stories are interesting and not degrading to women (several men's fashion stories appeared also), but the daily mention of new styles, what the Parisians are wearing, the sexiest, most expensive clothes—this comes dangerously close to reinforcing the conventional view of women as frivolous consumers and thing-minded persons.

The Chronicle editorial page, unlike the rest of the paper, rarely mentioned women. However, on January 28 that page came through with this three-inch column by Harold Coffin:

Now that we've liberated women in the home, they're demanding to be turned loose in the office.

Instead of a gray flannel suit, today's executive sports a gay silk miniskirt.

At home, she wears the pants.

It's confusing for a child to be tied to his mother's apron strings, now that Dad is wearing the apron.

Liberated women have demonstrated their ability to make good in the world of commerce by giving their husbands the business.16

Chicago Tribune

The Chicago Tribune printed numerous articles about women and the women's movement. Its choice of local and national stories indicates the newspaper is becoming sensitive to women's special problems and interests. Personal interviews with Chicago-area women appeared frequently, demonstrating the Tribune's recognition of intelligent, talented, interesting women who are trying to break into a man's world. The Tribune obviously believes women make interesting copy—all kinds of women.

The news sections did not display as much news about women as did the "Tempo" or Sunday "Lifestyle" sections, but they carried a fair variety of information about the women virtually become parasites on their children to preserve what control and meaning they have in their lives. Ibid., p. 293.

Friedan has stated that every woman's revolution is accompanied by men who fear that liberation of women leads to the feminization and weakening of men. "According to the feminine mystique," she writes, "the 'masculization' of American women, which was caused by emancipation, education, equal rights and careers, is producing a breed of increasingly feminine men." But current psychological studies reveal that "feminine" qualities—passivity, weak ego, incapacity for abstract thought, loss of ambition—are found most often in boys and men whose mothers lived under the feminine mystique—who forfeited their own careers, goals and identities to preoccupy themselves with child-rearing. These "feminine" qualities are not found in men whose mothers lived fulfilled, emancipated lives according to a self-chosen purpose. Ibid., p. 263.

As Betty Friedan points out in The Feminine Mystique, work is rewarded by two things in our society—a sense of achievement and money. The housewife, of course, receives neither. She is expected to be satisfied with working longer hours than a man, with none of the traditional rewards society gives the man. She quickly loses her sense of self-worth. Friedan, op. cit., pp. 225-246.

Friedan explains this phenomenon: Many housewife-mothers, as they grow older, have no other identity except through their children. They have no other opportunity to exercise control or power, except over their children, because society has forced them to forfeit all meaningful intellectual, emotional fulfillment outside the home in order to be "good mothers." Thus many moth-

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an of today. The Tribune was the only one of the five newspapers to print an important story about the death of a women's rights bill in the British Parliament. The Tribune Press Service article reported that the bill, which would have provided women with equal rights in job training and educational skills, died owing to filibusters in the House of Commons—the sixth time a women's rights measure was beaten by the parliamentary clock. One wonders if this story would have appeared in the four other newspapers if the subject had been a racial or ethnic minority instead of women.

In the same 10-inch report, however, were some sentences that seemed to remind readers that the women's fight for equal rights is, after all, just not that serious or important—in fact, it is rather quaint:

Coinciding with the debate, women's lib organizations held a meeting at a nearby Caxton Hall to mobilize political power [emphasis added] in the battle for women's rights. . . . Old-timers recalled the suffragette campaign preceding World War I when militant women broke windows, stoned police and chained themselves to railings to achieve the vote.

fallaci quoted

The Tribune published a fascinating interview with Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci February 4. The Tribune writer asked Fallaci to respond to the frequent charge that women are merely charming, sexy women. Fallaci responded:

This is a work for women. Sure, it is easier for us than a man. . . . We arrive with our long hair and we cannot be treated like a man. It helps with women and with men. In peace and in war time. . . . It never, never happened to me in the field to be treated without respect by a soldier. Not a bad word. And I have seen some men treated very badly. Also, this is a work based on intuition and we have more intuition. Not that I believe there are works for men and works for women. But you must admit there are works that men do better and works that women do better. For example, I think women should be heads of state and newspapers should be made by women.

Other woman-oriented articles in the Tribune news sections during January and February included:

—A feature on a Women for Peace group in Chicago. On every Saturday for seven years, these mostly middle-aged, middle-class women held anti-war vigils in front of a government building.

—A Reuters story from Paris reporting on "the mother of the women's liberation movement"—Simone de Beauvoir.

—An Associated Press story that presented a female film critic's opinion about sexism in American movies.

—A full-page special feature entitled "Looking Back on the Year of the Ms." It summarized women's progress in politics and employment and discussed the Equal Rights Amendment. Several women from national women's groups and college, government and political groups were interviewed.

—"A Mother's Greasy Adventure Under the Hood"—a report on a woman in an auto-mechanics class.

—"Seagoing Women Add Salt to the Navy"—a 40-inch special Tribune article about Navy women.

—An interview with a female city commissioner—how she plays the game of politics in Daly's Chicago.

—"Snow White's Seven Chauvinists"—a New York Times News Service story that explored charges of sexism in fairy tales.

—"Women's Lib a Hollow Phrase to Most Yemeni" (AP).

—"Miss or Ms.—Cong Know Title"—a UPI report about a Vietcong spokesman who called a UPI reporter and asked whether he should address her as Miss or Ms. This story was not found in the other newspapers.

In juxtaposition to those articles, however, was an incredible amount of sexism.

The Tribune was the only newspaper of the five that succumbed to the worst of all sexist violations in a newspaper—the cheesecake photo. It printed several. For example, an AP photograph appeared on a sports page with this cutline: "Teri Bova giving Jockey Craig Perret a boost onto First Bloom before recent race at Tropical Park in Miami. Miss Bova's vital statistics are 35-24-35. First Bloom's were not available."

The Tribune sports pages seemed to delight in using the female body to lure readers to athletic events. At least four times a bikini-clad woman graced a sports page in connection with a boat show or sportsmen's show in Chicago. Here are typical cutlines: "Demonstrating how to catch fish—or a cold—is Kathy Francour as McCormick Place gets ready for boat show." "Pretty mermaids and Mercury motors help point out approach to boat show which opens today. . . ."

Cheesecake even found its way to a non-sports page with a story entitled, "Sweetheart, you've got a lot going for you up front." It was accompanied by a three-column photo of a sweetheart who certainly did. The 11-inch story described, with much relish, the "petite young females" with "proportionate dimensions," who were vying for "sole costumed live hood ornament perched atop a Dodge Charger at the 1973 Chicago Auto Show." It included this:

Janice, a lovely little brunette, did well. She may make the finals. The sexpots shouldn't have shown up. "We're looking for a gamine, an Audrey Hepburn," the judge said. "With a fetching, a piquant face, and a degree of grace. . . ." Gloria Steinem would have raged. But in a day when publicity stunts have degenerated into staged press conferences with open bars to deaden the dullness of what somebody thinks is "news," the Dodge Boys had a better idea. Good Luck, Janice.

The writer failed to perceive that when a publicity stunt degenerates into a female-body auction, it is far more degenerate than any staged press conference.

Those were not the only instances in which the Tribune treated women as bodies instead of people. Bob Cromie devoted a 15-inch column on the January 13 editorial page to Miss America. It listed Terry Anne Meeuwsen's attributes—"23-years-old, bright, amusing and, naturally, very
pretty”—and her daily diet, the name of her singing idol, her recent marriage proposals and her latest television appearance.

The Tribune news sections described women according to their appearance, as did the other newspapers. For instance: "The poise of a 5 foot 6, brown-eyed blonde has toppled the male-dominated Chicago Mercantile Exchange." Men never were described in that manner.

An interesting case of newspaper schizophrenia appeared in a movie review February 9. The writer was explaining the plot of Ingmar Bergman's "Cries and Whispers," the story of three sisters—one dying of cancer—and a servant girl. The reviewer commented: "Problem: If you haven't done anything for a person all his life, what can you do for him when he is on his deathbed?" (Emphasis added.) Apparently, the reviewer was so accustomed to using male pronouns when speaking in general terms that he did not perceive the peculiarity, let alone sexism, of applying them to a female cast.

The Tribune carried an AP photo of Hayley Mills holding her new baby, and the caption read: "Five-day-old Crispian John David is determined to be heard as he makes his debut with his mother, actress Hayley Mills, 26, wife of film producer Roy Boulting, 59. Miss Mills is the daughter of veteran British actor John Mills." Hayley Mills probably has more name recognition than either Boulting or John Mills, but she is identified in terms of some man's daughter, some man's wife and some boy's mother.

The daily "Tempo" section and the Sunday "Lifestyle" department are forums for women—all kinds of women. The sections are obviously traditional "women's pages" in terms of their fashion and food features. The Tribune, like the other newspapers, runs an unusual number of fashion displays. However, "Tempo" and "Lifestyle" carry frequent articles about the changing woman and the special problems she encounters. Tribune writers are constantly interviewing local women and local women's groups. National events in the women's movement also received good coverage.

The Tribune covered a New York press conference at which Gloria Steinem introduced several women who were "working to change their lives and the world around them." Several guests were middle-aged and older women who only recently had stepped out of their conventional role. "Tempo" quoted Steinem: "...the image of women in the movement has been of three 21-year-old SDS bombers... This is a different image."

"Does Sexism Start with the Sandbox Set?" was the headline for an interview with Myra and David Sadker, University of Wisconsin professors who contend that sexual discrimination, dangerous to both sexes, occurs daily in elementary schools. Boys are reprimanded more but receive more attention from teachers, the professors explained. The Tribune quoted the Sadkers: "Girls suffer from sex typing far more than do their male counterparts... Girls are rewarded for silence, neatness and conformity, yet active curiosity and analytical problem-solving are discouraged."

"Tempo" published from Edward Buxton's book Promise Them Anything an excerpt that examines sexism on Madison Avenue. The article pointed out that although more and more women are working in advertising agencies and playing crucial roles in the ad business, many discriminations still exist:

... rules still in existence in the women's lib era include no out of town travel, no after 7 p.m. working hours, no staying on the job after the fifth month of pregnancy. And if an affair is discovered in an office, it is always the female who is asked to resign... It's never easy for women. The successful ones often take on the man's world characteristics. For all that men complain about women in business who lose their femininity, the records prove that the soft-spoken, quiet mannered girl is not likely to advance rapidly in the aggressive atmosphere of today's ad agencies.

An article entitled "What if Rembrandt had been a Woman" reported on a Chicago lecture about women's roles in painting. One lecturer explained that although more women than men enroll in art schools and are involved in art appreciation, men paint the paintings. The "Tempo" section quoted her: "...studying and viewing are passive, submissive states... The act of creation is an assertive act—one that the subsidiary role of women has not been allowed."

A magnificent 32-inch feature in the February 11 "Lifestyle" was entitled "These women are the mothers of our country." It described a feminist slide show called "Our North American Foremothers," which seeks to dignify and honor important American women lost in male-dominated history. Women like Harriet Tubman, a fugitive slave who served as a scout and spy in the Civil War and freed some 300 slaves; Sacajawea, who died in childbirth at 25; Elizabeth Blackwell, who was graduated at the top of her class from the Geneva Medical School, which promptly started refusing admittance to women; Sojourner Truth, abolitionist and reformer; and Rosa Parks, who began the Montgomery bus boycott.

The reporter observed: "But, as too often, women who fight for causes are casually dismissed. 'It's almost as if it isn't a cause unless you can find a man leading it,' says Anne Grant [coordinator of the slide show]."

conventional characterizations

Despite the fact that "Tempo" and "Lifestyle" treat women as independent, active people in many stories, conventional female descriptions are invariably used in characterizing women. Soft, well-coifed, slim, attractive and feminine were frequent adjectives. The Tribune never described men as masculine, well-groomed, slim or attractive unless such description was absolutely necessary to the story.

This special treatment of females indicates an irritating, condescending tone toward them. The following examples from the "Lifestyle" section were written by women reporters and editors:

—A story about Hanna Rose Zimmerman, East Coast operations manager for a Chicago restaurant chain, described her as "attractive, glowing."
—A feature portrayed newly elected Rep. Marjorie Hold this way: "... her voice remains accented and soft. She is a well-coiffed, well-dressed, feminine woman. She is a wife, a mother and a grandmother."

—A feature on a factory foreman in the Chicago area: "Attractive, feminine Jenny Franco is the boss of a department that assembles and tests hydraulic and hydrostat parts."

One could conclude that the Tribune writers are consciously or subconsciously trying to assure readers that liberated women, career women or other women breaking out of sex stereotypes still have not lost the femininity that a male society insists they keep. A woman's appearance seems almost as important as her achievements.

Three Tribune editorials in February directly concerned women. One was a superb—and rare—comment entitled "The Expanding Role of Women," which noted that more women are entering the labor force than ever before yet still are suffering inequality in job choice, advancement and salary. The editorial urged that questions on child care, credit equality and welfare problems be solved, and it advocated passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. Strangely, this was the lead: "Women's Lib aside, one of the most significant changes in the American economy in this century has been the growing number of women who work outside the home and the contribution they make." This was not the only instance in which the term "women's lib" was used in a slightly derogatory or derisive manner. Most of the newspapers studied did it at least once. (The Tribune always used "women's lib," which connotes lack of seriousness, to describe anything even remotely part of the women's drive for equal rights.)

In a short editorial comment February 19, the Tribune wrote: "This is a proud time for Women's Lib. A staunch member has crashed out of the household prison and has gotten a job—cooking." The editorial was a pleasant rundown on former Chicagoan Leslie Arp, the first woman chef at New York's Waldorf. But it ended this way:

She says that even the waiters are friendly; in the hope of getting special attention for their dishes and thus winning big tips, she says, they try to butter her up. Chef Arp may be underrating her personal attractiveness. The waiters may in fact be slightly smitten with a dish named buttered-up Leslie a la Waldorf.

Here is a woman who finally broke through a sex barrier—a 42-year sex barrier. But does the paper honor her merits, her talents, her skill? Yes, but "personal attractiveness" still gets the last word.

Another short editorial acknowledged that a woman "seaman" had recently become pregnant. Problem: Whether a pregnant seaman properly can be called a seaman:

There is seaperson, but it would be hard to imagine Captain Bligh or Ahab referring to anybody as a seaperson. The solution, we suppose, is to follow a precedent already set. If there can be a boatswain's mate aboard ship, then why not a seaman's mate? And if she's attractive, she could be a seaman's mate first class. [Emphasis added.]

The Tribune editorial page rarely referred to women. When it did, as in the previous instances, it took two women who were challenging female stereotypes and smugly turned them right back into female stereotypes. The message: Women are really cute and amusing; women's liberation is amusing.

It is incredible that a newspaper could have so many beautiful stories about women, then publish so much sexist material about them. The contradiction has not yet occurred to the Tribune.

The coverage of women by the New York Times and the Washington Post—when women were considered important enough to write about—was exceptionally thorough, often fascinating and generally non-sexist. The selection of articles showed awareness of and sensitivity to the women's drive for equality and recognition. Sex-bias suits and political and economic problems of women received special attention.

Despite this quality of coverage, the quantity was decidedly low. Both the Times and the Post seemed content to stop with just the essential stories about women and the women's movement—and it was not because of lack of available copy. The combined female populations of New York City and greater Washington, D.C., must exceed 5 million—but a reader of either paper would never know it. Absent were interviews with local women's groups and local or wire stories about women's health and consumer problems. Such stories were daily fare for the San Francisco Chronicle. News of the women's movement usually concerned economics or politics.

The two newspapers did not seem interested in the ordinary local woman as a newsmaker, as did the Chronicle, the Chicago Tribune and even the Seattle Post-Intelligencer. Apparently, this lack of interest restricted the number of articles about women. A reader could scan an issue of the Washington Post or New York Times without finding a single mention of women.

The New York Times

The New York Times, although its daily coverage of women was negligible, did print some superb articles of special interest to the woman who is seeking economic, political and professional equality. Most of those features and articles did not appear in most of the other papers studied.

A 20-inch story January 8 reported that the advisory commission on the economic status of women had reprimanded some of President Nixon's top advisers for "what they said was the administration's failure to understand the main economic problems facing women." According to commission members, a chapter on women in the President's 1973 economic report discusses jobs for women "almost entirely from the viewpoint of women who do not actually need to work for economic reasons." The Times said:

Several members of the advisory group ... pointed out ... that 65 per cent of all working women, and 80
The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is empowered to take employers to court for hiring and promoting practices. Forty percent of the complaints received by the EEOC are about pay discrimination against women. Carbine insisted that women cannot begin to achieve economic equality unless they begin to achieve economic independence. The decision certainly reflects a changing attitude toward traditional male-female roles.

Paternity leave discussed

An important Times story on paternity leave was not reprinted by the other newspapers under study. This page-one article said the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had declared that a teacher-parent should be entitled to a leave to bring up a baby, even if the teacher is a man. That decision could of have significant implications for the American mother who always has been expected to care for the infants with little help from the father. The decision certainly reflects a changing attitude toward traditional male-female roles.

On January 15 the New York Times ran on the business page two articles about pay discrimination against women in Britain and other Common Market countries. In Britain, according to the Times, men still earn up to twice as much as women, and the salary disparity has widened in some areas despite passage of the Equal Pay Act two years ago.

The Times also published an article by Patricia Carbine, publisher and editor of Ms. magazine. It listed the special economic oppressions endured by American women. Carbine insisted that women cannot begin to achieve economic equality unless they begin to achieve economic independence. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is empowered to take employers to court for hiring and promotion violations, Carbine explained. She pointed out a frightening fact:

William H. Brown III, EEOC chairman, says, "Many people consider sex discrimination rather comical. But it is not funny, certainly not to the 5,800 people who filed charges in fiscal 1971, and the 10,400 who filed in fiscal 1972."

"Wall Street's Unhappy Women" headlined a 30-inch feature February 4 on the business page. It explored the difficulties of women in a male-dominated field—stock brokerage. According to the Times, only 150 of 5,000 stockbrokers are women in the firm of Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner and Smith. The Times said:

This means that women are greatly outnumbered. It means they have to be sharper than men to win a job with a firm. It means that male brokers grab the bigger, more lucrative accounts. And it means that promotions of women to executive status seem rare. . . . Brokerage firms, although few of them admit it, have long discouraged women brokers. Sometimes it is argued that both men and women customers prefer to deal with men brokers.

The Times published a report about a meeting of New York drama critics, headlined "For Some, Sexism in the Theater Has Been a Boon." One woman admitted sexism had helped her because it had driven her to form an alternative theater. Another said: "The fact that one-third of the people on Broadway are women—many of them in 'stick' roles—reflects the fact the active roles in our society are played by men."

The Times also interviewed two women partners in a women's law firm. It said they plan to "undertake nonprofit cases to challenge discrimination against women, while operating a private practice to pay bills. . . ."

The male citizens of Liechtenstein voted in February to continue denying the vote to the nation's women. The Times ran a one-and-one-half-inch AP report explaining that Liechtenstein is the only non-Arab country to deny women political equality. The men defeated the motion with a majority even larger than a vote two years ago. The San Francisco Chronicle and the Seattle P-I also carried this story.

The movie industry is a major perpetrator of sexist clichés and female stereotypes. Yet, few film reviewers see an obligation to include sexist critiques in their reviews—in the same way they might include critiques of racism.

On January 21 the New York Times published two sexist critiques by two female critics of recent movies. Rosalyn Drexler reviewed "Up the Sandbox," starring Barbra Streisand, and attacked it as an infuriating cop-out on the women's liberation movement. Drexler wrote:

"Up the Sandbox" purports to examine Margaret's [Streisand's] changing role in relation to her husband, children, political reality, racial problems—anything and everything that touches upon herself and the

MONTANA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Published by ScholarWorks at University of Montana, 2015
rest of the world—it becomes a clumsy reaffirmation of
the notion that staying at home and having babies is the
best thing for a woman to do, especially if her husband
"generously" likes babies and is willing to give her one
day a week off.

The movie "is to the women's movement what 'The Straw-
berry Statement' was to the student revolution, a rip-off
giving lip service to authentic concerns but cropping out in
the end."

Aljean Harmetz reviewed "The Poseidon Adventure," in
which she said "the women must be pulled, pushed, cuddled
and babied through every inch of the climb to survival."
The four female characters, Harmetz said, are either helpless
or neurotic and "embody almost every stereotype with which
Hollywood has labeled women during the last three de-
cades... If the six men who join them in the climb do not
stay far from cliché either... there is a subtle difference
that the male clichés are, for the most part, positive ones."

The "Family, Food, Fashion and Furnishings" section, al-
though it sounds extremely conventional, generally appeals
to both sexes with its light news and feature content. Still,
it resembles a "women's page" in some respects because more
articles about women seem to be concentrated in this
section than elsewhere in the newspaper. Fortunately, no
important news stories about women were relegated to this
section as they were in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and the
Washington Post.

The woman-oriented articles in "Family, Food, Fashion
and Furnishings" ranged from simple-minded fashion and
food features ("Knees Are in for Summer," "Strapless 40s
Return in Style to Suit the 70s," "Expensive Bag is so Com-
mon Chic May Fade") to interviews with women who are
challenging the conventional home-oriented view of fe-
males ("She Became a Chef Despite Male Prejudice").

A feature entitled "Distaff Production Team that's More
than Tokenism" reported on the female producers behind
"The Classic Ghosts"—a series of 90-minute dramatic
shows on ABC television. The male executive producer
selected a female producer who promptly hired women for
the many subordinate jobs. The Times quoted her:

I just had to get together the best possible team. . . .
They [women] have an eye for detail, they don't bother
jockeying for position, they cut through the nonsense. . . .
They're also more dedicated. . . . A lot of men in the
business are just in it for the paycheck. They might as
well be working for an insurance company. Women are
doing this kind of work because they enjoy it. It's a
deeper form of expression.

A fascinating feature in "Family, Food, Fashion
and Furnishings" was headlined "Women's Liberation in the
Comics: The Jokes are on Everyone." The Times story
described the "new wave of funny-paper feminists and
pseudo-feminists such as Ms. Joanie Caucus of "Doones-
bury." (Garry Trudeau, creator of "Doonesbury," told the
Times: "... I see women's liberation as the most interesting
and important movement in the country."") The story said:

Funny things have been happening on the way to
comic-strip relevance, which is sometimes mere window
dressing, as syndicators make their bows toward what they
almost invariably designated as "women's lib." A man-
hater named Gloria Stingem recently joined the man-
crazy heroine of "Plain Jane." In "Lolly," the cute blond
secretary acquired a similarly obsessed and unattractive
sidekick named Liz, off whom the "lib gags" are bounced
—pro and con, but mostly con. "Captain Easy" now has
a partner, a female detective named Deucy Wild, who
gets equal billing. Even Oola, girlfriend of Alley Oop,
is said by the caveman-strip's syndicate to be getting a
little independent lately.

A Times reporter also interviewed a comic-syndicate
comedian who admitted that newspapers "have had static"
from the women's liberation movement. But he said some
of the old-line comics like "Blondie" and "Joe Palooka"
are "impervious to the lib—they're almost above it.
" One comic art director said he was seeking a good feminist
strip: "A lot of them are being shown around, but they all
have the same fatal flaw: They're done by men. They don't
come off. Probably women never have been encouraged
enough in this line."

Other items in this section during January and February:
—"Dropout Wives—Their Number is Growing."
—"Women Architects, Slow to Unite, Find They're
Catching up with Male Peers."
—"The Women of Vietnam: Some Grow Strong in the
Face of War."

The New York Times, like the other newspapers in this
study, printed an abundance of fashion and beauty-related
material in the women's section. In fact, the Times ran
regular "Fashion Talk" and "Beauty Talk" columns—rein-
forcing the idea that women are appearance-oriented, sex-
oriented people.

The Times displayed no blatantly sexist material, al-
though a very traditional view of women often was reflected
in the reporting and editing. For instance, in a report on
the first woman stock specialist on Wall Street, the reporter
asked her if children would be "likely to interfere" with her
new career. Surely that question never would have been
asked of a married man.

The Times was not much different from the other news-
papers in its frequent use of special feminine descriptions
in news stories. Significantly, a woman's appearance is not
usually described if she is over 45. A Times story called
a 36-year-old female subway "motorman" tall and slim.
But it used no physical terms to describe a 49-year-old
woman running for governor of New Jersey.

a flippant headline

The Times editorial page rarely mentioned women. How-
ever, a full op-ed page February 24 was devoted to a feature
about the Germaine Greer-William F. Buckley debate at
Cambridge, England. The story was great but here was
the headline: "Oh, the Things They're Debating at Cam-
bidge." Such a headline would have been unthinkable
over a story about Indian liberation or black liberation.
But with women's liberation—well, it is all right. Because
sexism is still a socially acceptable prejudice, women's libera-
tion is not treated with respect but with indifference and
amusement. No matter how enlightened the New York Times is about the women's movement and no matter how many sex-bias stories it prints, one headline such as this indicates the Times does not comprehend the total meaning of the women's movement today.

The Washington Post

The Washington Post, although its coverage of women was slight, did publish some excellent, thorough material. Like the New York Times stories, these Post articles were concerned mainly with women's special economic, political and professional problems. Few stories appeared about women's current consumer, health, psychological and sexual-role problems. Interviews with women were rare.

The Post news columns printed two excellent sex-bias articles. One investigated a militant airline-stewardess movement that had been developing for about a year and finally had coalesced into one group, Stewards for Women's Rights. The Post story said: "A small but growing number of airline stewardesses, shunning their image as sex symbols of the sky, have launched a nationwide assault on airlines they say have put them on diets and denied them promotions in violation of federal law."

The stewardess group had filed with federal employment agencies 14 complaints charging cruel overemphasis on physical appearance, airline reluctance to back up stewardesses harassed by drunken passengers and promotion policies that allegedly keep most women from rising to positions higher than stewardess supervisors.

"We're not there as flying geisha girls," one woman said. "We're there to make sure the safety regulations are kept . . . that's what we want to prove to the airlines."

The other article, even more critical, reported on page one the bizarre sex-discrimination case of an Arlington, Va., woman who complained to federal officials that a mortgage company made her promise to remain childless by means of birth control, abortion or a vasectomy on her husband before approving her home-loan application. The woman earned $11,000 a year, her husband $6,000. The Post reporter wrote:

Mortgage lenders in the area say the practice is not uncommon—particularly with young women who have recently married—but they say it is an improvement over days when many lenders refused to base loans on the incomes of any married woman under 30. National women's groups, also investigating Mrs. Lewicke's complaint, have charged in recent years that mortgage lenders often refuse to take a working wife's income into account or make it more difficult to obtain a mortgage based on her income rather than her husband's.

That the Washington Post researched this event thoroughly and placed the story on page one indicates the newspaper is sensitive to discrimination against women—economically, at least.

The January 7 Washington Post carried two long feature articles of special interest to women. "Mrs. Satan for President," a reprint from the London Observer, was a detailed account of the political life of Victoria Woodhull, first woman candidate for United States President (1872). Although Woodhull's belief in free love was heavily emphasized in the story, her aggressive political opinions were presented well. According to the article, Woodhull published a weekly newspaper, Woodhull and Chafin's Weekly, that advocated free love, easy divorce, legalized prostitution and the presidential candidacy of Woodhull. The paper denounced financial swindlers, the death penalty and religious hypocrites and was the first newspaper in the world to publish the full English version of Marx's Communist Manifesto.

The other feature, in the "Metro" section, was a 50-inch report about policewomen in Washington, D.C. According to the article, the city was conducting a police-foundation study to determine if women performed as effectively as men in street duty. Though the study had not been completed, the recruitment figures showed that women were trained the same as men, scored as well in academic and physical testing and had a low attrition rate. About 3.2 per cent of Washington police officers are female. The story told about a "very negative" attitude among male officers toward a greater feminine role in the police department. A policewoman said fellow officers tend to resent women doing the jobs as well as the men do them.

Other articles in the Post news sections: "U.S. Jaycees Bar Women as Members" and "WAC Who Wed Another is Discharged," a short item about two lesbians in the Women's Army Corps.

The Washington Post was refreshingly free from overt sexism; it carried no cheesecake photographs nor did it ridicule or dismiss the importance of the women's movement—when it reported the women's movement. Separate journalistic treatment for men and women was apparent, however. For instance, the Post interviewed a black woman barred from a Maryland club swimming pool five years ago. Her subsequent law suit made headlines, and the Post described her as "an articulate black woman of 29 . . . ." That is similar to the San Francisco Chronicle's use of "intelligent" in describing a woman. "Articulate" never would have been used to identify a man unless he had some sort of handicap or special condition that made his articulateness an exceptional characteristic. The use of that adjective for an ordinary woman implies that being a female is a handicap in itself. As Gloria Steinem says, "If you are a white male it requires no adjective."21

The "Style" section of the Washington Post tries hard not to be a women's page. Most "Style" articles are light features that easily could appeal to men as well as women. At first the reader of "Style" is led to believe that the Post has rejected the idea that women's interests are so narrow they must be relegated to the "women's page." However—and this is a consistent characteristic—more woman-oriented stories appear in "Style" than in any other section. It is not clear whether this is because the Post considers women's news insignificant enough to go with the light features or

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whether it still secretly considers 'Style' a women's section. Most of these stories are oriented to the traditional concept of women's interests. For example, all fashion features can be found in "Style"—women's fashion features, that is. These displays invariably stress the "in look," what they're wearing in Paris, and generally very expensive, luxurious clothes. No men's fashion story appeared in "Style" during January and February.

One worthwhile article on changing sex stereotypes appeared in "Style"—"Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad, Sexist, Racist, Dirty Books?" The feature covered an American Library Association meeting where delegates argued about censoring sexist and racist children's books. The Post concluded: "Are kids affected by stereotypes? That's what worries mothers who remember feeling conditioned as children by books that taught, for example, that girls were nurses, never doctors. That is what bothers black adults who remember being called 'Black Sambo' by white schoolmasters in days before black was called beautiful." "Style" also carried a Gallup Poll about the popularity of 'Ms.' Other than this, "Style" rarely mentioned the women's movement. That would be all right, except that the rest of the paper rarely mentioned it either.

Surprisingly, the Washington Post editorial section printed several good comments and features about women during January and February. On January 22, the editorial page ran a Minneapolis Tribune feature entitled "The Study of Women Unpredictable." It was an informative analysis of the growing popularity of women's courses at colleges across the country. The writer included a report on the Nobel conference in Minneapolis at the University of Minnesota—the first such meeting that concerned women and the first that included female speakers. One was Rep. Martha Griffiths, who declared: "Women are last hired and the first that included female speakers. One was Rep. Martha Griffiths, who declared: "Women are last hired and first fired. Just look at the monetary rewards society gives for jobs and then you'll really know who the last-class people are." The article said "there is no stopping this diligent examination" and ended with this quote from Walter Lippmann, who said in 1914:

"The awakening of women points straight to the discipline of co-operation. And so it is laying the real foundation for the modern world. The old family with its dominating father, its submissive and amateurish mother, produced invariable men who had little sense of a common life and women who were jealous of an enlarging civilization. It is this that feminism comes to correct, and that is why its promise reaches far beyond the present bewilderment."

A Post column by William Chapman sought to dispel the myth that women go to work essentially to earn "pin money." Chapman, with the help of statistics, said a significantly large number of women work to put bread on the table—32 per cent are the sole wage earners in the family and that percentage is increasing among poor families.

Chapman commended President Nixon's recent economic report—which included a special section on women—and he attacked the administration's past policies: "Women work outside the home for the same reason as men," the report declares, as if the thought had just dawned on the Council of Economic Advisors. "The basic reason is to get the income that can be earned by working . . . ." To many that may sound terribly obvious, but only a year ago the administration was employing a rather different attitude toward the working woman. Treasury Secretary John Connally was telling the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, for example, that a 6 per cent unemployment rate wasn't as critical as it seemed because so many of the unemployed were teenagers and women . . . .

A beautiful 25-inch biography of Emma Goldman—writer and social reformer in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—appeared in a series on "Thinkers and Their Thoughts" on the Post editorial page. Goldman is one of hundreds of women lost in male-written history. The writer, Colman McCarthy, outlined Goldman's struggle for women's rights, better schools and prisons and less hypocrisy in religion. He wrote: "She was called Red Emma by males accustomed to putting down women with clever sallies—the way arrogant males today dismiss Gloria Steinem as "Gloria Stadorn . . . ."

People like Emma Goldman are not familiar historical figures because historians and the media have not written much about women who were not just wives or daughters but active, independent people. The Washington Post is a contemporary example of a medium that has scant news coverage of women. The Post will print a column about Emma Goldman but still does not increase its news coverage of other newsworthy women.

**editorials about women**

A few Post editorials concerned women directly. One entitled "A Female Foot in the Door" mildly attacked an all-male Washington club for sexual discrimination. The Cosmos Club, according to the editorial, decided to admit qualified blacks a decade ago but recently denied women the privilege 274 to 203. The club includes many distinguished male scientists, professionals and artists. Those opposed to the admission of women, the editorial explained, insisted on upholding tradition and complained of the difficulties in providing separate facilities for them. The membership did vote to let female guests use the club's front entrance, which had been barred to them. The editorial continued:

"The real question is not, however, whether some professional women might feel more patronized by having the front doors opened to them at last and at this time, only as tolerated guests. The question, as we see it, is whether the Cosmos Club will live up to its own first set of by-laws, adopted on Jan. 6, 1879. They define as eligible for membership not just men, but persons interested in science and literature. It has also been, from its very beginning, one of the foremost purposes of the club to serve as a meeting place and forum for various scientific and professional societies which find a congenial atmosphere in return for providing the club with some of its needed income and these societies include persons of the female sex. Permitting them to enter by the front door is not enough."
The bulk of the advertising is designed to appeal almost exclusively to women.

The Post deserves praise for writing about a subject not often regarded as interesting copy for the editorial page—sexism. But one wonders if the editorial would have had the same moderately critical tone if blacks still were barred from the Cosmos Club. Furthermore, human equality needs no defense. Regardless of what the Cosmos Club constitution says, sexual discrimination—any kind of discrimination—is wrong.

A somewhat questionable, though sincere, editorial was entitled "So Here's to You, Ms. Robinson." It was a light, airy little piece designed to overdramatize humorously the effects of "Ms."—a title recently recommended by the revised edition of the Government Printing Office style book. The editorial concluded:

For our part, we have already begun to adjust our thinking about some of the women who are part of the glorious heritage of Western Civilization as we have known it—and whom we do not intend again to describe in terms of their relationships to men, children, or anyone else. There is, for instance, the non-commissioned officer of Orleans, there is the consenting adult of Bath.

There are the Merry Survivor, John's Other Co-person, Grandmoms. Moses and Citizen Bloor. Something, it must be conceded, may be lost in this effort to eliminate the sexually possessive or derivative term of address. But even those of two minds on the matter must concede that something may also be gained. As George Gershwin and DuBose Heyward would have put it (if only they'd known), "Bess you is my equal now."

Certainly, the women's movement is not so cold and humorless that it cannot laugh at itself occasionally. Further­more, the Post news stories still address women as Miss and Mrs.

Advertising

The bulk of the advertising in the five newspapers is designed to appeal almost exclusively to women. In any one paper, on any one day, many more advertisements than news stories concern women. This phenomenon parallels the division of roles in American society: The man is the breadwinner, the career-oriented person, the decisionmaker, the policymaker, the newspaper; the woman is the homeowner and mother, the buyer of goods for the home. "Women are said to make 75 per cent of all family consumption decisions," author Alice Embree writes. "For advertisers, that is why women exist."22

The media constantly reinforce the idea that a woman is a passive, easily influenced consumer, an emotional non­intellectual who is not supposed to think or act beyond the confines of her home. The advertisements in the five newspapers continually appeal to the woman's insecurity about her femininity and her attractiveness. Ads for clothes and beauty aids were the most frequent and most offensive. Their message was: Women, you must buy beauty. Buy lots of it. And buy it at our store.

The New York Times seemed to be the worst offender, but perhaps only because its advertisements were so huge. Giant cosmetics ads were common. On January 14 the Times carried a full-page lipstick advertisement that described the product as "high voltage for the best dressed mouth." Another displayed a full-page nail-polish ad.

This was an advertisement for nightgowns on a Chicago Tribune sports page: "Just like a woman—full of wonderful contradictions. Refined . . . yet slightly wicked. A very special way of nightdressing . . . ." The Tribune ran an ad for facial-hair removal: "For the woman with more exciting things to do than pluck hairs . . . try electrolysis . . . Permanent Hair removal."

An unbelievable New York Times ad by Seventeen magazine tried to persuade businesses to advertise in the slick fashion magazine. The text talked about the teen-age girl:

She's more interested in personal appearance now than at any time in her life. She's fascinated by beauty products. Loves to experiment. When she likes something, she wears it all the time . . . the teen girl is the peak user of the following products. Eye liner, eye shadow, mascara, eye care. Lip gloss and nail polish. Sun tan lotion. Bubble bath, dusting powder. The teen-age girl accounts for 20 per cent of all women's cosmetics and toiletries expenditures—over $567 million. Concentrate on young beauties in the magazine that caters to them. Over 7,000,000 girls read every issue of Seventeen. We mean business. She means business.

All of these advertisements play on a woman's fears and insecurities. Betty Friedan explained how the advertising industry exploits the housewife:

With increasing skill, the ads glorify her "role" as an American housewife—knowing that her very lack of identity in that role will make her fall for whatever they are selling. But a new stove or a softer toilet paper do not make a woman a better wife or mother, even if she thinks that's what she needs to be. Dying her hair cannot stop time; buying a Plymouth will not give her a new identity; smoking a Marlboro will not get her an invitation to bed, even if that's what she thinks she wants. But those unfulfilled promises can keep her end­lessly hungry for things, keep her from ever knowing what she really needs or wants.23

One may argue that a newspaper has nothing to do with

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the content of advertisements, that it cannot be held responsible for sexism in ads, that it must accept such advertisements to stay in business. Yet, it is safe to say that none of the newspapers in this study would accept a racist ad. Racism is unacceptable anywhere. But sexism—the exploitation and degradation of women—is still very acceptable.

Furthermore, the women’s sections of the five newspapers often were covertly selling products themselves by constantly pushing fashions and accessories and occasionally providing the brand names or department stores where the merchandise could be purchased.

Betty Friedan pointed out the media’s complicity with the advertiser:

Here the housewife is often an unaware victim. I have written for some of the magazines in which the sexual sell is inextricably linked with the editorial content. Consciously or unconsciously, the editors know what the advertiser wants. . . . A memo need never be written, a sentence need never be spoken at an editorial conference; the men and women who make the editorial decisions often compromise their own very high standards in the interests of the advertising dollar. . . . The kind of home pictured in the “service” pages is dictated in no uncertain terms by the boys over in advertising.

This policy was explicitly demonstrated in the Seattle P-I and the Chicago Tribune, which both occasionally displayed the fashions of an advertiser. On February 5 the Chicago Tribune’s weekly “Feminique” section carried six pages of spring fashion stories and pictures, which included examples of Dior styles. Dior clothing appeared in display advertisements on the same pages. A February 15 Seattle P-I article described the history of the traditional “love bracelet,” which the story said could be purchased at the I Magnin department store. I Magnin advertised the “love bracelet” in the same paper.

Perhaps the most blatant case of media complicity was a Seattle P-I interview with representatives of Beene Botique, which just happened to have a new spring collection in at the I Magnin store. The P-I quoted one representative who characterized women buyers:

They will say “no” unless they really want something that’s the whole scene today. So the only way to keep things going is to create what they want. Women are fighting the battle of clothes today. A lot of this stems from the creators who haven’t been creative or who didn’t produce things women wanted. . . . Women don’t need another dumb dress in their closets. They want something soft and appealing, something that will make their friends envious and their husbands proud. . . . The future of fashion is not a problem. We’re not the dictators. The women are.

Looking through the sales double talk, which has the blessing of the Seattle P-I, one conclusion becomes clear: Business and industry tell women what they want, wait for them to buy what they have been told to buy, then sit back and slyly insist that women are the dictators.

One of the most insidious myths perpetrated by American industry is that the consumer makes the decisions, that she has a choice and therefore is “liberated.” Alice Embree writes:

The endless parade of products across the TV screen are meant to give the illusion of a highly competitive economy which, because of the competition, produces quality products. Procter and Gamble doesn’t care whether you choose Dash, Tide, Duz, Bold, Oxydol, Cascade, Cheer or Ivory Soap, as long as you choose one of them. . . . “Women must be liberated to desire new products.” Those are the words of a market-research executive. (Not liberation for a new collective identity, not for more life-fulfilling roles, but for commodities.)

Advertisers exploit women as consumers and as sex objects to sell products—all with media approval. The New York Times carried a seven-column, full-page perfume advertisement that displayed women (sex objects) super-imposed behind perfume bottles (sex products) with captions such as “Sensuous Shalemar” and “Innocent Chant d’Armos.” A full-page swimsuit ad in the Times showed a bikini-clad woman with sultry, beckoning eyes: “See Worthy [brand name]. Don’t expose a great figure in just any old swimsuit! Get into a soft . . . sexy . . . sensational bikini . . . ."

Another example of the sexual sell is the infamous “I’m Karen, Fly me” advertisements. Feminists constantly object to the ads, but National Airlines continues to distribute them, and the Washington Post, San Francisco Chronicle and New York Times continue to run the full-page ads two to four times a month. I’m Karen. . . . I’m Barbara. . . . I’m Elaine. . . . I’m Heidi—Fly me.

**hypocrisy and contradiction**

Gradually, media schizophrenia moves into the realm of hypocrisy and contradiction. On one day the five newspapers report about the women who are challenging sex stereotypes and on the next day pander to those very sex stereotypes. The press fails to perceive a link between what it is reporting about the changing woman and its own policies. Ironically, the two newspapers that had the best coverage of women—the San Francisco Chronicle and the Chicago Tribune—displayed some of the most degrading and sexist material about women.

It is no wonder that the feminist underground press is flourishing. The conventional press gives women no alternative. Hundreds of feminist newsletters, pamphlets, journals, newspapers and magazines have emerged in the past few years because the establishment media insist on looking at women as ornaments and helpmates to men instead of people with important interests and critical problems.

Many of the worthwhile stories about women in the five newspapers were reporting about problems that have been recognized for years. The New York Times and the Washington Post printed fascinating, probing stories about

*Embree, op. cit., p. 184.

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women's special economic and employment problems. But where were they five years ago? Ten years ago?

The media view the women's movement as an event, a spectacle—often an amusement—instead of the root of a possible revolution in living styles. The San Francisco Chronicle was the only newspaper even to hint that such a revolution may be starting. Its coverage of women's liberation did not stop with economic discrimination but explored sexism in hospitals, churches, the literary world and the theater—to mention just a few areas.

The press should be the predictor, the digger, the announcer of injustices, of movements, of changes. But it is not; it is often the last to change. The subject of women has received more than its share of press resistance to change.

Gloria Steinem said to the American Newspaper Publishers Association: "We don't see much innovation in journalism." She was too kind.

**The Press Convention**

By Charles H. Eggleston*

With coat peeled off and pipe in mouth
An editor sat one night;
And he wrote of this, and wrote of that,
—He was strictly on the write.

He tackled the Dingley tariff act;
Exposed the pension sharks;
Examined with care the national debt
In brief but sage remarks.

He waded right into the Dreyfus case;
The Transvaal crisis, too;
Considered the Philippine war at length,
—His copy grew and grew.

He spoke of the kaiser, mentioned the queen,
Anon referred to the czar;
He told all the powers just what they should do
Or else they would all go ajar.

He threw off a stick on Li Hung Chang,
And gave two sticks to Japan;
He took a big stick to the Mormons, and
Belabored them all to a man.

He took up free coinage and then discussed
The railroads and the crops;
Republicans and democrats;
The prohibs and the pops;

The American cup and the chances of
Columbia's winning the race;
Fitzsimmons, Jeffries, Kid McCoy,
They each came in for a place;

The resignation of Speaker Reed;
The fierce political fight
That, bred in old Kentucky, keeps
A-breeding day and night;

All this was threshed out at a lively rate
As a matter of pure routine.
Two-thirds of the time an editor's brain
Works on a threshing machine.


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But in scanning exchanges he suddenly struck
A fresh, inspiring theme,
Which caused his brainery to scintillate,
And flash and glow and gleam.

He found that a rival had jumped him hard,
—Had jumped him with both feet;
To jump right back was a matter of course,
—He'd rather jump than eat.

And vitriol flowed from off his pen;
And sneers came into play;
And verbal dum-dum bullets whizzed;
Inventive blazed away.

Next week that rival editor
Came back at him, of course;
And brickbats hurtled back and forth
With unconsciousness and force.

To read their papers one would think
That murder was in store;
That both the men would shoot at sight
And daub the street with gore.

To tell the truth both felt that way;
Each felt inclined to shoot;
Each felt the other had gone too far;
And each was resolute.

And things went on this way until
The conclave came around;
And brotherly loves abound.

For this annual meeting is a clearinghouse
Of this year's bad blood and spite;
And all old scores are wiped clean out,
And all is love and light.
Reflections on the Liebling Conferences

By JOHN V. PEARSON JR.

Mr. Pearson, a graduate student in the School of Journalism, attended the first two Liebling Counter-Conventions. He earned a B.A. in history at Colorado College and served as a special correspondent for the Luray (Va.) Page News and Courier and as a photographer and researcher for the Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission.

The two Liebling Counter-Conventions were the first attempts by journalists dissatisfied with the status quo in the American press to meet on a national level to discuss their problems and suggest reforms.

What have the conventions accomplished? None of the wire services, networks or other press institutions has come crashing down or experienced fundamental internal revolutions in ownership or control. Patrick Owens of Newsday called Liebling I "an uncommonly elegant bull session." Nick Von Hoffman described Liebling II as beginning "in a happy bath of booze, amity and self-satisfied anti-Nixon one-liners." Members of the underground press branded both conventions frauds and soirées of halfway liberals still affected by the Establishment Disease.

I agree with most of the criticisms. But to expect a great reform organization to spring from conventions of independent-minded, egotistical and windy journalists is asking too much. The Liebling Counter-Conventions have served as meeting places for reform-minded journalists to exchange ideas, and no more.

There were many differences between the 1972 and 1973 Counter-Conventions. Liebling I, at the King Labor Center in New York, was a two-day pressure cooker with much confusion and disorganization. Liebling II was at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C. The staff of the New York journalism review, (MORE), which sponsored the Counter-Conventions, ran things much more smoothly. Though some (MORE) staff members thought that the turnout of Washington press corps journalists was poor, it seemed to me that in general the panel discussions and workshops on press issues and problems were much better than at Liebling I.

Perhaps because Washington is the nation's political nerve center and politics is the main topic at any social gathering, Liebling II delegates were much better prepared to engage in fairly serious dialogue. Also, no crowds of pseudo-intellectuals and partisans descended on Liebling II—as they did at Liebling I—to root for and boo their journalism favorites and unfavorities with the gusto of hockey fans.

The panel discussions at the first Counter-Convention were mainly gripe sessions about problems with editors and publishers, government and business. Journalists were very much on the defensive because of Nixon Administration attacks on the press for its "East Coast liberalism," and few had definite ideas about press reform.

The atmosphere at Liebling II was much different. There was a general feeling of vindication because of the Watergate stories, and the discussion topics included specific reforms actually being attempted around the country: Press councils, ways to fight subpoenas, the roles that the Newspaper Guild and American Federation of Television and Radio Artists should play in bringing about change, and reporter power in the newsroom.

Liebling II attracted more attention in the press in Washington than Liebling I did in New York, though coverage still was somewhat sparse.

Also, whereas the American Newspaper Publishers Asso-
ciation Convention in New York ignored Liebling I, a con-
tinual stream of delegates flowed from the convention of
the American Society of Newspaper Editors to Liebling II.
One purpose of the Liebling Counter-Conventions was to
protest the ANPA and ASNE conventions for ignoring the
real issues in American journalism.

I would criticize Liebling II on three counts.
First, the vindictory statements because of Watergate
often went far beyond the bounds of fairness. At times
they became blatant prejudice against the President and
his administration—the same kind that were leveled against
Roosevelt and his New Deal by conservative editors and
publishers.

Panelists like Art Buchwald and Dick Tuck drew con-
tinual laughs with anti-Nixon jokes, and during the panel
on Watergate some of the underground delegates hung a big
anti-Nixon poster from the balcony. It had a picture of
Nixon with headphones, saying "Nixon's the One." The
audience applauded.

Meanwhile, two former Nixon aides, Richard Whelan
and Kevin Phillips, both of whom had left the administra-
tion because of disillusionment, were listened to politely
but drew occasional derisive laughs.

In another panel discussion the audience heckled Victor
Gold, a former speech writer for Vice President Agnew.
When one young journalist yelled, "What's the most cor-
rupt thing Agnew ever did?" Gold blew up. "I'll answer
the SOB," he said and, grabbing a microphone, he shouted,
"I don't talk for the Vice President any more! Damn it,
let's have an orderly discussion!"

The dislike and contempt that so many journalists at
Liebling II expressed toward Nixon, his political friends and
palace guard are understandable. Any administration that
blatantly and consistently lies and attempts to make
the press its tool as much as this one has since 1968 is going
to make few friends and gain little respect among the re-
porters who write about it.

But is it in the interests of good journalism to expend
so much time and energy making personal insults and at-
tacks at a convention that is supposed to find solutions to
press waywardness? Are the anti-Nixon journalists who
engage in this kind of vituperation, rather than hard ques-
tioning and solid dialogue, being any fairer to Nixon than
his administration has been to his enemies? I think not.

stupid questions

Second, there were, despite the improvements over Lieb-
ling I, too many stupid questions from the audience. Many
delegates, especially from the underground press, got up
not to ask questions or make serious challenges to state-
ments but to expound their personal views and prejudices.
Sarah McClendon, one of Washington's top independent
columnists, blamed it on too many New Yorkers who came
down. She said their questions lacked substance.

The panel debates suffered at times because of the in-
ability of panelists or journalists in the audience to con-
sider fairly other sides of arguments.

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A good example was the debate over the merits of press
councils by Murray Rossant, head of the Twentieth Century
Fund; Hodding Carter, editor of the Greenville (Miss.)
Delta Democrat-Times; Robert Maynard, an editor from the
Washington Post; and Dick Pollak, editor of (MORE).
No matter how hard Rossant and Carter tried, they couldn't
get through to Maynard, Pollak and critics in the audience
that press councils are not meant to be panaceas for all the
ills of the press.

Pollak challenged the contention that the National Press
Council being set up by the Twentieth Century Fund would
spur some basic reforms. He said the real issue is power in
the newsroom, and trying to establish a press council is
"assigning priorities in the wrong place." He added:

—What the public thinks is not that important. How
reporters are run is what's important.

—Most newspapers in the country are terribly bad, and
except in rare cases where a benevolent dictatorship exists
—the New York Times, the Washington Post and
(MORE)—there is going to be little change unless jour-
nalists gain some power to say how the press is run. All
too often when management does decide to show how
liberal and wonderful it is, it holds a press conference to
air all the grievances of its reporters. It prints all the com-
plaints, then forgets about them.

—Because "the public" is an indefinable term, it is im-
possible to put together a press council truly representa-
tive of any public.

—The whole system in this country is reports, dealing
with committees and saying things about problems, instead
of really making any fundamental change in the way things
are.

—The key to press reform is an association of working
journalists that will reorganize the press on a shop-by-shop
basis, because the needs of newspapers around the country
are so different.

Murray Rossant replied that the council has a limited
function and does not deal with the question of power in
the newsroom. Like the British Press Council, he said,
this one probably will not cause any major reforms. But
"the whole idea of the National Press Council is an attempt
to assert the public interest, not the interest of the publisher,
and not necessarily the working journalist." It not only
will provide public access, thus defending press freedom
for the public, but also might make editors a little more
careful, though not necessarily less aggressive. It also
should help to raise public consciousness about the press
through its criticisms.

Rossant said press-council critics see it only in terms of
what it is not meant to be and cannot accomplish: "I agree
with Pollak, but that doesn't mean that his call for a revolu-
tion on a shop-by-shop basis is going to do away with the
need for some public access to the media." The National
Press Council is an experiment "whose time has come. All
I ask is that it be given a chance."

Robert Maynard said press councils are inappropriate
because they don't confront the ever-growing problems of
monopoly power and concentration of ownership. He continued:

—Press councils also will not guarantee an increase in access to the media of the unheard voices in our country so often frozen out of the mass-communications process. To be heard before a press council is not the same as being heard on CBS Evening News.

—There is a danger that the council could become a captive of the very forces it is designed to counter by coming to reflect the composition of the local hierarchies.

—At worst the press council would give the press the appearance of solving its major problems. Those who think they are treated badly by the mass media and complain about it could easily be told that they don’t have any problems because the press council is there to solve them.

—The Fund is wasting its money. Its resources might be better spent on journalism reviews.

reform on a shop-by-shop basis

Hodding Carter, a Fund trustee who was on the task force that studied the issue for two years, agreed that true press reform must be done on a shop-by-shop basis and that more outlets for opinion are needed.

"There's a certain amount of navel watching in the notion that the only proper critics of the press are those who work in the newsroom," he said. "There is a great temptation among the vested interests of the press, especially reporters, to resent subjecting themselves to review by any kind of jury of their nonpeers."

He said many journalists in his own community had objected strongly to the recent establishment of a local press council but now supported it.

The Liebling II critics of the National Press Council ignored the fact that it never can become an instrument for censorship because it is not connected with government and has no regulatory powers. Its only weapon is public criticism, the same weapon used by the press in attacking people and institutions.

The audience offered few thoughtful questions or arguments. I overheard Carter say, "The questions were so dumb I can’t even remember one of them."

My third criticism of Liebling II was the ego-tripping not only by liberal journalists who have been smelling rats in the Nixon Administration and have been proved right but also by members of the underground press. The undergrounders, in their zeal to show everyone at Liebling II that they knew the Ultimate Truth about the press, Nixon and the national political situation, caused much friction and abrasiveness with their shrill demands and accusations.

At both Liebling I and II, radical journalists threatened to wreck the proceedings unless certain demands, such as more representation on panels, were met. And at both conventions, the (MORE) staff agreed to all the demands to avoid a major disruption. The flyer that the undergrounders circulated at Liebling I branded the convention "a back-patting sock hop of New Journaloids whose Creative Writing III skills and high fees enable them to appropriate the landmark innovations of genuinely alternative journalism."

The undergrounders decided that because (MORE) was holding Liebling II at the Mayflower, one of Washington's biggest convention hotels, and charging an $8 admission fee instead of holding it for free in a Colorado cow pasture, the whole affair was an establishment ripoff and they and their supporters shouldn't have to pay. They didn't. The fact that (MORE) is a struggling publication that has been operating at a deficit—and because of this the staff decided it couldn’t afford to sponsor a second free counter-convention—didn’t seem to bother them.

I regretted this, because it clouded many of the important contributions the radical journalists made at the convention. The vital things they had to say were hidden behind a vapor of plain rudeness. The underground presswomen forcefully pointed out the inadequate representation of women on most panels as well as the absence of representatives from black and other minority papers.

The speakers in an open discussion of the underground press made some informative comments about the purpose of the underground press and the way it is run. Frances Chapman of Off Our Backs, a collective newspaper run by 10 women, said her staff members teach each other and avoid specialization by making no division between jobs like writing and layout.

She described her paper as contraposing both the "establishment and alternative press." In these male-dominated media, she said, men's minds destroy stories because "only the most colorful, most spectacular, most shocking stories that affect people who are in power" are printed. The rest of the population is ignored. "We avoid that competitive, martial trip that the male is on. We don't have to operate that way. It is not the way to change a world that men have run before."

The radical journalists said the underground press had certain advantages because its staffers don't have families and other responsibilities and work for low salaries. They said they run simple operations that can be dismantled and moved around the country with ease.

Pointing to the Watergate investigative articles that began to appear in Paul Krassner's New York Realist and other radical newspapers soon after the story broke in June, 1972, they noted that the underground papers react to developing events much faster than the straight press does and that they are the first to get into trouble with government during waves of suppression.

"The establishment press tailgates stories because its journalists simply won't believe things are as bad as they really are," Art Kunkin of the Los Angeles Free Press said. "If you see excesses on our part, remember that we're looking at you and seeing excesses on the other side that are just as bad."

The underground-press representatives also said that when the straight press prints something it is assumed to

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be fact, true or not, whereas the credibility of the under-
ground papers is always suspect.

Straight journalists depend on a limited number of re-
liable sources, they said, and miss many stories about police
oppression and other vital subjects because they "don’t want
to trust people in communities to tell them what’s happen-
ing." Underground journalists get their stories right from
the streets.

Some radical journalists were candid about the failings
of their own press. Many papers no longer exist because
they failed to devise adequate organizational structures.
Also, underground newspapers have a tendency to print
anything and engage in hyperbole without checking sources.
Several called for cooperation and assistance between the
establishment and underground presses. Each does some
things well, they said, and the different factions must not
get embroiled in a house fight. "We have to stop the
schism," one editor said.

The underground journalists should have hit the conven-
tion with a well-prepared barrage of penetrating and em-
arrassing questions. A few, like Paul Krassner, made a
good effort. He was able to exclaim triumphantly to one
panel that was unable to answer a question, "Ah-hah!
Gotcha ‘by the balls, didn’t I?"

But most of the radical journalists didn’t follow Krassner’s
lead. A Baltimore lawyer told a panel of underground
editors that it was running a propaganda session and that
he felt as if he were at a revival.

Things may have been different in the hotel the last
night at the underground press party, which was open to
everyone. I couldn’t go because I was with several reporters
who spent the night questioning Sherman Skolnik and Alex
Botos. Those two characters from Chicago dropped a
bombshell on Liebling II with their claim that they had
evidence that the Midway plane crash that killed Mrs. E.
Howard Hunt was sabotage and murder.

From what I witnessed, the underground press delegates
did not perform according to their capabilities during the
main panel discussions.

The most important contributions of Liebling II were
the indications in the panels and workshops that small but
definite steps toward reform are being taken by journalists.
I concluded at Liebling I that journalists are so reluctant
to organize for reform because journalism is an art as much
as a profession, and they want to be free to report news a
lot more than they want to become businessmen and run
newspapers. Publishers, I decided, were the key to reform.

But I concluded at Liebling II that unless journalists start
pushing there won’t be much decisive reform for a long
time because it won’t be done by publishers who too often
are so far removed from their own newspapers that they
have no idea what happens in the newsroom.

Four events or trends might be noted.
First, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press,
funded by private grants and personal donations from mem-
ers, was formed by journalists in 1970 in response to the
threat presented by the subpoena policies of the Justice De-
partment under John Mitchell. At present it is the only
legal-research and defense-fund organization devoted to
protecting the First Amendment and freedom-of-informa-
tion interests of the working press. It provides funding,
legal advice, representation and research services to journal-
ists.

In a Liebling II workshop entitled "Getting Subpoenaed:
How to Fight Back," Jack Landau of Newhouse Newspapers
and other committee members said the greatest danger to
press freedom appears to come not from the federal govern-
ment but from state and local courts. They pointed out that
most of the 67 cases listed in a committee pamphlet did not
originate in federal courts.

recommendations for reporters

Reporters, they said, should:
—Write more about press-freedom issues.
—Get their employers to agree to back them if they have
to go to court, because government may be more reluctant
to subpoena reporters if it knows it must fight not just an
individual but an entire organization.

—Make the issue of who owns notes a contractual ques-
tion, especially on large newspapers whose reporters belong
to the Guild.

—Retain a lawyer beforehand if they think assignments
are going to get them into trouble.
—Establish press-credentials councils to work out prob-
lems with police. This, the committee members said, had
helped to end much police harassment of underground
papers in Washington, Philadelphia and several other cities.

—Not give information under any circumstances to any
government agency or even a defendant who might benefit
from it. As committeeman Jim Goodale of the New York
Times said, "Once you get on the stand, they’re into every-
thing."

—Break a muzzling order of a court immediately if it
appears to be wrong and not wait for an appeals-court de-
cision. “If you wait,” Landau said, “the next case that pops
up, they throw that case right back at you and say ‘if other
papers are willing to obey invalid court orders, why aren’t
you?’

—Follow the advice given to lawyers confronting any
government agency in a case. "If you think they’re gunning
for you, stay out of bars," said Ian Volner, a Washington
lawyer working on the Baton Rouge case.

Massive civil disobedience may be the last resort of jour-
nalists, the committee members concluded, if cases like
Porambo and Baton Rouge are not overturned by the ap-
pellate courts.

Second, more newspapers are experimenting with new
organizational structures. In a panel called "Power in the
Newsroom: Who Has It and How to Get It," journalists
from several publications told about reforms and innova-
tions at their organizations.

John McCormally, editor of the Hawk-Eye in Burlington,
Iowa, said his reporters must now approve a new manag-
ing editor before he is hired.

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Published by ScholarWorks at University of Montana, 2015
Susan Braudy of *Ms.* said her magazine is run as a commune, in which decision-making is shared and there is no hierarchical structure to "set the tone." The staff shares writing, editing, typing and other tasks, and "several women who now help edit started on the switchboard."

Best of all was the exuberant Laura Shapiro of *The Real Paper*, an alternative publication in Boston. She said the paper, which was started on "nothing," now pays for itself through advertising and circulation. It is incorporated and the staff owns the stock. Its directors are elected by and responsible to the staff. "Unless you own, you are owned," she said. "And we own. I mean, it's ours. We did it!"

Third, the Newspaper Guild and AFTRA are becoming involved in issues other than wages, hours and vacations. They are including in their contracts items such as a voice in the produce and guarantees of help in fighting subpoenas.

Guild President Charles Perlik told the delegates that his organization had negotiated 23 contracts with 27 publications at the time of Liebling II, eight of which had been concluded in the previous year. The Guild began its drive beyond bread-and-butter issues three years ago, he said, and it has been campaigning for shield laws since 1934.

And fourth, the ad-hoc committee that formed at Liebling I to start a national reform organization and failed reconvened at Liebling II and set up an organization called "The Liebling Group."

Its purpose is not to try again to start a formal organization but to establish an "informal network of rebellious journalists" who would pool information and resources to cope with problems in their respective areas. Membership is open to anyone. There are no dues, but contributions are accepted. It had about 70 members in 1973.

How successful will it be? It's too early to tell. But chairman Michael Dorman wrote in the September, 1973, *Liebling Ledger*, the Group's occasional publication, that I can report to you, after spending a good part of the last four months on nationwide and international travels in pursuit of material for a Watergate book, that such a network is being created. I made it a point in traveling from coast to coast and from Mexico to Canada to seek out working journalists, explore their problems with them and invite them to join our organization. Many have done so.

Charles Perlik and Sanford Wolff of AFTRA both pledged the support of their organizations at Liebling II. The Guild is providing Washington facilities for publishing and distributing the Group's newsletter.

I hope those small steps will lead to major press reforms. At no time has the American public needed a free and responsible press more than it does now. It needs a press that not only tells what happened and why but offers enough diversity and opposing views so the average citizen can analyze and compare and decide the truth for himself.

For every major issue exposed by the press, there has been only a small swordpoint of penetration by a few journalists on a few newspapers. When a big story finally does break, the rest of the press follows. In Watergate, for example, at the point were journalists of certain underground papers, Woodward and Bernstein of the *Washington Post*, CBS News reporters and a few others. Most of the daily newspapers and radio and television stations ignored the issue or denied there was anything substantial to the June break-in until the continuing exposure by the investigating news organizations made it too obvious to ignore.

*a question about the wire services*

Dick Pollak of (MORE) asked during the debate on press councils what would have happened if the wire services—the largest information-disseminating organizations in the world—had put their manpower and resources into a thorough investigation of Watergate right away instead of waiting so long. What difference might it have made in the campaign practices of the 1972 election?

As Philip Geyelin, editorial-page editor of the *Washington Post*, said at the beginning of Liebling II, it is tempting—because it might be some time before the government tries to undermine press credibility again—to believe that "public confidence has been fully restored; that we need not worry any longer about the question of whether readers will believe what we write." Though Watergate has been the hour of vindication for the press, journalists should not be overly jubilant. The newspapers still have too many things wrong with them.

Managing editors and publishers who regard decision-making and ownership as synonymous and are afraid of freaks and weirdoes taking over their newsrooms just don't understand the wonderfully corrupting effect that granting a piece of the action would have on the militancy of dissident journalists.

Reporter power will lead to more, not less, responsibility in the newsroom.
A Disturbing Arrogance in the Press

By CHET HUNTLEY

This article comprises excerpts from a speech by Mr. Huntley at the Montana Press Association convention in August, 1973, at Big Sky, Montana. Mr. Huntley, former NBC News announcer and commentator, was the Dean Stone Night speaker and professional lecturer at the Montana School of Journalism in 1959. He died March 19, 1974.

I want to make an off-the-cuff remark on the "to whom it may concern" basis. An old friend of mine, Lou Mayor of New York, has an incredible sense of humor. Not long ago, he had an excruciating prostate problem. The operation was terrible and extended, and there was the waiting period to determine if it had been successful. Lou was accepting this in good spirits, but finally the day of truth came when the last examination had been made and the doctor said, "Lou Mayor, my friend you are a whole man. You are well. You are restored. Everything is fine. After a short recuperation, you can pick up your life and go back to work. Everything is normal, fine and wonderful."

Lou said, "That's great." Then he reflected for a moment and said, "There is one question that occurs to me. What about my private life? You know what I'm talking about."

The doctor said, "Lou, I told you—everything is fine, wonderful and beautiful. Pick up your normal routine."

Lou said, "For my wife, Trudy, put it in writing. On second thought, make it 'to whom it may concern.'"

I do want to talk to you seriously about the state of journalism. In this third year of a new decade—as we approach the 200th anniversary of this nation—I am sure it has occurred to you that it is important to consider the status of this institution and reflect on it, because it is the only instrument there is to keep the people of this country informed and to let us know what is going on. There are no alternative devices or institutions for the dissemination of information. It's the press and that's it.

I hear a genuine feud is going on between much of the press and this administration—a feud that goes somewhat beyond the normal, traditional, healthy coolness that always has characterized relations between the national press and the government.

Actually, I suppose we might be somewhat more concerned if the truth at this moment were that the national press and the administration were in bed together and were engaging in a total show of harmony. Some conflict and some mutual suspicion are just right, and we want to keep it that way. But it has gotten a bit out of control, in my opinion. So we ask, where did this begin? What is the origin of this suspicion and this climate between the national press and this President of the United States?

I have a guess. I have known the President since the first time he ran for Congress in 1946. At that moment and from that time on, this man and the press never got along very well. He did not enjoy being with newsmen, and they did not enjoy being with him. There was always this coolness. And, being very candid, I might say that there is a lack of style, a lack of great flourishing prose so far as this President is concerned. He doesn't coin the great ringing words and phrases that came from other Presidents, and so there was always this coolness. And, being very candid, I might say that there is a lack of style, a lack of great flourishing prose so far as this President is concerned. He doesn't coin the great ringing words and phrases that came from other Presidents, and so there was always this business about Nixon being unable to excite the press. Newsmen didn't particularly care for him, and he didn't particularly care for them. So the coolness started, in my opinion, as early as 1946.

There is a story that might cast some light on this issue.
I was on the Truman train going through California in 1948. I got aboard at Berkeley to ride to Los Angeles, and—I think it was at Fresno—Truman held a press conference on the train. Nixon was running for reelection to a second term in Congress, and he had lambasted Truman and the Democrats in a speech in the state. During the press conference, a California reporter asked, "Mr. President, are you aware of what Congressman Nixon said about you and the Democrats this morning?" Mr. Truman said, "Yes, I saw that. And by the way, in his remarks Mr. Nixon used a very mild four-letter word that was not all that bad. I have one observation to make about Congressman Nixon: It seems to me that he doesn't even know how to swear or cuss. He's got the words but the melody ain't right."

At first I could only quarrel with Vice President Agnew, in his now famous remarks about the American press (and I include both print and electronic media in the word "press"), on the grounds that some of his charges were ill informed and ill founded. I can find no monopoly of news distribution as Mr. Agnew charged. In broadcasting, for example, the networks are responsible for a very modest percentage of the total news output of all the television and radio stations in the nation. I think we would be hard put today to prove that there is a monopoly of the American print media. But to whatever extent Mr. Agnew was attacking the new journalism—the journalism of advocacy and involvement, personalized and subjective journalism—then I am on his side. In my opinion, there is an arrogance, a haughty smugness, a conceit running through too damned much of our journalism today.

It is not too difficult to figure out how this developed and what happened. I remember going to conferences and conventions of press associations, publishers associations and network-affiliate associations 10 or 15 years ago. And it was conceded, more or less, 10 or 15 years ago that because broadcasting had taken over the hard news and spot news, there hadn't been a newspaper extra on the streets of our principal cities for a long time.

**Coping with a new role**

The publishers realized that broadcasting had taken over the spot news, the instant news, the hard news, the front-page banner news and, therefore, the print medium would have to do something else. Of course, the only alternative left was to go into the judgment kind of journalism—analysis, comment or whatever you choose to call it. I think possibly we are still in that transformation period. But I do believe that several of our colleagues in the print business still haven't quite figured out how to handle this new assignment, this new role, this new kind of journalism, particularly when it appears on the front page.

This arrogance by too many newsmen has disturbed me for several years. That a reporter on the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post* or whatever can write a respectable sentence in English, or perhaps even in a foreign language, or that he once interviewed General De Gaulle doesn't impress me at all. And as far as journalism being the Fourth Estate, an altogether noble calling, I would be much more tempted to subscribe to all of that if someone other than newsmen thought so.

So it was proper, it seems to me, that all of us should have noted Mr. Agnew's criticism and applied it to whatever degree was justified. In my opinion, it had enough merit that it simply couldn't be rejected out of hand, and I don't think it has been rejected out of hand. It has been there bedeviling us and annoying us since it was delivered.

A press that dutifully believes that it is privileged and dutybound to criticize government cannot object too strongly when government decides to respond in kind.

But since Mr. Agnew's critique some disquieting developments suggest that the government was rather eager to go beyond the healthy exchange of criticism and started tampering and fumbling with the First Amendment. And now we have offered to the Congress several propositions on how to restrain these dangerous newsmen, and we have the courts on the new tack of throwing these reporters in jail because they refuse to reveal their sources of information.

I believe there is a dilemma concerning the problem of jailing reporters for failure to reveal sources. I certainly would subscribe heartily to the notion that the reporter is not a privileged person. He is no better than anyone else. But the flow of free and unrestricted information is highly privileged and is, indeed, sacred.

If government is all that eager to apprehend the wrongdoer, the crook and the cheat—and it says that is what this exercise is all about—then it doesn't occur to you that government has powers far beyond the humble powers of any poor benighted reporter. Government has the power of subpoena, investigation-making policies, search and seizure, inquiry, wiretapping and eavesdropping—my God, does it have that! The grand jury can examine income-tax returns and, in some cases, other private documents. So my reaction to all this is to let government do its own sleuthing and policing. Newsmen have no desire to work for the government and should not be required to do so. They should not even be asked to do so.

If it comes down to Congress passing a shield law for newsmen and reporters, I must say I have rather mixed emotions about that. I would rather rely on the court's interpretation of the fine old First Amendment, which has done us very well over these past 200 years. But if it becomes necessary and if exceptions to the First Amendment are about to be made by the courts, then I would say yes—I suppose we must be provided with a shield. This disturbs me. But if a shield is to be provided by the Congress, it had better be one with no exceptions. It had better be a blanket one, because the minute you start making exceptions to a proposed shield law, the Congress always can provide more exceptions in future years. Furthermore, what Congress gives us today it can very well repeal next year.

There is in the American press one other general characteristic that remains somewhat inexplicable to me. In
all sincerity, I believe there exists in our journalism today a fundamental antipathy toward business and industry. I think business and industry—more than any other sector of our society—find it difficult to get their stories told accurately and fairly. Labor does fairly well in getting its point across to the public. Government, for all that it is frequently criticized in our press, certainly has no trouble getting its share of space and time and telling its story. Education, religion, the arts, the professions all seem to do comparatively well in this respect. But too frequently the American businessman, in my opinion, is justifiably appalled at how his story appears in the newspaper or on television or radio.

Why should this be so? Well, once in a while the American businessman chooses to speak to the public through his public-relations counsel. Business would be well advised, particularly in critical situations, to speak to the American press more directly. There exists among journalists a traditional and, I believe, healthy and certainly cultivated antipathy toward the professional hired spokesman.

There may be another reason. We have seen it happen time and again in situations involving an industry. Labor comes into the meeting or final confrontation or conference well prepared, well rehearsed, with one voice. Government is equally well prepared, speaking with one voice. But repeatedly, business and industry, revealing no exchange of information or ideas beforehand, will speak with as many different voices as they have representatives at the meeting. This is not too difficult to figure out. Naturally, the Justice Department is there, and the charges of collusion are there, and the Sherman Antitrust Act is there. So business and industry are very careful and sensitive about phoning each other or meeting in advance to decide what they will say or what their case will be or what their policy will be as they go into a meeting of this kind.

There is one other possible explanation. The press—radio, television and print—does not hire enough reporters with training or background in economics. Everyone wants to be a political reporter. Every cub reporter wants to be a Walter Lippmann within six months. And there is no way. Some of these fellows should be put on the economic beat, the business, industrial or corporate beat, the police beat. Or they should cover education or medicine and science or whatever. But it is the political area that is the great zenith of every young reporter. And there is just not that much room for them.

a romantic mythology

Also, there floats around too many editorial rooms a romantic mythology about the virtue of brotherhood in the American labor movement. Nonsense.

I have seen old hard-bitten, cynical reporters, particularly in New York, grow positively lachrymose, with the aid of a couple belts of Scotch, about the poor benighted, beaten-up guys on the picket line. There is a tendency constantly to equate George Meany with Samuel Gompers.

Finally, I suspect that once in a while an American businessman does himself—and all of us—great damage by marshaling an argument in something less than a rational or convincing way. Once in a while, we hear an old troglodyte in American business or industry asserting that the sole reason of American business or industry is to turn a profit. Well, he should be read out of the society, because it is erroneous from the start and it is dangerous. He might be reminded that the free-enterprise, capitalist or profit system is not part of the Constitution. And even if it were, it could be amended or discarded. We might remember that it is a privilege to do business in this country. It is a franchise, and the American people are going to award that franchise or privilege to the system or the practice that best serves their needs and their desires and their wants. Thus far, our profit system has been rather well accepted, and its performance without doubt has been the best on this planet. But it has worked not because profit was the sole objective but because profit always has been a kind of incentive plan or fringe benefit, a bonus, a windfall, if you please.

The businessman who will stand up and say that profit is the sole payment for what he does, and who practices it, is creating whole battalions of Ralph Naders and is getting the entire American economic situation into serious trouble. Consumerism can destroy business in this country unless we realize that satisfaction of the consumer, and not profit, is the sole purpose and function of business. The consumer does not begrudge a business profit if the performance is satisfactory. This means we must stop regarding marketing as a way of looking at the world from a seller's point of view. The consumers who look at the world from a buyer's point of view have the businessmen outnumbered in this country several hundred to one. Furthermore, the businessman or industrialist who declares that profit is all there is, is indeed asking for a very bad press.

I have come to some tentative conclusions about journalists, now that I am a safe distance from where the action allegedly occurs—mainly New York City—and after being able to look at the forest instead of the trees. We may be captives of a false orthodoxy. American journalism, I believe, has its roots and its beginning in the classic liberalism of the 18th and 19th Centuries—that kind of liberalism that produced the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the great state papers or doctrines of Abraham Lincoln, and all the rest of our great state papers and institutions. I wonder to what extent we journalists of 1973 may have adopted this new liberalism, or whatever it is, more out of habit than anything else, for we have not yet had time to think through what this new liberalism is today.

In my conversations with men and women of the White House and Congressional leaders and other principals in the government, sooner or later, after much dancing and prancing around, we get down to the final and ultimate question: "Now wouldn't you agree that if I backed you up against the wall and twisted your arm sufficiently,
wouldn’t you agree that most of you guys are Democrats or liberals?” And I think I would have to say, in that situation, “yes.” I would have to guess that most of my colleagues in this trade are liberals and that most of them vote the Democratic ticket.

Why should this be so? It is just a guess of mine that we have been voting for liberal or Democratic candidates out of blind faith because that is what the doctrine and the doctrinaires tell us liberalism is all about. In my opinion, liberalism—as we use the term today and as the profession or the orthodoxy is being pursued and practiced in this country—has no particular relationship with the classic liberalism of the 18th and 19th Centuries.

It would be my guess again that the majority of journalists in this country today accept, rather on blind faith, the Keynesian theory of economics. They accept without too many questions the practice and the theory of big government, of centralized government. They accept without too many questions the practice and presence of big and rather uncontrolled labor. They accept without too many questions the whole philosophy of a little bit of anti-business attitude, a little bit of suspicion or hostility toward the profit system and a very healthy contempt for state and local government. All accept it as a bit of the articles of faith of what is called the new liberalism.

I would recommend to all journalists of 1973 that if we could ever get a week off—if we could ever get away from our eternal, everlasting deadlines—it might do us all good to come out here in an area of quiet and serenity and do some thinking about what is going on in our trade and in our lovely, beautiful and highly important profession.

**new ideas needed**

Our press begs for improvement, for some rethinking, new ideas and new practices. But politicians and government are not the people or the institution to do the improving, and I will fight those people to the bitter end. Whatever improving and whatever change comes about must come from readers and listeners and journalists. Critics, yes. That is very healthy. But let us go very cautiously about reinterpreting and rewriting the First and Fourth Amendments of the Constitution.

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**Two Gentlepersons of Verona**

**By Merrel Clubb***

The women's lib movement has, of course, given birth to many worthwhile improvements, but it has also spawned at least one linguistic monstrosity. One can, with some ease, accept the new form Ms as filling an empty slot in our language; but, is chairperson, or even chairwoman, really necessary? Chairperson is fast infiltrating our newspapers, magazines, and even the publications of at least one of our most august scholarly institutions, The Modern Language Association of America. If we go the route of chairperson, we may as well start talking about clergyperson, churchperson, countyperson, journeyperson, kinperson, longshoreperson, foreperson, postperson, brakeperson, milkperson, Redperson, Pekingperson, innerperson, person o f the world, person in the street, person of God, person of straw, person of war, person o'war bird. We may even talk about personing the ship and personing the production lines. And finally, Persons' Room. Now surely, we would want to be able to tell what is behind the door labeled "Persons' Room," wouldn't we? So, we will have to start talking about Persons' Room in contrast to Wopersons' Room. This will lead to flagperson and flagwoperson, policeperson and policewoperson, salesperson and saleswoperson, personish and wopersonish, person of the house and woperson of the house, and—chairperson and chairwoperson. Most surely, wopersons—or fepersons—would wish to distinguish woperson power from person power, woperson infrage from person suffrage, and most of all, wopersons' lib from persons' lib!

The insistence on such forms as chairperson, cochairperson, and chairpersonship only goes to show how uninformed avid wopersons and their campfollowers can be. What does the form man mean in its various contexts? The modern man comes from Old English man (in various spellings, as early as 971 A.D.). The meaning of Old English man, along with its cognates in all the Germanic languages, was two-fold: (1) "an adult male human being" and (2) "a human being of either sex." Moreover, the more common meaning of man in Old English was the latter—"human being or person" without reference to age or sex, and the distinctive sex terms were wer, "man, adult male," and wif, "woman, adult female." The forerunner of modern woman, Old English wifman, meant literally "female human being" or "female person." The dual meaning of man has continued in English down to the present day, although the meaning "human being" has become somewhat more constricted in that it occurs now only in general or indefinite applications. In many words such as swordman, penman, policeman, chairman, etc., the unstressed form man is no longer even a word, but, in effect, a derivational suffix with meanings of, roughly, "one who is skilled in the use of something" (a sword, a pen) or "one who is connected with some act" (policing, chairing). In short, why bring in a relative johnny-come-lately person (originally from Old French) to replace a perfectly good English form man? Do we really want to talk about Shakespeare's Two Gentlepersons of Verona, Pope's An Essay on Person, Shaw's Person and Superperson, O'Neill's The Icyperson Cometh? Must we open Milton's Paradise Lost and read: "Of Person's First Disobedience, and the Fruit/Of that Forbidden tree. . . ."?

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Montana Journalism Review
Montana’s Media: Areas for Improvement

By JERRY HOLLORON

Mr. Holloron, who served as a visiting lecturer at the Montana School of Journalism in 1972-73 and 1973-74, presented these comments at the first annual statewide conference of the Montana Committee for the Humanities in December, 1972, in Helena. He has worked as a reporter and city editor for dailies in Montana and Wisconsin and for three years was chief of the Lee Newspapers State Bureau in Helena. He subsequently served as assistant director of the Montana Constitutional Convention Commission, and at present he is research director of the Montana Legislative Council. Mr. Holloron earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in journalism at the University of Montana.

I am reminded at the outset of the unfavorable and largely inaccurate images of the journalist and the college professor—or “academic humanist” as the Committee for the Humanities would have it.

The professor is pictured as a fuzzy-minded theorist, the possessor of “book learning” who never could make it if he had to meet a payroll. He has grass growing out of his ears—the type of grass depending on his age and lifestyle.

The journalist often is portrayed as the ultimate Philistine—the unknowledgeable simplifier for the great unwashed. The reporter, the image has it, has his degree in sensationalism: He is forever looking for the scoop and the hot story at the expense of serious, thoughtful and significant news.

Combining those two images, I find myself, as a reporter temporarily turned professor, in serious trouble. By those images, I suppose I am a fuzzy-minded Ivory Tower Philistine.

Speaking as an Ivory Tower Philistine, I must admit that sitting through some of the proceedings of this conference has been like dog-paddling through a pond of warm mush. There is something really frustrating about discussing the humanistic qualities, the historical values and philosophical, sociological and economic features of a topic like strip-mining. While we sit in this nice warm room wringing our hands and being fashionably liberal, those huge machines are tearing the coal out of eastern Montana. I wonder if we’re not participating here in a sort of academic cop-out.

Now that I’ve sealed my doom with the academic community, let me do the same with the press.

We could spend all day discussing political power and the Montana media in the past tense. That is tempting for a couple of reasons: The main one is that the Montana media—particularly the major newspapers—are so much better today than they were 15 years ago. Lest we forget: The Anaconda Company owned four of the five major Montana newspapers until 1959 and all the news that fit was printed—that is, all the news that fit the Company’s narrow colonialism.

Those were bleak days for Montana journalism and for Montana, period. The Company papers practiced “Afghanistanism”—they reported the Afghanistan news while overlooking the crucial, controversial Montana news, the Butte news, the Billings news, the Helena news and so on. You see, there were no Anaconda copper mines in Afghanistan. Anaconda was not surrogate king of Afghanistan, but it was surrogate governor of Montana.
As I said, the major Montana newspapers have changed dramatically. The four Company papers—those in Butte, Helena, Missoula and Billings—now are owned by the Lee Newspaper chain and they, with the Cowles-owned Great Falls Tribune, increasingly are reporting the real news in Montana. In particular, their state-government reporters are providing hard-hitting coverage of politics and the state bureaucracy. And on the local level, the major newspapers are slaughtering some sacred cows.

But I sense a tendency within the Montana newspapers—particularly at the business-management level—toward a sort of self-satisfied righteousness. In some instances, I fear that the fact that the Montana press is a lot better than it used to be is being used as an excuse for the fact that the Montana press is not nearly as good as it could or should be.

So today, instead of dwelling on the accomplishments of the press, let me mention some areas that trouble me concerning the future of the media and their relation to political power. In other words, to quote our new philosopher-king, "Let's work together for a better tomorrow."

Let me outline five areas that concern me in the relationship of the Montana media to political power.

The first is the concentration of ownership of the Montana media. Nationally, chain newspapers hold 60 percent of the daily newspaper circulation—and that figure is increasing rapidly. In Montana, chain ownership among the 13 dailies is even more extensive: The percentage of daily circulation held by chain newspapers is more than 95 percent. Lee newspapers exist in four cities; the Cowles chain owns the Great Falls Tribune; the Scripps League owns the dailies in Bozeman and Havre; and the Scripps-connected Hagadone Group owns the Kalispell daily. Dailies in Livingston and Miles City have common owners.

The situation is no better for Montana's 12 television stations. Western Broadcasting Co. owns stations in Kalispell and Missoula and a satellite station in Butte; the Montana Television Network owns stations in Butte, Billings and Great Falls and a satellite in Missoula; Harriscope owns stations in Billings and Great Falls.

In addition, virtually all television cable service in Montana's major population centers is owned by Teleprompter—the largest TV cable company in the nation—or by Community Telecommunications, Inc.

The ownership of Montana's 50 commercial radio stations is more diversified, but there still are numerous examples of multi-station or multi-media ownership.

Such group ownership of the media is a mixed curse. We are told that the economics of the news media—at least of newspaper publishing—are such that chain ownership allows expenditures for news coverage that otherwise would be impossible. A chain newspaper, so the theory goes, also has greater financial resources with which to weather periods of local financial distress or periods during which local advertisers try to influence news coverage by withholding their business.

But I think we must fear this statewide trend toward group ownership of the media because of the potential it opens for group control of the media's considerable political power. At its worst, chain ownership of the Montana media could mean chain control of news and editorial policy. In short, it could mean a return to Anaconda Company journalism.

I am not saying that is what is happening in Montana today. In five years of working for the Lee chain, I was not asked once to compromise legitimate news in the interest of chain policy. Nor am I aware of substantiated evidence that other media chains in the state are requiring such compromises.

But such things do happen. One only has to look at some of the shoddy chain newspapers around this country as evidence. All I am saying is this: Let us be aware of the dangers in chain ownership so we can guard against them.

**media accountability**

That brings me to my second concern: What means are there to check the possible abuses of the media's political power? In other words, how can we make the media more accountable? How can we assure accurate and thorough news coverage?

Certainly the best means would be independent radio and television stations and newspapers competing with each other—competing in terms of accurate, gutsy and solid reporting, serving as a check on the inaccuracies and occasional corruption of each other.

Such competition still takes place to a certain extent. For example, the Great Falls Tribune and the Lee newspapers have a healthy competition in state-level coverage. But most Montanans live in one-newspaper towns, and radio and television in this state—with few exceptions—are not providing in-depth coverage of controversial state and local issues. (One exception, increasingly, is the Montana Television Network.)

Perhaps the following are ways in which potential media abuses could be checked:

—Relatively small papers, like the old People's Voice and the new Borrowed Times, can criticize their fatter step-sisters in the media. And I don't mean to suggest by my examples that all criticism should come only from the political left. Forthright conservative criticism is needed just as badly.

—Devices such as advisory councils, made up of local residents, or critical media reviews in which journalists publicly criticize their own newspapers and radio and television stations should be considered in Montana.

—The media should open their pages and air time to their critics. I do not buy the theory that admitting mistakes or recognizing differences in interpretation destroys the credibility of a newspaper or of a reporter—unless that newspaper or reporter is so bad that neither has credibility.

What I basically am saying is this: The Montana media are no more and no less than the media nationwide, must themselves become more critical of their performance. The result will be better news coverage. And the alternative—
judging from some recent court decisions and administrative actions in Washington, D.C.—could well be increased government control at the expense of the First Amendment.

But such government control would be the worst of all possible worlds. The thought of Richard Nixon or Lyndon Johnson being the final judge of what the press says about his administration should be enough to prove my point.

The first two concerns I have mentioned—media ownership and media abuses—deal with newspapers and radio and television as the possessor of political power. Now let’s look at the related question: How well are the Montana media fulfilling their role as a check or as a watchdog on the other wielders of political power?

That brings me—numerically if not gracefully—to my third and fourth concerns. How well does the Montana press check the political power of big government and of major economic interests such as utilities and mining companies? Put another way, does the Montana press adequately present the views of less politically potent groups, such as the poor, the Indians and the average citizen—wherever and wherever he may be?

What we’re really talking about is the media’s obligation to make sure that those who are “fat” politically don’t overrun those who are politically “skinny.” Because of their substantial financial resources, the Montana “fats”—the utilities, the big corporations, big government and, increasingly, big labor—have a built-in advantage in telling their story through the media. They often have staffs trained in dealing with the press—in telling the corporate story. They can—and they do—buy advertising to influence public opinion.

They possess another sizable advantage: They have the political know-how to get what they want. Most of the Montana political system—its laws, its increasingly complex bureaucratic maze—was engineered by and for the benefit of the Montana “fats.”

One theory of journalism says the press’ obligation is simply to act as a mirror to society—simply to report, without analysis, what is said and what is done. But in practice, this theory often results in tipping the political scales even more toward the “fats” and away from the “skinny.” In its overwhelming desire not to become committed, this journalistic theory results in overwhelming commitment—commitment to the status-quo power structure.

I think the press should be committed—committed to challenging the abuses of the “fats”—the wielders of political power. I don’t mean that this commitment should result in reporters playing loose with the facts and not telling all sides of the story. But I do mean that the media must look critically at all enclaves of political power, whether they are created through election or economic holdings.

Conversely, I mean that the media must make a greater attempt to report the legitimate complaints of the “skinny’s” in Montana society. I don’t think that we—and I include myself—have done an adequate job of discussing the real problems facing Montana Indians, the Montana consumer, the Montana poor, the Montana resident who watches with impotence as his environment is polluted or stripped away.

Certainly the media—or at least the major newspapers—are doing an increasingly better job in presenting the problems of the “skinny’s” and checking the abuses of the “fats.” But we shouldn’t be satisfied with the progress we’ve made.

**Washington coverage weak**

Now, my final point—a specific criticism of the Montana media in relation to political power. I think we are failing terribly in our role as a watchdog of the state’s congressional delegation and in reporting Washington news of interest to Montanans.

To a large extent, the Montana voter knows about his senators and congressmen only what those men want him to know. No Montana newspaper, radio station or television station has a special correspondent in Washington, D.C. I know that such things cost money. But I thought that chain ownership of the media was supposed to make such expenditures possible. I am reminded of the following comment from A. J. Liebling:

The function of the press in society is to inform, but its role is to make money. The monopoly publisher’s reaction, on being told that he ought to spend money on reporting distant events, is therefore exactly that of the proprietor of a large, fat cow, who is told that he ought to enter her in a horse race.

That may be unfair criticism of the owners of the Montana media. If it is, let them prove it by entering their fat cows in the Washington, D.C., horse race.

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If H. W. Fowler, whose *Modern English Usage* is the most dazzling record of a temper tantrum ever written, were alive today, he would die.

—Jean Stafford in Saturday Review World

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Montana Journalism Review
Formula News Writing

By DON BLOOM

Mr. Bloom, a 1973 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, is assistant sports editor of the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian. He has worked as a copy editor for the Oakland (Calif.) Tribune, as a reporter and public-relations writer for the Army and as an advertising copywriter for Spiegel, Inc. He currently also is a graduate student in English at the University of Montana.

One hazard in reading a daily newspaper is getting a sense of déjà vu—a feeling that you already have read the same article, same page, even the same day’s news. Unfortunately, this sensation is not so much eerie and exciting as merely boring. It is a sad fact that countless news stories do sound exactly alike, put together like form letters with names, dates and places filling the blanks. There are, of course, certain family resemblances among the various political upheavals, disasters, wars, exposés and so on that make up the stuff of news. To the average American, peering blearily at his morning paper, a coup d'etat in Paraguay may seem like a coup d'etat in Panama or South Korea or South Yemen. He probably doesn’t much care if there are differences or if the reporter points out the differences.

Other events are much closer to home, however. Some things directly affect the reader and can be important to his work, his home life, his children. Yet the news stories about those events also tend to have a great sameness. Is it really necessary to stamp out such stories like so many plastic toys?

Take labor problems, for example. They have been around for more than 100 years. Reporters, being generally well-educated people (whether formally or informally), should know that labor problems do not exist as isolated events like traffic accidents but as complexes of egos, emotions, vices, needs and memories that are partly the result of current conditions and partly of historical events. Each strike, threatened strike, organizing confrontation or whatever is different from previous ones—even from previous ones involving the same organizations and personalities.

Nevertheless, there seem to be only a few basic labor stories—the union demand, the management offer, the charge and countercharge, the government appeal, the strike and the settlement—that are trotted out when the situation demands. We’ve all seen these stories. They are as similar and soporific as those stories about the coups in Paraguay and South Korea (or was it Panama and South Yemen?):

Twenty-five thousand widget workers walked off their jobs yesterday after labor and management negotiators failed to reach agreement on a new contract. . . .

Oswald Inch, president of the AFL-CIO Amalgamated Fuzzmakers Union, opened contract talks with fuzz industry negotiators with demands for a 12-per-cent pay hike—largest in the industry’s history—plus increased fringe benefits. . . .

Harold P. Scrooge, vice president for personnel and chief widget industry negotiator, termed the settlement “grossly inflationary” and said the costs would have to be passed on to the consumer. . . .

Under the new contract, widget workers will get a 13.4-per-cent wage increase over the next two years plus cost-of-living increases of from 2.3 to 6.1 cents an hour. . . .

In an effort to avert a “devastating” nationwide fuzz strike, the President asked Congress yesterday for emergency legislation. . . .

One always suspects that back of such stories is careless, hurried journalism—that the reporter was given the assignment, got the details of the immediate event, threw in a few superficial statistics and a couple of superfluous quotes, and
sent it out. Of course, under deadline pressure it is sometimes hard to get more, but often the second story—or the third or fourth—is no better. There is beyond the immediate event something happening that is not being reported, and that is the reason why it is happening at all.

Strikes, for example, are emotional events. People enjoy them the way they enjoy wars and football games. They satisfy combative urges, give people a sense of brotherhood and accomplishment and provide an approved outlet for hatred against traditional enemies. One does not have to be a psychologist to be aware of this. Newspaper strikes are no less infected by this fever than are other strikes. People wouldn’t enjoy them so much if they were as boring as they usually are presented.

In addition, all strikes have histories of previous confrontations, strikes, lockouts and sometimes riots. Current labor problems in an industry often are clearly the continuation of problems that have existed for years, sometimes from an era before the participants were born. Industries that today have costly strikes are frequently those that often have had bitter strikes. Industries that forcibly resisted organization now might find themselves in situations where one or both sides still are trying to punish the other by refusing to compromise.

Most importantly, however, current conditions affect the strike. A new leadership might want to demonstrate its strength by a big negotiating victory. A company might want to deal off pay increases for reduced numbers of employees or work-rule changes. A union might want to take advantage of a depressed company or industry to gouge extreme benefits. A company might want to use its depressed condition to gouge money out of the government or take advantage of its workers. A company might find it possible to play one union against another. A union might want to strike because of sheer cussedness.

**explaining the cause**

What must be remembered is that nothing happens without cause. When the cause is obvious, the reporter’s work is easy. Usually the cause is far from apparent and has to be dug for. Frequently, spokesmen on both sides are reluctant to make remarks other than empty charges or glib rejoinders. Nevertheless, their statements must be nailed down with all the side issues, background issues and statistics. If not, newspaper stories may be meaningless, confusing or—worst of all—misleading. For example, a by-lined Associated Press story in early 1973 began:

> An emergency resolution passed by Congress to end the crippling Penn Central railroad strike lacked President Nixon’s signature late Thursday night and the walk-out continued.1

So far, so good. The article said the 28,000 striking conductors and brakemen would stay home until the resolution could be flown to San Clemente for signing and that Congress had acceded “under pressure that the strike threat-ened economic catastrophe in agriculture and massive layoffs in the auto, steel and coal industries.” Not until paragraph six and seven do we learn what the issue is:

> The resolution rescinded, temporarily at least, new work rules promulgated by the bankrupt rail giant to reduce train crews—a disputed move, approved by a federal court, that prompted the strike.

It was exactly what the UTU [United Transportation Union] demanded. The union, during 18 months of fruitless bargaining, had resisted all Penn Central efforts to eliminate 5,700 jobs by 1980—all by attrition—in order to save an estimated $100 million annually from the payroll, now $1 billion.

The story continues with further details of the “threatened economic catastrophe” (repeating the phrase used in paragraph five), which included “massive layoffs” plus food shortages in the northeast. It mentioned that other legal remedied had failed to produce accord. Paragraph 15 finally tells us what happened:

> The strike by 28,000 conductors and brakemen began at 12:01 a.m. Thursday [February 8] as the UTU pulled its men off trains in 16 states and the District of Columbia in a last-ditch bid to stop Penn Central from implementing new court-approved rules that would eliminate 5,700 jobs through attrition.

Paragraph 17 concludes the article by explaining:

> The crew cutback—from three to two on most freightsis a vital element in the bankrupt railroad’s struggle to wipe out operating losses reportedly running at $600,000 a day.

In addition to the repetition of certain words and phrases, the obvious anti-union bias of the reporter and the sections that sound as if they had been cribbed from a management press release, there are some serious defects in this story. For example, there is a strong implication that the union is deliberately trying to sabotage the railroad’s self-improvement efforts. Why, then, didn’t the reporter ask a union leader if that were the case and why the union was so determined to prevent the new rules from coming into effect? If he had a good reason, that is important news. If he had no reason, that is equally important. Even if he had a reason that some would find adequate and others not (most likely the case), that still would give the reader some idea of why it was happening.

If we pursue speculation on the work-rules issue, even more questions arise. How are other railroads dealing with this problem? Have they been able to cut back train crews? Or can they make profits with three-man crews? Is this an example of featherbedding? What have the unions said in the past to justify this? What do they say now? Is it customary for federal judges to decide work rules? Did the union and railroad agree to submit the issue to a particular judge for arbitration or did the railroad seek some notoriously anti-labor judge to hear the case?

Furthermore, anyone who has read the papers regularly during the past 20 years or so should have two things come to mind as soon as he hears about a labor dispute at the Penn Central: Featherbedding unions and incompetent,
perhaps corrupt, management. Those ideas may be entirely legendary, but even as legends they have force. A confrontation between the two could provide an opportunity to determine to some extent the truth or falsehood of one or both. Is the union taking advantage of the weakened position of Penn Central to gouge benefits it couldn't get from a healthier road? What's wrong with phasing out jobs by attrition? Doesn't it just cut the total dues collected by the union leadership? Or, how could a railroad that dominates the richest industrial region in the country (possibly in the world) be bankrupt? Has it been looted? Is the management trying to cover its crimes (or those of its predecessors) by provoking the union into a strike so it can blame the union for its problems?

the statistics don't really help

The statistics, cited in the article to support the management position, don't really help us sort this out. According to them, the railroad is now losing more than $200 million a year. By 1980 it plans to save $100 million a year by its phase-out program or an average of $50 million a year for seven years. Unfortunately, it apparently still will be losing an average of $150 million a year in the same period and will be in debt by more than $1 billion after seven years. The statistics either contradict the point they were supposed to make or, more likely, are meaningless.

Hoping to get answers or clarification in the follow-up story was futile. The next day told of the signing of the special legislation and reiterated much of the material. Moreover, this story is not a botched job or a blown assignment. A similar issue came up three years earlier and got similar coverage:

Wage negotiations for some 48,000 railroad shop craft workers broke off Thursday night and a union leader said there could be a strike like "a shot out of the dark" at any time, triggering a nationwide shutdown.8

The 1970 story identified the chief negotiator for the four unions involved as William W. Winpisinger, attributed to him a statement that the unions did not intend to strike all railroads at once but said the rail industry was threatening to shut down all roads if one were struck. The unions involved were identified as the machinists, electricians, boilermakers and sheetmetal workers. Finally, in paragraph six, so was the issue:

The unions rejected last month a wage settlement that would have been the largest in their histories because the sheetmetal workers refuse to accept new rules allowing other workers to cross their jurisdictional lines to perform some work.8

The story added some trivial statements by Winpisinger and a government spokesman and concluded with a breakdown of the wage offer: Pay to be raised from $3.60 to $4—retroactive for 1969—going to $4.28 in August, 1970.

Since the problem is clearly not with wages but with rules, the obvious next step would be to determine the rules problem. What is the point of having such rules? Why does the union want them the way they are? Why does management want them changed? Are they worth striking for? Are they worth a nationwide lockout? So we look expectantly at the next day's story and find this:

Secretary of Labor George P. Shultz appealed to railroad union and industry leaders to delay threat of a nationwide rail shutdown but a union official said, "As of now, no."

"It's our move and the only one left is to contemplate strike action," William W. Winpisinger, of the AFL-CIO International Association of Machinists, said.

"I could change my mind in an hour," he added.

Chief industry negotiator James P. Hiltz said, "If any of the four shopcraft unions should strike any one or combination of railroads—after they have rejected what their own leaders called a 'generous' settlement—we will be forced to discontinue rail service throughout the country."

There were hints of a strike against one or more railroads over the weekend and Winpisinger said, "It could come like a shot out of the dark."

Shultz asked both sides for a seven day no-strike, no-lockout pledge and to resume efforts to settle the dispute over wages and working conditions. He said the nation could not stand for a nationwide rail shutdown.

"If there is a shutdown it will be their responsibility," Winpisinger said of the industry's lockout threat in the dispute which involves 45,000 shopcraft workers.

Aside from the clumsiness of style, the article falls down on factual matters. The issue is not wages or even working conditions—it is work rules. It may be that some people think strikes are always over pay and this reporter is one of them. In fact, many strikes in recent years have been over matters other than pay: Conductors and brakemen over train-crew size; shopworkers over jurisdictional lines; teachers over class sizes; air-traffic controllers over work loads; autoworkers over earlier retirement (among other things).

Furthermore, the quotes tend to be dull, meaningless and irrelevant to basic issues. The reporter has talked to (or heard statements by) representatives of all three sides, but we still don't know what these work rules are and why they're causing so much trouble. Granted that no news is sometimes news, especially in labor-dispute stories, there is still a distressing absence of meat here. It is simply a government-spokesman-said-union-spokesman-said-management-spokesman-said formula story in which nobody said anything at all. The following day more developments occurred and a third story was filed:

A federal judge Saturday halted for 10 days a threatened nationwide railroad shutdown and the strike that prompted it after a railroad attorney told him President Nixon would seek special legislation Monday.

But the White House—in a statement by Secretary of Labor George Shultz—denied that the administration told railroad attorney Francis N. Shea that it would seek laws to halt the lockout and strike.

The article reports at some length the legal tangles involved, the possibility of special legislation as a last resort,
the general agreement as to the bankruptcy of the Railway Labor Act (though this act is not described) and the fact that, according to the judge, both the strike and the lockout could well be illegal. In covering a lot of confusing court action—the immediate event—the reporter here has done a far better job than before, but there remains the question one has to ask: Why didn’t he do that kind of work on the underlying issues? The answer is lost in obscurity. Somebody was doing some leg work because the next day (February 2) in yet another story, we get some news in paragraph 16 about the proposed rule-change:

... The change would have permitted members of unions to cross each other’s jurisdictional lines to do a limited amount of work in small shops. Sheet metal workers, smallest of the four unions, rejected the earlier proposal out of fear that members might lose jobs. The unions have agreed that all must accept the contract or none would.

Here at last is the nail in our for-want-of-a-nail story. The unions had agreed in advance (this all started more than a year earlier) to negotiate together, any one union having a veto power over the contract. Management negotiators were willing to give up apparently large pay increases for this work-rule change “in small shops.” Justifiably or not, one union regarded this as a threat to its members’ jobs and rejected it. Management refused to back down on the rules change. So did the unions. When a few thousand shop-craft workers struck Union Pacific, the railroads closed across the country (until restrained by the judge’s order), putting more than 500,000 employes out of work and disrupting the economy.

Why is this going on? Isn’t it totally absurd? Can’t someone go to Winpisinger and Hiltz and ask if they don’t think it’s idiotic to wreck the nation’s economy over such a tiny issue? Why is it so important to change that rule or not change it? How much money could the railroads save by it? Would they be putting sheet-metal workers out of work? Why did the unions commit themselves to such a position? Why do the sheet-metal workers fear the change when others don’t? Will it make much difference if it is applied only to small shops or are they afraid it will be extended gradually to large shops? Aren’t the unions with their complicated jurisdictional lines forcing the railroads to employ far more shop-craft workers than they need? Isn’t this just more featherbedding?

extra effort needed

Not just the AP is at fault here. The Missoulian, from which those examples were culled, made no effort to dig into the basis of the strike. Missoula residents receive large amounts of income directly from the Burlington Northern and Milwaukee Road operations, and other major local industries, especially lumbering and cattle ranching, would be hard hit by a strike. It would have been easy for a reporter to walk the two blocks from the newspaper office to the BN machine shops and ask a shop-craft worker to explain the rules problem. Who knows, maybe the AP would have picked it up.

That particular dispute did not end until April, 1970, when Congress responded to a presidential request for a law that would require the workers to agree to the contract offered by management and accepted by three of the four unions. At that time, according to an AP story, some union leader told a congressional committee that the new rules would eliminate distinctions on incidental work, thereby undercutting membership in the smallest union. That’s all we ever were told about it.

Not all strikes are like those, of course. Railroads from any angle are especially confusing and frustrating. Nevertheless, reporters tend to get by with formula stories in most labor disputes. The first story on the 1970 contract dispute between the United Auto Workers and the Big Three manufacturers (General Motors, Ford and Chrysler) ran as follows:

The United Auto Workers, opening contract bargaining with General Motors on Wednesday, said unlimited cost of living allowance for UAW members would be a top demand at GM and other Big Three automakers.

Leonard Woodcock, UAW president, said wage hikes based on increases in the cost of living would have the effect of "braking" the constant escalation of standard wage rates.

General Motors called on the union to get down to serious bargaining right away and the UAW replied it was agreeable to a speeded up timetable to negotiating sessions.

The UAW opens bargaining at Ford Thursday and at Chrysler Friday. The current three-year contract covering about 730,000 workers at Big Three automakers expires at midnight Sept. 14.

In addition to a return to unlimited cost-of-living allowances in effect from 1948-67, the UAW demands include substantial wage increases, early retirement with $500 per month pension after 30 years of service and additional money for Supplementary Unemployment Benefits (SUB) funds.

Woodcock did not put a price on UAW demands in his hour and fifteen minute session with the GM bargaining team led by Earl Bramblett, vice-president for personnel.

The union has said, however, it expects to get more than the 15 per cent pay hike it gave its own staff workers over a two-year period.

The Big Three estimate they spend about $4.02 in wages and $1.75 in fringe benefits per hour on the average autoworker. A 15 per cent increase over $5.77 would cost the Big Three about $1.26 billion.

After meeting with Bramblett, Woodcock said, "We agreed the settlement should be non-inflationary."

The union president, who took over May 22 replacing the late Walter Reuther, said military spending and the Vietnam war were the prime causes of inflation, "not relations between the UAW and GM."

Woodcock said no dollar or percentage figures were discussed with GM officials but he said several high wage settlements in the construction trades industry were brought to the attention of Bramblett.

This is fine as far as it goes, covering the immediate event.

and offering some background. On each of the next two days, very similar stories discussed the presentation of the identical contract demand to Ford and Chrysler but offered no new information. Aside from a July 20 business-page story keyed to auto-industry problems generally, the issue did not become prominent again until September 3 when matters began to heat up:

The United Auto Workers, after rejecting new contract offers from Big Three automakers, Wednesday named General Motors and Chrysler as twin targeted firms—one or both of which would be struck if agreement is not reached by Sept. 14.

UAW President Leonard Woodcock said the union had decided to exempt Ford Motor Co. from a strike threat because "we want to have at least one firm producing minicars to meet competition from imports." The article explains that there were doubts that both companies would be struck or that the strike would include parts plants. However, not until paragraph eight do we learn what was offered:

The Big Three, who employ about 730,000 autoworkers in the U.S. and Canada, said their offers would raise wages alone by 7.5 per cent in the first year and by 3 per cent in each of the last two years of the three year contract. They said it would cost them $2.3 billion over three years.

Those figures are not very clear, but they do seem to indicate that the companies are offering a non-inflationary 4.5-per-cent increase each year. A cost-of-living allowance is not mentioned. Could it be that the workers would be relatively poorer than they are now at the end of the three years if they accepted this offer? It seems possible.

Secondly, what does management's estimated total cost of the increased pay over three years have to do with anything? Granted it is an eye-gripping figure, but what does it mean? That much money seems like a good deal less on the surface it seems an equitable solution to an old, tough problem. People always want as much as last year, plus a little more to compensate for inflation, plus a little more than that. The problem with flat raises is the difficulty of telling how much is just to compensate for the increased cost of living and how much is the worker's share of the economic boom. One would think that direct correlation of pay to the cost of living through unlimited cost-of-living allowances would dispense with the first problem. Why is management so resistant to the idea? Aren't limitations likely to negate the effect? How much would living costs have to go up for the 28-cent maximum to be less than the unlimited amount? Is that likely to happen? Is it, perhaps, already happening?

Paragraph 10 enlightens us on another aspect of the offer: "GM's offer would reduce the $500 monthly pension payments for 30-year workers under age 58 by $40 for each year. For example, a GM spokesman said, if a man started with GM at age 18 and chose to retire at age 48, his pension would be $100."

Better, but it would still be nice to know how this cost-of-living-allowance escalator—as it's called—works. On the surface it seems an equitable solution to an old, tough problem. People always want as much as last year, plus a little more to compensate for inflation, plus a little more than that. The problem with flat raises is the difficulty of telling how much is just to compensate for the increased cost of living and how much is the worker's share of the economic boom. One would think that direct correlation of pay to the cost of living through unlimited cost-of-living allowances would dispense with the first problem. Why is management so resistant to the idea? Aren't limitations likely to negate the effect? How much would living costs have to go up for the 28-cent maximum to be less than the unlimited amount? Is that likely to happen? Is it, perhaps, already happening?
The account leaves out a good part of what is vitally important to this strike story.

each stage. In either case, the total wage increase for three years would be right at the 5.5-per-cent guideline. This means that if wages from the last contract had not kept pace with the inflation rate (which the union later claims), then the autoworkers still would be the same distance behind at the end of this contract—if the cost of living rose no faster than 5.5 per cent.

On the next day, September 13, we get further developments:

The United Auto Workers said Saturday they were lowering first year demands in contract bargaining with the auto industry, but the union president is "not at all hopeful" for a settlement before the midnight Monday strike deadline.39

The story then covers a good deal of ground previously covered. Not until the 14th, 15th and 16th paragraphs do we get factual information of any significance:

GM has 119 plants in 18 states and 69 cities and total U.S. employment of 442,000, including 32,000 members of the International Union of Electrical Workers.

In addition, GM has 59,000 suppliers with whom it spent $61.5 billion for goods and services last year. A GM strike likely would not shut down all its suppliers, but if it did and each supplier employed only 100 people, that would add 3.9 million to the unemployment lists.

GM, which normally builds more than half the nation’s cars, consumes more than 10 per cent of America’s total steel production and is a major consumer of aluminum, plastics and lead.

This is more like it. The statistics try to give an idea of the impact even a short strike at GM would have on the economy. It is more than probable that the messed-up statistics (59,000 times 100 not equalling 3.9 million and $61.5 billion in purchases being unlikely in a company that had total sales of $24.3 billion and profits of $1.7 billion) were the fault of the local paper. The middle paragraph is a little too "iffy," including both an invented average employment and an admittedly unlikely eventuality, but it is an attempt.

facts omitted

Similarly, there is nothing wrong with the lead September 14:

The United Auto Workers announced it would strike General Motors Corp. at midnight Monday unless a new three-year contract was negotiated by then.11

Unfortunately, the story leaves out a good part of what is vitally important to this (or any other) strike story: Why it is happening. This is not really explained until paragraphs 9, 10 and 11. After describing the proposed pay increase of 38 cents an hour, paragraph 9 says, "The union cut its first-year demand from 96 cents an hour to 61.5 cents an hour. The union calculates this as an 8-per-cent pay increase of 30.5 cents an hour plus the money due workers for inflation catch-up." Ah-hah. Here seems to be the union's justification for its much larger, seemingly inflationary demand. It believes it has lost ground to inflation and is figuring its percentage pay increase on what it thinks wages ought to be (current pay plus catch-up), rather than what they are. Is there some relation here to the limited cost-of-living allowance agreed to after the strike against Ford in 1967?

Paragraph 10 goes into this somewhat, but not clearly enough. After mentioning the deadlock over an unlimited versus a 28-cents-an-hour maximum cost-of-living allowance, the story says, "In the last three years an unlimited escalator clause, as it is called, would have brought workers 42 cents an hour." As there was a limited escalator in the contract, the reporter probably means "an additional 42 cents." Finally, paragraph 11 restates the early-retirement controversy, adding nothing new.

It would be easy enough to put these difficulties in the lead to give an idea of the problem and how close it may be to settlement. For example:

Disagreement between labor and management over catch-up pay for past inflation and unlimited allowance for future inflation may cause nearly half a million workers to strike General Motors Monday.

Or:

More than 400,000 autoworkers will walk off their jobs at General Motors tonight if a settlement on higher pay, unlimited cost-of-living increases and early retirement is not reached.

Their union, the United Auto Workers, is asking for an average raise of 61.5 cents an hour—half of which, it says, is just to catch up with past inflation—plus an unlimited cost-of-living-allowance escalator, plus retirement after 30 years on the job regardless of age.

So far negotiators for the Big Three automakers have offered . . .

By contrast, coverage of the strike itself showed no grounds for major criticism. Being a definite event, the strike probably fits in better with the AP’s straight news format. On the day of the strike, September 15, the AP lead was:

The United Auto Workers struck auto industry giant General Motors Corp. just after midnight Monday as negotiations for a new three-year contract ground to a halt.12
The next day’s story follows suit:

The United Auto Workers strike against General Motors moved through its first day Tuesday with hopes for a quick settlement dimmed by the announcement that serious bargaining would be put off for at least a week.13

High in the story this time are some statistics. The daily cost of the strike for GM was set at $116 million. The union said its strike fund was being depleted at about $2.5 million a day as it paid striking workers up to $40 weekly.

Those statistics become even more significant when it is realized the strike lasted almost nine weeks. The first break in the deadlock was reported November 12:

The United Auto Workers and General Motors reached a tentative agreement Wednesday on a new three-year contract which could set the strike-crippled giant moving again toward full production by the end of the week.14

The story gave admittedly unofficial details, which the next day showed to be somewhat inaccurate. The next day’s report is clearer:

Representatives of 394,000 striking General Motors workers approved Thursday a new pact which one union executive said would raise wages and fringe benefits $1.80 an hour in three years.15

Included, though buried as usual, are the details: An average first-year pay increase of 51 cents an hour, increasing by 3 per cent in each of the next two years; restoration of an unlimited cost-of-living allowance; retirement at $500 a month after 30 years service at age 58 in the second year of the contract, going to 56 in the third year.

The cost of waiting for such a neat compromise was not mentioned. The 60-day-plus strike would have cost the union about $150 million ($30 million more than was reported in its strike fund). The average worker lost about $100 a week in take-home pay for a total loss to him of nearly $900 and an aggregate loss to the economy of more than $350 million. Finally, the GM loss by its own estimate would be about $7 billion. Although this figure may seem astronomical, it is probably somewhat conservative. Based on GM’s sales and earnings in previous years (and borne out by the record since), the company should have had 1970 sales of $27 to $28 billion and profits of about $1.8 billion. Its actual sales totaled $18.8 billion and earnings only $600 million.16 That is another element that could and should be reported for any strike story.

The pattern is evident. We have seen it applied to labor stories, and it applies to many other kinds of news as well. The reporters involved are good enough to work for a major news organization and good enough to cover immediate events clearly. But they seem unable or unwilling to get behind the immediate events, to get into—except super-

14Ibid., Nov. 12, 1970.
15Ibid., Nov. 13, 1970.

officially—the situation that is causing the event to occur.

The reporters seem to be using a police-beat formula for non-police activities. That is, when you’re covering a traffic accident, you always get the names of the drivers and any dead and injured (who), the type of accident (what), the location (where) and the time (when). You don’t go into why the accident occurred (even if some friendly expert—such as a policeman—offers an explanation) until somebody is officially charged with wrongdoing.

News media quite rightly stay out of court matters, not only to avoid prejudicing a case or libeling a person but simply in the interests of fairness to those involved. The instances where this rule does not apply should be the exceptions and only those cases where ordinary justice has collapsed or gone awry.

This rule should apply only to court matters—traffic accidents, criminal proceedings and so on—and to no others. Strikes, scandals, political upheavals and other news should be covered with as much depth and as much exposure of root causes as possible. This is not to say that the reporter is supposed to set himself up as judge and jury but more as simultaneously prosecution and defense counsel. A newsman has a definite advantage over an attorney in that his primary loyalty is to the truth, rather than to a client. He can and should cross-examine all witnesses, not just those hostile to his case. Furthermore, while he cannot win, he cannot lose either: He is not committed to any side.

The danger of such an analogy lies in its extension beyond the simple matter of digging out and presenting evidence. Newsman should not be Patients and witnesses and they are not allowed opening statements or closing summations. Such conclusions—editorializing in the news columns—are inappropriate not because of constraints on press freedom but because of credibility. No one expects a lawyer to be fair in a trial; rather, they expect him to be as prejudiced and biased as possible within the ethics of the profession. Advocacy in print makes a journalist as untrustworthy a presenter of evidence as a lawyer in court.

the investigative reporter

Between the two extremes, then, of ignoring the background of an event or of setting yourself up as advocate of one side or the other, lies the realm of the investigative reporter. His role is to find out and tell what’s really going on, a difficult but vital job. For when investigative reporting fails—as it did in the McCarthy era and almost did concerning the Watergate scandal—the results can be disastrous. Sen. Joe McCarthy took advantage of the failure in two ways. By staging events (wild charges against various persons and institutions), he used the formula news-writing tendency to create a Pavlovian stimulus-response effect. The news media became for him a kind of trained-seal act. By his peculiarly effective evasiveness, he was usually able to avoid being nailed down to specific charges and documentation until long after the events he had staged had fallen from public interest.
The answer, then, is in constant questioning, in refusing to accept the immediate event as all there is to a story, in ignoring glib quotes and unsubstantiated claims or figures, in insisting people explain what they mean and the implications of what they say and do, and in verifying everything. That is, of course, the standard method of the investigative reporter. But somewhere it often is forgotten and the writing reverts to a formula. That is unfortunate for it not only wastes a lot of newsprint and ink but also indicates a failure by the writer to live up to his duty both to abstract truth and to the concrete necessity of an informed public.

Troubled Waters

By Jim Cotter*

A controversial proposal to part the Red Sea is being heavily attacked by the Mideast Wilderness Association, which contends that the parting of the sea’s waters will result in “irreparable damage.” Meanwhile, backers of the proposal claim that efforts to stall the plan mean “potential disaster for millions, possibly the world.”

The dispute began when the Jewish group Free Us Now (FUN) announced it planned to leave the jurisdiction of the Egyptian Department of Slaves and go to a distant valley and start a new country. The FUN group’s route crosses the Red Sea, and a decision by FUN to part the waters and cross the sea floor on foot set off an uproar among conservationists.

The group’s leader is a former Egyptian government official, Moses, and it is believed his orders come from a higher-up. But Moses and his band of followers now find themselves stalled on the west bank of the Red Sea awaiting approval of an environmental impact statement filed in connection with what is now commonly called “the parting waters proposal.”

The Moses group claims it will part the waters only long enough to allow its people to cross the sea floor on foot, a process estimated to take about an hour.

In the environmental impact statement, it is acknowledged by Moses that when the water flows back over the crossing area about 1,500 soldiers from the Department of Slaves are expected to be on the sea floor.

It is this point which the Mideast Wilderness Association has jumped upon and loudly deplored.

The association claims that when the waters flow back it will mean the soldiers will be trapped, littering the sea floor with shields, arrows, spears, chariots and other armaments and, consequently, “ruin the pristine beauty of the sea.”

The association has been joined in its fight by the Mideast Fish and Game Department, which contends that the parting of the waters, “no matter how briefly, will place undue hardship upon the fishes in the sea.”

Moses, in the environmental impact statement, contends only that the “fish will not be harmed.” The statement does not give particulars on how the fish will escape harm, a point the wilderness group contends “needs clarification.”

A public hearing on the proposal must be held so other interested parties can present their views before the environmental impact statement is approved.

Moses is pushing for an early decision on the matter.

“I am free only to say that unless a quick decision is made, my group will suffer severe hardship. And if that happens, dire consequences will befall the Mideast,” he warned.

The Wilderness Association charges that Moses “is merely trying to bury the real issues with innuendoes of doomsday rhetoric.”

No date for the public hearing has been set.

*Reprinted by permission from the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian, Nov. 4, 1973. Mr. Cotter, a former journalism student at the University of Montana, is a Missoulian reporter and columnist.
The United States vs. the AP

By MARY PAT MURPHY

The author, a 1969 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, has worked as a reporter for the Helena Independent Record and as a newswoman for the Associated Press in Helena, Omaha and Seattle. This article is based on a report she submitted for a history of communications class at the University of Washington.

The government usually is regarded as the principal threat to press freedom, but in a major case in the 1940s the threat to a free flow of information came from within the news media.

The Associated Press, the largest news-gathering organization in the world, had several restrictive bylaws that made it nearly impossible for a new newspaper to obtain an AP franchise in a city where an AP member already operated.

When those bylaws were challenged, the AP was found in violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890.

What became known as the Chicago Sun Case started when department-store magnate Marshall Field announced he would begin a newspaper to compete with Col. Robert McCormick's morning Chicago Tribune. The Sun issued Vol. 1, No. 1, Nov. 25, 1941, and printed eight rehearsal editions before it was offered to the public Dec. 4, 1941. It said it would "wear the colors of no party or class. It will support men and notions and ideas which it deems to be working in the best interests of Chicago, the Midwest and all America."

The Sun also pledged to support the policies of President Franklin Roosevelt, in contrast to the extremely anti-Roosevelt Tribune.

Field had tried to buy an AP franchise from William Randolph Hearst, but Hearst would not sell. The easiest way to circumvent the AP's stiff membership requirements was to buy a defunct or failing newspaper for its AP franchise. The price varied but was more than $1 million in New York City.

The franchise purchase was a major shortcoming in the AP's argument that it should be able to choose its members. Anyone who had the money could buy a franchise and become a member. On that point the Nation said:

... anyone owning a big enough bankroll can buy his way in with no questions asked. If Al Capone were able to persuade Colonel McCormick to sell him the Chicago Tribune, it's difficult to see what the other [AP] members could do about it.

Since he could not buy a franchise, Field signed a contract with United Press and applied for membership in the Associated Press. Colonel McCormick exercised the right of protest guaranteed by AP bylaws, and the Sun's application was rejected.

Thurman Arnold, United States assistant attorney general in charge of prosecutions of monopolies, threatened to

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2Ibid.
3Ibid.
file suit against the AP under the Sherman Act, and the AP responded by liberalizing its bylaws slightly.8

The Associated Press was founded under a New York state law, and its restrictive membership practices prompted Newsweek to call the AP "one of the most exclusive clubs in the world."10

When the Sun was founded, any AP newspaper had the right to protest membership of a prospective new newspaper in the same city. That right at first was given only to original AP members, but it was extended to all members in 1928. If an AP newspaper protested the admission of a competing paper, a four-fifths vote could override the veto.11 No newspaper ever had been elected to membership over the veto of a rival.12

Another bylaw required that a rival newspaper pay the established AP member 10 per cent of the member's total AP assessment since Oct. 1, 1900, or three times the member's past assessment—whichever was greater—as an "initiation fee." In Chicago, Marshall Field, if approved for membership would have had to pay Colonel McCormick more than $400,000.13

Because of a possible Justice Department suit, AP members met to liberalize the bylaws. On April 20, 1942, AP members voted to drop the right of protest and set the initiation fee at a flat 10 per cent of past assessments.14 Consequently, it now would have cost Field $334,250.40 for the initiation fee to Colonel McCormick.15

At that same meeting, AP members voted 684 to 287 against admitting the Chicago Sun.16

The AP also denied membership to the Washington Times-Herald.17 Owned by Colonel McCormick's cousin, Eleanor (Cissie) Patterson, the Times-Herald was turned down 514 to 242. Colonel McCormick, in a strategic move, also had applied for an evening franchise for his Tribune but later withdrew his request.18

It seems obvious that the right of protest had been abolished in name only, and the AP would continue to bar newcomers opposed by entrenched member newspapers. The AP was trying to keep the government off its trail, but it did not want to change substantively the method of admitting members.

The AP ploy did not work, and on Aug. 28, 1942, the Department of Justice filed suit in federal court in New York's Southern District against the Associated Press and 35 member publishers and newspapers.19

Colonel McCormick's reaction to the suit ignored the issue:

Marshall Field is not a legitimate newspaperman and the Sun is not a legitimate newspaper. It is part of an alien and radical conspiracy against our government. It [the Sun] is subsidized by our government to the extent that its losses, running into millions of dollars each year, are deducted from the owner's income tax.10

Field said a government victory would be "one of the most important strokes for freedom of the press in the history of American journalism."21

The suit sought a summary judgment against the AP on four issues:

(1) the AP bylaw which made it difficult for membership to be obtained by a journal in a city where any newspaper already had an AP franchise; (2) the bylaw that the news acquired by member newspapers, which they were obligated to furnish to the AP, must not be communicated by them to nonmembers; (3) the AP's purchase of shares in Wide World Photos, Inc., alleged to violate the Clayton Act; and (4) the AP agreement with Canadian Press, a similar agency, for the exclusive interchange of news.22

One main point was the exclusive nature of AP news-gathering arrangements. The government contended the AP violated the Sherman Act because it barred non-member newspapers from its domestic news-gathering facilities.23

Under AP bylaws, members had to agree to give all of their local news to the AP and not to give it to nonmembers. Since the AP had a much more extensive domestic news-gathering network than did its rivals, non-members were at a definite competitive disadvantage in offering their readers news from other parts of the country.24

reader was real loser

The real loser was the reader, who had to depend on one source of information. The "free marketplace of ideas" theory clearly did not operate effectively under such an arrangement.

It may be argued that readers actually would have had only one version—that of the Associated Press—even if several newspapers in their city had AP memberships. But the editing of news copy can result in a significant difference in the slant given to an event. And the non-member newspaper probably would lose readers if it did not have access to the AP domestic report, which generally was regarded as more complete and extensive than those of the United Press or International News Service.25

The government contended it was trying to promote freedom of the press in its suit against the AP, while most

8Jones, op. cit., p. 570.
12"Chafee, op. cit., p. 551.
15Newsweek, loc. cit.
16Jones, loc. cit.
17Time, May 4, 1942, pp. 68-69.
18Brucker, op. cit., p. 75.

Montana Journalism Review
of the country's leading newspapers and the AP insisted the suit was a grave threat to press freedom.26

Associated Press President Robert McLean, publisher of the Philadelphia Bulletin, defended AP admission policies as an attempt to "protect its members who have invested their skill, their work and their money in its growth."27

Other publishers overwhelmingly supported the AP's position. The AP published two volumes of member-paper editorials supporting its right to be selective in membership requirements.28

The voices supporting the government case were few, and the press in most instances ignored them.

One of the early AP critics was Zechariah Chafee, whose statement was published by the Providence, R.I., Journal, an AP member, in April, 1943. The statement had been rejected by the New York Times, the New York Herald Tribune and the Washington Post.29 It appeared in the Journal next to a defense of the AP.

Most of the other anti-AP sentiments were expressed in magazines, particularly liberal publications such as the Nation, which said Nov. 7, 1943: "Once again the banner 'freedom of the press' is being unfurled by the publishers as if that precious constitutional right were their exclusive possession."30 The magazine called the AP the "news agency with tentacles reaching around the world which for some 50 years has operated to restrict the flow of new blood into the newspaper business."31

**a 7,000-word answer**

The AP filed on Oct. 27, 1942, a 7,000-word answer to the government suit. The brief stated:

It is the fundamental law of the land, that no statute shall be construed as to abridge the freedom of the press. A free press requires that newspapers shall be free to collect and distribute the news and that they shall be free to choose their associates in so doing.

This right is now challenged by the means of a novel interpretation of the anti-trust statutes, which is designed to foster a particular newspaper, to wit, the Chicago Sun.32

Reaction and countercharges varied.

The New Republic said: "The reply of the Associated Press deserves to be laughed out of the court of public opinion."33

The Saturday Evening Post, a vigorous defender of the AP, on Oct. 3, 1943, dismissed the government suit as in-

The AP argued that it was impossible to monopolize news because "the source of news lies in the event itself."38

The arguments dragged on, with the AP stating that it was in no sense a monopoly and had been responsible for the growth of UP and INS. The AP asked how the news service could be in restraint of competition when its restrictive policies led to the growth of its rivals as non-member newspapers searched for other news sources.39

The AP argued that it was impossible to monopolize news because "the source of news lies in the event itself." Access to the source was open to all who were "willing to expend time, effort and money."40

The AP had worked to protect its property rights in news before the anti-trust case. Melville E. Stone, AP general manager from 1893 to 1918, had urged Congress to pass legislation giving the AP "property rights" to news gathered by its correspondents and members. The AP had contended that the 1918 Supreme Court decision prohib-

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26Newsweek, Sept. 7, 1942, p. 70.
27Ibid.
28Time, May 10, 1943, p. 64.
29Ibid., p. 65.
32Jones, op. cit., p. 572.
34"Historic Case or Chicago Feud?" Saturday Evening Post, Oct. 3, 1942, p. 112.
35Brucker, loc. cit.
36Wolf, loc. cit.
37Time, May 10, 1943, p. 46.
39Jones, op. cit., p. 571.
40Time, op. cit., p. 64.
ing INS from "pirating" news had set a precedent for the property-right theory.41

Kent Cooper, general manager in 1943, also believed news was subject to property rights, although in his back-patting book Barriers Down he praised his fight against monopoly among European news cartels.42

The Nation said Cooper pictured the AP as a "pure and forlorn maiden in the clutches of a sinister international dragon and himself as the valiant knight who for 20 years fought to effect a rescue."43

The UP eventually got into the anti-trust fray, defending its honor as a news service. It filed a brief disputing the government's contention that it was a weak competitor.44

The AP might have been flattered by the government's estimation of its influence, but its attorneys played down the edge it had over UP and INS.45

The district court's decision was announced Oct. 6, 1943, in an opinion written by Judge Learned Hand and concurred in by his cousin, Judge Augustus N. Hand. Judge Thomas W. Swan, the third man on the panel, dissented.46

The opinion said the contested AP bylaws violated the Sherman Act, and the court issued the summary judgment requested by the government on those two issues. The court refused to uphold the government's position on the Wide World Photos stock and the agreement with Canadian Press.47

Judge Hand recognized the existence of other news services and said some "think UP is a better service, at least in some departments, perhaps in all." But Judge Hand said "monopoly is a relative word":48

No decision of ours as to the relative merits of the two [AP and UP] would convince those who may chance to prefer it; the grievance of being unable to choose his own tools is not assuaged, when a court finds that the user does not understand his interest. And so, even if this were a case of the ordinary kind: the production of fungible goods, like steel, machinery, clothiers or the like, it would be a nice question whether the handicap upon those excluded from the combination should prevail over the claim of the members to enjoy the fruits of their foresight, industry and sagacity.49

But, the opinion continued:

However, neither exclusively, nor even primarily, are the interests of the newspaper industry conclusive; for that industry serves one of the most vital of all general interests: the dissemination of news from as many different sources, and with as many different facets and colors as possible. That interest is closely akin to, if indeed it is not the same as, the interest protected by the First Amendment; it presupposes that right conclusions are more likely to be gathered out of a multitude of tongues, than through any kind of authoritative selection. To many this is, and always will be, folly; but we have staked upon it our all.50

Judge Hand said two news services should not be treated interchangeably, because to "deprive a paper of the benefit of any service of the first rating is to deprive the reading public of means of information it should have."51

**Judge Swan's dissent**

In his dissent, Judge Swan said the Sherman Act had not been violated and that the AP had not tended to create a monopoly in news-gathering:

To my mind the nature of a news report, which is the intellectual product of him who makes it, points to the conclusion that he may choose to whom he will disclose it, rather than to the conclusion that he is under a duty to disclose it to all applicants.52

Judge Swan's dissent and basically the entire AP argument seem to presuppose the property-right theory of the news. News would be meaningless—and worthless—unless an audience received the information. The AP reporters and stringers did not create the news—they reported on public events. The idea of news as property, therefore, does not seem logical.

The modern newspaper publisher is in the business to make money, not to stand on the principle of freedom of the press. He is more concerned with advertising revenue, in all too many cases, than with the rightness of an issue. The news business is, after all, essentially like most other commercial enterprises—the profit motive reigns.

When profits are involved, the public's right to know often is subordinate to the self-interest of the newspaper. The AP bylaws that blocked the membership of at least 59 newspapers between 1900 and 194253 did nothing to uphold freedom of the press.

The major newspapers, through their cooperative news-gathering association, simply were trying to keep as much circulation and advertising revenue as possible without dividing the pie with new rivals.

I am inclined to agree with the New Republic that the AP's "civic nobility" defense was "nonsensical."54 The magazine said the AP bylaws tended to promote "fewer, bigger, more prosperous, more conservative papers."55

The New Republic also contended that "no informed student of journalism can deny that the AP has operated in the past in favor of conservatism."56 It strongly praised the federal district court decision striking down the AP bylaws, calling the decision a "victory for a free press," and it expressed hope that the ruling would "encourage fair

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Ibid.
Newsweek, July 5, 1943, p. 96.
Ibid., p. 97.
Brucker, op. cit., p. 77.
Chafee, loc. cit.
Ibid., p. 555.
Ibid.

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competition and, we hope, help inspire higher standards of journalism."57

The AP report of the decision indicates a possible consequence of news monopoly. The lead said:

The right of the Associated Press membership to pass upon the admission of members was upheld yesterday by a decision of the federal district court here. The court, however, directed that the bylaws of the Associated Press shall be changed to prevent a member in the same field (morning, evening or Sunday in the same city) from presenting any bar to the election in such a membership.60

The New York Times printed the United Press version beside the AP story. The UP report began:

A three-man federal court, by a two-to-one decision, yesterday enjoined the Associated Press from continuing "in their present form" its bylaws regulating the admission of members, but left the way open for the news organization to "adopt substitutes" that might bring the association into line with the law.60

Only a third of the nation's newspapers subscribed to both the UP and the AP, and a cursory reading of the AP story probably left most readers with the impression the AP had won a great victory.

But Colonel McCormick and his fellow publishers had no illusions about the ruling. The AP appealed to the Supreme Court. The government also appealed because the district court had declined to set aside the AP's purchase of shares in Wide World Photos and its agreement with Canadian Press.61

The Chicago Tribune and the American Newspaper Publishers Association filed amici curiae (friend of the court) briefs on the AP side, and Field Enterprises filed a brief on the government side.61

lower-court ruling upheld

The Supreme Court reviewed the case in October, 1944, and in June, 1945, it upheld the lower-court ruling 5 to 3.62

The eight justices who took part in the consideration filed five separate opinions.63

Justice Hugo Black, with whom Justices Reed and Rutledge concurred, wrote the main opinion, which said in part:

It is apparent that the exclusive right to publish news in a given field, furnished by AP and all of its members, gives many newspapers a competitive advantage over the rivals. Conversely, a newspaper without AP service is more than likely to be at a competitive disadvantage.64

Justice Felix Frankfurter wrote a separate concurring opinion that said in part:

The freedom of enterprise protected by the Sherman law necessarily has different aspects in relation to the press than in the case of ordinary commercial pursuits. The interest of the public is to have the flow of news not trammeled by the combined self interest of those who enjoy a unique constitutional position precisely because of the public dependence on a free press. A public interest so essential to the vitality of our democratic government may be defeated by private restraints no less than by public censorship.65

Justice Frankfurter added:

The short of the matter is that the bylaws which the District Court has struck down clearly restrict the commerce which is conducted by the Associated Press and the restrictions are unreasonable because they offend the basic functions which a constitutionally free press serves in our nation.66

Justice William O. Douglas filed a separate majority opinion, taking a stronger stand against the AP, while the three dissenting judges filed two opinions.68

Justice Roberts, with whom Chief Justice Stone concurred, said:

The court's opinion blends and mingles statements of fact, inferences and conclusions, and quotations from prior opinions wrested from their setting and context, in such fashion that I find it impossible to deduce more than that orderly analysis and discussion of facts relevant to any one of the possible methods of violation of the Sherman Act is avoided, in the view that separate consideration would disclose a lack of support for any finding of specific wrongdoing.69

Both the district court and the Supreme Court seemed to have widely divergent opinions on just what category the

The court ruled that while the AP was not a monopoly, its exclusionary practices resulted in a restraint of trade.

On the First Amendment question raised by both the government and the AP, the court said:

Finally, the argument is made that to apply the Sherman Act to this association of publishers constitutes an abridgment of the freedom of the press guaranteed by the First Amendment . . .

It would be strange indeed, however, if the grave concern for freedom of the press which prompted adoption of the First Amendment should be read as a command that the government was without power to protect that freedom.

The First Amendment, far from providing an argument against application of the Sherman Act, here provides powerful reasons to the contrary. That amendment rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public, that a free press is a condition of a free society.68

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Colonel McCormick "bellowed for the AP to 'go to Congress.'"

AP bylaws fell under, but the majority in both courts agreed the news service's membership policies restrained the free flow of information.

press shackling feared

In his dissent, Justice Roberts said the AP would thenceforth "operate under the tutelage of the court." He thought the decree might lead to greater tendencies toward monopoly, since the restrictive membership policies had spurred the growth of competing news services. And he feared the ruling might be

but a first step in the shackling of the press which will subvert the constitutional freedom to print or withhold as and how one's reason or one's interest dictates. When that time comes, the state will be supreme and freedom of the state will have superseded freedom of the individual to print, being responsible before the law for abuse of the high privilege.

Justice Frank Murphy also wrote a dissenting opinion, saying in part:

The tragic history of recent years demonstrates far too well how despotic governments may interfere with the press and other means of communication in their efforts to corrupt public opinion and destroy individual freedom. Experience teaches us to hesitate before creating a precedent in which might lurk even the slightest justification for such interference by the government in these matters.

The decision was assailed editorially and most AP members disagreed vehemently with the ruling. Colonel McCormick "bellowed for the AP to 'go to Congress,'" and he did push through a resolution asking Congress to enact legislation exempting the AP from the Sherman Act. Time reported that "McCormick's plot to override the Supreme Court was jammed through by a 114-30 vote" of Associated Press members attending a special board meeting in May, 1946.

The Saturday Evening Post said in an editorial that the AP was "found guilty of success":

This extraordinary decision is perhaps the logical consequence of New Deal practice in judicial appointment. One can only hope at this stage that the damage to the American people and the system they have created will not be irreparable before legislation or the passage of time spares them the full penalty of the doctrine that the law exists, not to protect the rights of men, but to implement the social theories of government.

The court had "retained the cause," meaning any newspaper rejected for AP membership could go to court for relief. Newsweek said: "This indeed could become government by injunction with a vengeance unless the AP really ceases to be a country club." The Supreme Court ruled in October, 1945, that there was no cause to reconsider the decision. At a special meeting the next month, AP members voted to amend the bylaws to comply with the court ruling.

In December, the Chicago Sun finally got its AP membership. It was admitted 949 to 34 as an "associate member." Even at this point, McCormick stuck to his convictions. He repeated charges that the entire suit was a "gestapo-like persecution of the AP." But, McCormick said, "It must be said for Mr. Field that the attack on the Associated Press did not originate with him, but with the Department of Justice.

McCormick told the meeting that attorneys had advised that the AP would be in contempt of court if it did not admit the applicants. He then seconded a motion to admit the applicants to membership the Sun, the Oakland Post-Enquirer, Washington Times-Herald and Detroit Times.

Field had withdrawn his request for full membership because his contract with UP required that all of the Sun's local news be delivered to that news service. That provision prevented the Sun from meeting the AP bylaw requirements for full membership.

The Chicago Sun thus became an AP member. Its admittance did not shake the foundation of the AP, nor did subsequent admittance of competing newspapers. The Roosevelt Administration did not go on to seize control of the press.

One of the most stinging denouncements of the AP's restrictive membership requirements came from Chafee in his book Government and Mass Communications. He repeated many statements he had made at the time the anti-trust case was being argued, and he summarized the findings of the Commission on Freedom of the Press, the so-called Hutchins Commission:

Liberty of the press in the Bill of Rights must mean something much bigger than the right of some newspapers to deprive other newspapers of access to a vital

"Ibid.

"Ibid.


See Brucker, loc. cit.

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channel of information merely because the insiders got there first. Liberty of the press is not the property of some newspapers or even of all newspapers. It belongs most to the readers.84

He said the people suffer from a restricted press, whether the restraints are imposed by "laws or bylaws."85 The implications of this case are far-reaching. The Associated Press was attempting to maintain a closed club to prevent competing newspapers from infringing on its members. The government was, for whatever motives, attempting to keep the news channels open.

It was argued at the time that the Justice Department wanted to get an AP franchise for Marshall Field because he supported President Roosevelt. The reasons behind the suit undoubtedly were more than just political, though some political considerations possibly were involved. The administration would be more likely to want a friendly newspaper to succeed than to support the interests of the Tribune, which was continually attacking it. But in this case, I believe the government truly was acting in the best interest of the public, not just for Marshall Field.

One important lesson can be learned from the publishers' reaction to the suit. They were all too willing to cry "freedom of the press" simply because the government believed the Sherman Act was applicable to the press as well as to the rest of society.

When the press uses freedom of the press as a shield for self-serving purposes, it hinders the crucial struggle to keep the press as free as possible.

Commercial newspapers historically have not been great crusaders and often are too willing to suppress news when

84Chafee, op. cit., p. 546.
85Ibid.

it suits their own purposes. But they drag out freedom of the press when they are threatened, even when their position has nothing to do with press freedom, at least from the point of view that they are defending it.

crying wolf

It is reminiscent of the tale of the boy who cried "wolf" once too often. If newspapers continually cry freedom of the press at every criticism, no one will listen when there actually is a threat.

Governments are not always noble, and they do not always serve the best interests of the people they are supposed to represent. The press must be in a viable position to be a watchdog on government's activities, and it can do that only if it is in an unimpeachable position itself.

The press too often thinks it is above other commercial interests and flaunts its watchdog image. But most of the time the press is too busy looking out for its own interests to bother with the public interest.

The Washington Post's coverage of Watergate and the subsequent coverup has been a recent, heartening exception. The rest of the news media jumped aboard, but it seems strange that the scandal wasn't unearthed until President Nixon had been safely reelected.

The press must watch itself so the government will not have to do its watching for it—particularly a government that has such a questionable image as the current administration. The Chicago Sun case represents the only time the press has been taken to court under the Sherman Act.86 But the press must remember that it is not immune to the evils it self-righteously points up elsewhere in society.

86Ibid.

Princely, Proud, Glittering Names

By Thomas Wolfe*

Where can you match the mighty music of their names? — The Monongahela, the Colorado, the Rio Grande, the Columbia, the Tennessee, the Hudson (Sweet Thames!), the Kennebec, the Rappahannock, the Delaware, the Penobscot, the Wabash, the Chesapeake, the Swannanoa, the Indian River, the Niagara (Sweet Afton!), the Saint Lawrence, the Susquehanna, the Tombigbee, the Nantahala, the French Broad, the Chattahoochee, the Arizona, and the Potomac (Father Tiber!)—these are a few of their princely names, these are a few of their great, proud, glittering names, fit for the immense and lonely land that they inhabit.

Oh, Tiber! Father Tiber! You'd only be a suckling in that mighty land! And as for you, sweet Thames, flow gently till I end my song: Flow gently, gentle Thames, be well behaved, sweet Thames, speak softly and politely, little Thames, flow gently till I end my song.

*From Of Time and the River.
Profile of a Wire Editor

By STEVE L. SMITH

The writer, wire editor of the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian, earned a B.A. in 1965 and an M.A. in 1969 from the Montana journalism school. He has been an assistant professor of journalism at the University of Alaska and a visiting assistant professor at the University of Montana. He also has worked as a reporter for the Bellingham (Wash.) Herald. Mr. Smith contributed two articles to earlier issues of Montana Journalism Review—one about author Dorothy M. Johnson and one about the late Ray Rocene, Missoulian sports editor and columnist.

“Al, could you come back?”

Accompanied by considerable static, the question came over an intercom from the print shop of the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian. It seldom failed to elicit a reaction, invariably the same, from the veteran newsmen to whom it was addressed.

“Goddamn the... goddamn…” he would begin, slamming down his pencil stub and pushing back his chair with a clatter and a squeak of casters. Then he would march, somewhat stooped but nevertheless warlike, to the print shop.

Al Himsl, Missoulian wire editor and resident sage from the early 1960s until his retirement in September, 1973, did not like to answer unnecessary questions about his page layouts or to be interrupted while he was editing the news. And if the Missoulian’s intercom, which usually was semi-operative, produced rage in Himsl, mistakes in stories or headlines—either before or after they appeared in print—produced near rage, derision or frustration—and sometimes all three. Himsl was a perfectionist.

It seemed inevitable, considering Himsl’s pace after he had reached 60, that sometime something would give. Seeing him day after day on the wire desk, to which he had devoted 50 to 60 hours a week for more than 10 years, many of his fellow staffers wondered how far he could push himself.

Himsl almost had learned his physical limitations in the late 1960s when he felt ill and found getting to the office difficult because of his condition. When he could work no longer, he consulted a doctor, who told him he had had pneumonia for 10 days. He returned to work as soon as possible, editing, writing headlines and dummying most of the Missoulian’s news pages. His desire for perfection seemed to have diminished little.

What newsroom employes thought was inevitable occurred one evening in February, 1972. Himsl, standing at an Associated Press teletype in the wire room, suddenly clutched his chest with both arms and collapsed, gashing his head on a counter. Deane Jones, then a desk editor and columnist, was quickly at Himsl’s side. Larry Clawson, a staff photographer, called for an ambulance and resuscitator. At St. Patrick Hospital, physicians determined Himsl had suffered a diabetic seizure. Earlier, he had suffered from ulcers but never had suspected diabetic problems.

Himsl had considered retiring when he had pneumonia. The diabetic seizure, however, apparently did not concern him. Within a month he was back at the wire desk.

There was something almost alarming about the intensity with which Himsl worked. Perhaps “worked” is inap-
appropriately, for Himsl's technique seemed more like an assault on an opposing force from 1:30 p.m. until the paper went to press. He did not type on a typewriter—he pummeled it. Scowling at the Royal and rarely pausing to consult the headline schedule, he sent strong headlines and captions to the back shop in a smooth flow.

Seldom did he stop working, but if a lull occurred he organized the rows of wire copy on the table behind his desk or read newspapers, including the Billings Gazette where his newspaper career began. Usually he left his desk only to put money in a parking meter, check a page in the back shop or refill his coffee cup. While other staff members left the newsroom for dinner, Himsl remained, munching on a single sandwich he removed from a paper bag. He said he felt better and worked better with smaller amounts of food.

**tight editing**

Himsl was not content merely to make reader's marks on wire copy—particularly AP copy, which he considered sloppy at times. His seemingly frail left arm pinned the copy to the desk while he slashed out unnecessary or obscure paragraphs and corrected typos or inaccuracies.

Himsl agrees he was a perfectionist but believes his perfectionism was wearing thin in the years before his retirement:

It used to bother me very much if I saw a typo in a paper or a bum head or something of that kind. As I got older it didn't bother me quite so much because I saw it happening right and left, not only on our own [Lee] papers but other papers as well. I realize papers couldn't be perfect, but it used to annoy me no end when I'd see mistakes, particularly when I was responsible for them. And I've been responsible for some good ones.

Part of Himsl's unhappiness evidently stemmed from techniques—or lack of techniques—he observed in the back shop:

I became a little disenchanted with some of the operations. I figure there was a lot of sloppy stuff going on that I couldn't do much about... It used to hurt me... I just gave up on it... The number of back-shop men who take pride in what they're doing has dwindled.

If Himsl was dismayed by certain back-shop trends, he was equally unhappy with practices that began to develop in the newsroom during his last years as wire editor. They did not concern him directly but they disturbed him. Himsl believes that:

—Reporting in depth as practiced by some at the Missoulian should be referred to as "reporting at length."

—Some Missoulian reporters (and thus the paper itself) are in danger of becoming mouthpieces for individuals and organizations—most notably the University of Montana. Himsl deplores what he regards as a lack of objectivity in some Missoulian reporting.

On reporting in depth, he said:

I'm a little in the dark as to just exactly what the journalistic powers call reporting in depth... I thought it meant digging into a subject and getting all sides of it. But some of the stuff that [Jack] Sawyer... called reporting in depth was anything but that. I deprecate that kind of stuff. Too often I think some of these people get carried away. They think they're doing an in-depth story when really they're being repetitious, and monotonously so...

I believe that if you express something with an economy of words you get the idea over a lot better... The Missoulian had people on its staff who in the course of one story would say the same thing three or four different ways. That just bags out the story and isn't my idea of good writing or good reporting.

**On objectivity:**

No matter what goes on the front page, or any other news page, I'm still in favor of the old idea of objectivity. Whenever possible, when I played a story on the cover giving only one viewpoint of an issue, I liked to get another story across from it giving the opposing viewpoint. I understand what the so-called advocacy journalists are trying to do, but these people forget everything that doesn't happen to bolster their side of the case.

That brings me to the Missoulian. I think some of the reporters here in the past few years have become echo chambers for the opinions of other people rather than using their own judgment. I think the Missoulian has been in danger of becoming a mouthpiece for the University of Montana, for example. Everything that comes off that campus isn't gospel. I'm afraid some of these people are beginning to accept anything that comes from there without questioning it. I'm not accusing people on the campus of being propagandists. But they, too, are human beings and have to pull on their pants one leg at a time. They're subject to human error. I'm not saying, either, that reporters shouldn't quote campus sources.

But I've noticed something in regard to, say, school-district affairs. Reporters quote people at the School of Education and they're so positive about this and positive about that. Not only people in the School of Education but elsewhere. There are some of these people—professors of English or instructors in English or mathematics—who, by God, become immediate experts on education or air pollution or something else that affects the community. Well I don't think their expertise extends over the entire gamut of human knowledge...

I'm not saying these young reporters shouldn't quote professors from time to time, but I don't think they should become mouthpieces for that kind of thing.

Although considered brusque and old-fashioned by some, Himsl commanded respect from his fellow workers. The praise focused on his craftsmanship, his knowledge and powers of retention, and, perhaps most noteworthy, his willingness to pull more than his own weight.

"He was an excellent craftsman in journalism, one of the best in my experience," said Edward A. Coyle, Missoulian editor. "His ability to dummy pages was amazing. He had it down to a science. His knowledge of grammar was a strong point; he had outstanding news judgment and he was accurate."

Coyle called Himsl a "reservoir of facts," a man whose "fountain of knowledge" was invaluable to reporters, adding:

"I think the young people [in the newsroom] learned a thing or two from Mr. Himsl."

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lot from Al. There were many, many people here who learned as much from Al as they ever will from anybody.”

Coyle also commended Himsl’s reporting abilities, saying he had the same “knack for speed and accuracy” that he demonstrated on the wire desk: “He’d cover a meeting and come in here and within 10 minutes bang out a concise and accurate story.”

Sam Reynolds, Missoulian editorial-page editor, regarded Himsl as a man who was “crusty more than cruel,” who could be “very abrupt,” but a man with genuine talent:

> Sometimes his stomach bothered him ... and in his last years [at the paper] he was not in terribly good health. But the people who dealt with him for a long period came to appreciate his very wry, sort of caustic, but genuine sense of humor. They also began to appreciate the fact that this man had a tremendous fund of knowledge about Montana politics and history.

And he was a craftsman with the English language. When he wrote, which was too seldom, he wrote very concise, beautiful news stories—short, terse and yet telling all the news. He was a very professional and it showed in his judgment of news. The headlines he wrote sometimes were very funny and very apt. But he had the usual disadvantages of having to do too much every day—too many headlines to be original and good on every one, too pushed to give every story the play it probably deserved. He wasn’t faultless; he was simply a very capable professional in every respect. He is a man of very diverse capabilities. His mental powers and his sharpness stayed with him.

He didn’t retire because he was slowing down at all. He seemed to be very steady. He was like an old mule in the traces—he just kept on going and kept on going ...

Reynolds’ opinion of Himsl as a tutor, of sorts, of younger journalists:

> With his sharp tongue, he would make some caustic comment not necessarily to the person who he thought had erred but maybe to somebody else on the desk who was in charge of the guy’s copy. ... He didn’t go out of his way to help young people but on the other hand at any time I ever wanted help he was extremely helpful. He wasn’t outgoing with his assistance but he never held it back if he was asked. 

Reading is Himsl’s primary pastime. He reads “anything I can get my hands on.” Reynolds commented: “Al was always a well-informed person. ... He always had more information on any given subject—particularly if it dealt with politics or the economy—than most people have.”

Reynolds’ reference to Himsl as an “old mule in the traces” is apt, for even when he sometimes was responsible for 15 to 20 pages, Himsl declined offers of help, even with writing captions.

> “He rejected help,” said Coyle, “but he’d always get the job done.”

Himsl denies that dedication had anything to do with his work habits: “That’s just the way I approached anything I ever did. Whenever I saw something that had to be done, I did it. If I could possibly do the doggone job, I wasn’t going to expect someone else to do it for me. I didn’t deliberately set out to be like that. It’s just my nature.”

an interest in philology

Had he followed the course that appealed most as an undergraduate at Minnesota’s St. John’s University, Himsl would have entered the field of philology—the study of words, literature and related disciplines such as historical and comparative linguistics. And had the stock market not collapsed the year before he left St. John’s with a bachelor’s degree in philosophy, he might have become an engraver or a representative for a college yearbook company. Years later, had he not substituted for a small-town correspondent and covered a speech in Bridger, Mont. (his story impressed an editor at the Billings Gazette), he might have continued a successful career as a high-school administrator, teacher and basketball coach.

Perhaps Aloysius Victor Himsl would have made a notable contribution as a philologist, but his personal economic circumstances, as well as those of the United States, prevailed:

> I figured at that time [1929] I’d starve to death doing something like that. I know now that I was mistaken. I’d probably have been better off if I’d tried to get into philology rather than something else, but in those days you took kind of a mundane view of things. When the bottom dropped out of everything, people started looking for their hole cards in a pretty big hurry. ... 

One hole card was a job with a yearbook firm. Himsl was editor of the St. John’s annual his junior year, and he conferred regularly with the book’s engravers in St. Paul.

socialized with Missoulian staffers was in the late 1950s when Carl Riblet, a layout and headline-writing consultant from Copley Newspapers, conducted a seminar for Missoulian editorial employees. Himsl did not agree with Riblet’s techniques or his blunt teaching methods. According to Evelyn King, Missoulian women’s page editor, and Ed Coyle, Himsl rose after a banquet marking the end of the seminar and presented a torrent criticism of Riblet and his techniques. Himsl calls himself “pretty much a loner” and says “I frankly don’t care for socializing.”

> Coyle interview.

Himsl said his father insisted that his youngsters always try to excel: “We didn’t always do that, but that was supposed to be the goal. And if we didn’t, we heard about it.” Himsl described his father as a strong disciplinarian: “You knew who in the hell was boss around home. ... He didn’t tell you anything twice. ...”

> The yearbook editorship provided Himsl’s only college training in journalism.

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Eventually, he was asked if he would be interested in joining the company after graduation. However, the stock market crashed in October, 1929, a month after Himsl had begun his senior year. In January, 1930, he was informed that the company no longer could hire him.

Under normal conditions, he might have found work in the iron-ore fields of northern Minnesota, but that prospect also was bleak: "The jobs just weren't there. There weren't any jobs for any kind of money."

Himsl turned to the teaching profession, although as a student he had "no more intention of teaching school than I had of flying around with a pair of wings strapped on my back." In the fall of 1930, he became a high-school teacher for $135 a month at Plevna, east of Miles City, Mont. ¹⁰

Himsl coached basketball and taught history, English and Spanish at Plevna High until 1934. Then, until 1936 when he resigned, he served as the school's principal. His Plevna basketball teams went to the state Class B tournament in 1933 and 1934.

In 1936, Himsl moved to Bear Creek, Mont., near Red Lodge, and taught history and coached basketball. He remained there until 1939, guiding his team to the state Class B championship his final year.

In 1939 he moved to Bridger, where he remained until 1944 teaching history and Spanish and coaching football and basketball. Himsl's coaching successes were not achieved without sacrifice: His ulcers, for which he twice underwent surgery, began on the sidelines.

The Bridger speech that Himsl covered for the Billings Gazette was delivered at a stag affair. The newspaper's regular correspondent, a woman, didn't want to attend the event, so she asked Himsl to take her place. A few weeks later the Gazette offered him a job. At the end of the school year in 1944, he resigned as a teacher and—at a $100 monthly cut in salary—became a newspaperman. He was 36 and had a wife and three children (he now has four sons and a daughter).

"I was getting a little weary of the teaching routine," Himsl said. "Here was a chance to do something else."

He joined the Gazette as a reporter but in three months was moved to the state desk: "They had a guy working that desk who every once in awhile had to take off and go on a hell of a big drunk. You didn't know when he was going to show up. They put me on there and that was it." ¹¹

Himsl was not pleased with the state-desk assignment: "I didn't like to be tied down that much. In those days we had to work a six-day week."

The state desk was responsible for the news of 33 Montana counties and northern Wyoming. Reporters took telephone calls from correspondents, but Himsl edited and wrote headlines for all the copy in addition to reading all local copy.

"They later reorganized the desk," Himsl said. "It was a mankiller. I'd go to work about 9:30 in the morning six days a week and it would be 8:30 or 9 o'clock at night before I got out of there."

Himsl described the salary range for the Anaconda Company-owned newspapers as "miserable . . . horribly low." He added: "Newspapers were actually orphans as far as the management of Anaconda was concerned. Most of the big wheels weren't at all interested in them. . . ."

In December, 1960, after almost 17 years with the Gazette, Himsl joined the Missoulian-Sentinel at Missoula.¹³ The Anaconda Company had sold its Montana newspapers in 1959, and Himsl's new employer was Lee Enterprises of Davenport, Iowa.

After a brief assignment in Helena, where he had been assigned by the Missoulian and other Montana Lee papers to cover the legislature, Himsl returned to Missoula as a swing deskman to put out the evening Sentinel. Within a few years he was named Missoulian wire editor, the job he held until he retired.

some opinions

In his almost 30 years as a Montana newspaperman, Himsl formed many opinions about his profession. Here are some as expressed in an interview soon after he retired:

Q: How would you evaluate coverage of Montana government and politics?

A: I question whether state political coverage is broad enough in terms of in-depth reporting. I think there's too much duplication—duplication between the AP and the Lee State Bureau for one thing. I know they have tried to avoid that . . . and maybe there's justification for some of the duplication sometimes. But I've seen stories where Lee has duplicated the AP just to get one aspect of a story AP didn't cover. I think it would have been much better if Lee had just covered the one thing the AP omitted. The

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¹¹In his final semester, Himsl took several education courses to qualify for a teaching certificate. He majored in philosophy and history and minor in economics and psychology.

¹²Himsl's father, Victor, was a native of Austria, a graduate of St. John's University and a banker. From 1910 to 1912, the family lived near Bethune, Sask., Canada, and from 1912 to 1914 in Minnesota. In January, 1914, the parents and their seven children (Matt, of Kalispell, has served in the Montana House of Representatives) moved to Plevna. In 1921, Al Himsl, at age 13, left Plevna to attend St. John's Preparatory School. Of his prep-school years, Himsl said: "They really threw the work at you. I got more out of prep school than I did out of a lot of college courses."

¹³If he had remained a reporter, Himsl would have preferred writing about economic matters. He believes that at times he has been victimized because of his willingness to accept a particular task.

_in later years at the Gazette, Himsl taught history and Spanish at Eastern Montana College during the morning.

One reason for moving was the fact his elderly mother lived in Missoula. He said he once considered working for a larger paper in Arizona but decided against it: "By the time I got into this racket, I was fairly well along. I realized before too long that when people were hiring they were looking for youth—someone they could get 30 or 40 good years out of."
Lee reporters could have devoted their time and energy to something else. . . .

As far as volume, though, I certainly wouldn’t fault them Lee reporters for that. Those guys have worked over there. There’s no question about that. They’ve turned out a tremendous volume of stuff. I don’t know how valuable it is or how historians will view it years hence. . . .

Q: Are you in favor of in-depth reporting and investigative reporting?
A: Yes, I definitely am. I have no quarrel with the concept at all, and I certainly wouldn’t call off the investigative reporting. The Lee State Bureau reporters pointed up some stuff over there [Helena]—the McGaffick case and the liquor-board case, for example. If they hadn’t dug around in that kind of stuff, we’d still be stuck with it. I pat them on the back for that.

Q: You occasionally filled in on the editorial page at the Missoulian. What is your philosophy on editorials?
A: I’m in favor of strong editorial pages. An editorial page is supposed to be a page of opinion—let it be a page of opinion. If the general public disagrees with you, well and good. . . . Strong editorial pages are far more valuable. The kind of editorials we used to have in the Anaconda papers! Honest to God they were insipid! Just milque-toast stuff. Oh, you could sound off and raise lots of hell about what went on over in Afghanistan or Libya, but you had better not get too close to home. . . . It really wasn’t much fun. Anaconda editorials didn’t say anything and no one read them. Who gave a damn?

Q: You were an Anaconda desk editor for 15 years. What was it like working on the Company’s newspapers?
A: Under the Anaconda Company the individual papers enjoyed little autonomy. They were told what to do from on top. One way to characterize the situation is to go back a little into Montana history, when Cornelius Kelley was chairman of the board of the Anaconda Company and Dan Kelly was vice president in charge of western operations. Those fellows were Montanans. They were familiar with Montana. Dan Kelly had been attorney general of Montana and he was interested in Montana politics. In the course of his political career, like most of these politicians, he had made some enemies and he had some friends.

orders from kelly

He didn’t hesitate to send down orders that the papers should play a certain thing this way or that way depending on its political complexion. And there were others in the organization, too—any one of whom would do it like that. They’d go to the papers—Butte, for example—and tell the editor this is what they wanted. And the editor would pass the word around to all the rest of the papers. . . . You got the message and you better damn well do the same thing or you were going to hear about it. . . .

Later, after Cornelius Kelley and Dan Kelly were gone, the people in command didn’t care a hoot. Things were being run in New York and down in Tucson and Salt Lake City. Some of the small fry were still making noises over in Butte, but they didn’t carry any weight. But these editors in Missoula, Helena and Billings had fallen into a habit. If somebody at Butte said we’re going to do so and so . . . the editors at the other papers did the same damn thing. They wouldn’t have had to. If they had stood up on their two hind legs and said, “We’re not going to do it that way,” they could have got away with it.

Q: Any examples?
A: Yes. Back in the Forties, Montana Power and the Anaconda Company were just like this [crossed fingers]. The gold-dust twins were really playing the game together. About that time the Federal Power Commission ordered all public utilities in the United States to adopt a uniform accounting system. Unfortunately for the Montana Power Company, about a year or 18 months prior to that it had adopted a new accounting system of its own and changed everything over at considerable expense. Along comes the FPC and wants to change it all again. Well, you can’t very much blame Montana Power for objecting to that. It objected and demanded a hearing.

The FPC obliged and conducted a hearing in Butte on this accounting system. . . . The testimony was taken down verbatim . . . and Anaconda ordered the Butte Montana Standard to set the entire proceedings in agate type. It amounted to eight columns. They were going to run that in the Standard, and they sent all eight columns to Billings to run in the Gazette.

Frank Coleman was division manager for Montana Power at Billings at the time, and the Standard had called him up and told him this was going to be there. . . . The Gazette pulled page proofs . . . and Coleman came up to take a look at them. I’ll never forget it. Coleman took one look at all that agate type—here’s Montana Power’s division manager, an official, mind you—and he says, “For Christ’s sake, who in the hell’s going to read all that crap?” And he turned around and walked out. He wouldn’t read it, but Montana Power and Anaconda expected the public to read it. If somebody had stood up and said, “We’re not going to run that stuff,” they wouldn’t have had to. Nobody in Billings gave a hoot about it. As a matter of fact, I don’t think anybody cared at Butte, outside of Montana Power. . . .

I also can recall the treatment of different politicians—some guy in the legislature they wanted to butter up—or some fellow in the western part of the state who didn’t concern us in Billings at all. . . . They’d give us the word to carry a story on him. Well, if the editor had said, “The Montana Journalism Review
hell with you, that's of no interest to us down here," I don't think the Company would have done a thing about it. I blame the local editors for that. . . .

Under Anaconda you had input from the top, not from the bottom. Your papers were not 100 per cent local papers. You didn't find any disagreement in editorial policy or in treatment of news as you do now. There was complete uniformity. If you picked up one paper, you picked them all up. Except that some of them looked considerably grayer than others. . . .

Q: What do you think of the AP's performance?
A: Mechanically, of course, the AP is superior to what it used to be. But I think the quality of news writing has suffered. I wonder if that isn't because of two things:— One, the lack of competition. UPI doesn't serve nearly as many papers as it used to in the old days. It has turned into largely a radio and TV wire. I wonder if that lack of competition hasn't enabled the AP to be a little more sloppy as far as domestic news is concerned. Internationally, of course, it's different. They do have some competition. But even there the competition is considerably smaller than the AP, so I don't know whether it really amounts to much.

—And I wonder if the other reason isn't a result of the training their people get now—the emphasis on getting the story out regardless of how it's done. They don't pay very much attention to some details. I don't think a person sitting at a wire desk ought to have to worry about a story coming out of Chicago on the trunk line where there are mistakes in geography in their own back yard. Or where they don't identify political figures properly. . . . You have to watch their copy very, very closely.

A Prideful Adventure

By Eliot Asinof*

For all the others who remained, the autumn turned into the long cold winter and the wind whipped across the countryside as damp and biting as ever. There were no noticeable changes in Gloucester Township as the decade of the 1960s came to an end. The Highland band was hardly better than mediocre. And when the Cotton Bowl festivities in Dallas, Texas, was accepted after the committee reviewed films of its prowess, and the community prepared itself for what promised to be a prideful adventure. In fact, State Senator Hugh Kelley had assured bandmaster Joseph DeMenna, et al., that he would secure the five thousand dollars necessary to fly the entire band to Texas at the next meeting of the Jersey legislature. When his efforts failed, the kids and their parents canvassed the area to raise sufficient funds to rent buses for the fourteen-hundred-mile trip. The proud bandmaster, like a football coach predicting victory, told their ardent supporters that his was a band good enough to march with any band in the country. Indeed, of the eighteen bands at Dallas on that nationally televised sunlit day, the stirring words were telephoned back to Blackwood: "We're Number One!" It lifted the town right out of its postholiday doldrums. A huge welcome-home feast was immediately prepared under the auspices of the president of the Board of Education himself, Joseph Moffa, owner of the huge banquet hall called Moffa's Farms. A police escort was waiting for the bus caravan as it emerged from the Jersey Turnpike after thirty-six hours on the road, and the one hundred and forty-five weary young heroes were brought directly to their jubilant parents and one thousand proud Blackwoodians to celebrate their triumph at a roast-beef dinner in their honor. It was a gala occasion, replete with speeches by such dignitaries as State Senator Hugh Kelley, Congressman John Hunt, and Mayor Joseph Menna, topped by a huge cake honoring the triumphant band and especially its leader, Joe DeMenna. The Blackwood Observer featured the story in its subsequent issue on January 8: "HIGHLAND HIGH MARCHING BAND #1 IN COTTON BOWL COMPETITION," ran the lead headline.

However, there were bandmasters of neighboring communities who believed the award was suspect, having long since felt that the Highland band was hardly better than mediocre. And when the Observer's intrepid young reporter, Carleton Sherwood, communicated directly with the head of the Cotton Bowl committee in Dallas, he received a reply that included the following revelation: "There is no competition [of marching bands], and when we received a letter with clippings a few weeks ago, we were confused, to say the least. . . ." The Observer of January 22 pulled no punches in its exposure of the fraud: "RUMOR SPARKS HIGHLAND WIN 'MISTAKE' SAYS COTTON BOWL."

Significantly, it was not bandmaster Joe DeMenna (who, at best, had guilty knowledge of the deception) who came in for criticism; it was young Carleton Sherwood for its exposure. It also became known that when, in earlier competition, DeMenna had let it be known that the band had been in the top ten, it had actually tied for last in a field of twenty-two. Nonetheless, most typical was the reaction of the cake-maker herself: "Win or lose, we're proud of you."

Sherwood said: "I guess people believe only what they want to believe."

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Midway through the 1972 Montana Constitutional Convention, some critical news analyses and editorials started appearing in the state's daily newspapers. They accused convention delegates of backtracking on pledges to overhaul the state's antiquated 83-year-old constitution. One lead article in the *Helena Independent Record* was headlined: "The Convention: $700,000 Worth of Status Quo." Delegates had come to Helena "bent on major reforms" but had become "politicians in full retreat toward the status quo," said the analysis, written by Daniel J. Foley, then chief of the Lee Newspapers State Bureau. The article also noted that Montana residents, by a margin of nearly two to one, had voted in 1970 to call a convention to reform a state government saddled with an unwieldy, restrictive constitution.

Delegates had backed down on several proposed changes and not necessarily because they opposed them. Instead, they feared the folks back home might vote to reject sweeping reforms when the new document was up for ratification. As the Lee news analysis said: "Given the option between writing a good constitution that might not pass and a mediocre one that will, the delegates are opting for mediocrity."

An Associated Press news analysis added: "In trying to placate don't-rock-the-boat Montanans, Constitutional Convention delegates may be risking the support of those citizens who expected more than just a few token reforms." It reminded delegates that reform-minded residents were "just as capable of mustering opposition to a new constitution as standpatters."

Lee reporter Dennis E. Curran interviewed disillusioned members of the convention's talented research staff. Their opinions were similar to those expressed in the news analyses. One researcher said: "We're replacing the 1889 constitution with one written for 1920."

The Helena newspaper, criticizing the convention's "weak-kneed efforts," advised delegates editorially to muster some courage and stand by their convictions. It alluded to a story about Sen. Mike Mansfield: Asked by a woman in Washington what the people in Montana were telling him to do on a certain issue, Mansfield replied coldly: "Madam, my people don't tell me what to do. They sent me here. I do the voting."

A *Missoulian* editorial charged that the convention was "crawfishing on altogether too many issues, compromising with outmoded relics of the past and giving in to a combination of special-interest pressures and unidentified fears." The editorial called on delegates "to resurrect their faith in themselves" and reminded them of the 1970 mandate.

The gun-shy convention delegates responded to those
articles and to others by the Great Falls Tribune Capitol Bureau. They rolled up their sleeves and went to work, reversing some earlier decisions. They approved sections that generally reflected their honest convictions about what was right for Montana heading into the 21st century—not what might please every voter in Eureka and Ekalaka.

The press often served as a prod at the Montana convention by reminding delegates why they were gathered in Helena. At other times, the press pricked the convention's inflated self-image. Convention officials actually increased the influence of the press by publishing a daily news summary containing articles and editorials from the dailies as well as a sampling from the weeklies.

While those critical newspaper articles had an impact, it would be presumptuous for the press to take credit for setting the convention back on course. Other forces, equally persuasive, were at work. Staff members used their influence to push for a modern constitution. More importantly, those delegates committed to reform became more outspoken, more organized, and more adept at parliamentary maneuvering. They were encouraged further when convention President Leo Graybill Jr. of Great Falls, in a rare maneuver, warned that their goal—writing a new constitution—was in jeopardy. "We need not change all of it," he said of the old charter, "but we need not re-enact it either." Voters would support a new document "if we've done our work well."

Delegates did their work well but barely well enough. The new constitution was approved June 6, 1972, by a small margin—2,532 of 230,298 votes.

Opponents challenged the legality of the ratification, contending the constitution was not approved by a majority of the electors. While 237,600 Montanans voted, 7,302 voted on only the three side issues and ignored the central question, ratification or defeat of the new constitution. If a majority of the 237,600 votes was required for ratification, the constitution would have failed. The Montana Supreme Court upheld ratification in a 3 to 2 decision, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal. A federal district court turned back an 11th-hour challenge in late June, 1973, and, after many anxious moments, the new constitution went into effect July 1, 1973. The U.S. Supreme Court rejected a final appeal by the Montana Farm Bureau Dec. 4, 1973. That ended litigation over the election.

Montana handled its constitutional revision in a manner different from the procedures used by some other states. After voters approved calling a convention, a 16-member commission was appointed to hire a staff to study the issues and make arrangements. The commission was forbidden by law from making recommendations about a new constitution. As a result, the 100 Montana delegates started from scratch, with no recommendations but with stacks of research material. A small legislative appropriation limited the session to 10 weeks, but delegates still produced a streamlined, 11,200-word document. It replaced a 28,000-word constitution that had been amended 37 times.

Time magazine, in a glowing report, accurately described the Montana convention as a "populist" body. Legislators and other public officials had been ruled ineligible to run for the convention by a controversial 1971 Montana Supreme Court decision. That decision encouraged political novices to file in the 1971 special election. Many of them won, prompting one lobbyist to call the convention "Amateur Hour." The ranks included the usual number of farmers, ranchers and lawyers, who traditionally dominate the state legislature. But mixed in were five clergymen, three professors, two newspaper editors, a disc jockey, a beekeeper and the wife of a former governor. (Mrs. Betty Babcock was among 19 women who served.) Although 18 former legislators were among the 100 delegates, the newcomers clearly had the upper hand in numbers, if not experience.

Five reporters covered the convention full time: One from the Associated Press, two from the Great Falls Tribune Capitol Bureau and two from the Lee Newspapers State Bureau, which serves four dailies—the Billings Gazette, Butte Montana Standard, Missoula Missoulian and the Helena Independent Record. Additional reporters from the AP and Lee bureaus helped out when the convention's 10 committees began public hearings. United Press International, whose state report is not carried by Montana newspapers, covered the convention on a hit-or-miss basis. The UPI statehouse reporter was assigned to cover other capital news as well as the convention. Because of overtime costs, UPI did not staff the convention's regular Saturday meetings until clients demanded coverage.

No radio or television stations assigned reporters to the convention, although crews sometimes were sent to Helena. In contrast, Cable TV performed an admirable service by carrying in 10 weeks 25 hours of programs about the convention, including footage from hearings.

pre-convention articles

Reporters found plenty to write about before the convention started. Several articles discussed secrecy, partisanship and broad issues faced by conventions in other states. Newspapers also printed Lee Bureau and AP series that focused on specific constitutional issues such as the short ballot and a unicameral legislature. A Great Falls Tribune series reported the results of a poll of delegates on likely issues. The Lee Bureau produced an informative 20-page tabloid about the convention, and it ran without advertising the Sunday before the plenary session started.

If reporters overemphasized the secrecy issue before the convention began, it was for good reason. Montana has an open-meetings law, which, as Foley said, is admirable in its intent but unsatisfactory in its execution. Newsmen had watched legislators regularly duck into secret committee sessions to conduct public business.

The articles quoted—from other state conventions—persons who stressed the importance of conducting entirely open deliberations. That point was underscored in Missoula at a preconvention seminar for reporters and candidates. Holding some deliberations in secret would jeopardize
chances of a new document passing, speakers from three states predicted. That message was not lost on Montana delegates, who adopted rules forbidding secret meetings.

After the election, it soon became apparent that reporters would be dealing with a talented but extremely image-conscious group of delegates. To some delegates, we reporters were regarded as an adjunct of the convention's public-information office. Our job, to some, was to spread the good news, stifle the bad news and make sure the constitution passed.

Delegates got off to a less than auspicious start at a five-day organizational session after the election. They argued at length over a trivial issue—whether their spouses were entitled to reserved gallery seats at the formal opening ceremony. On the following day, one delegate indignantly objected from the floor to my use of the word "wrangled" in the lead of a story describing the first meeting. He was right: "Haggled" or "bickered" would have been more descriptive.

Some delegates resented our use of party labels to identify them, as in John Smith, R-Billings. But since they had run for the convention as Democrats, Republicans and Independents, we felt compelled to use the labels. Delegates claimed the convention was conducted in a spirit of non-partisanship, eliminating the need for party labels. It was nonpartisan but only after the Democratic majority had flexed its muscles long enough to elect Graybill, a Democrat, convention president. The use of party labels in news stories demonstrated to the public more than any convention propaganda that delegates were, indeed, being nonpartisan. This was apparent to persons who read about Democrats, Republicans and Independents lined up against other Democrats, Republicans and Independents on issues.

Reporters found the convention quite different from the legislature. Most regarded the convention as a pleasant improvement over the legislature, which in 1971 was ranked 41st in the country by the Citizens Conference on State Legislatures.

A chief difference, of course, was working in a one-house body. unicameralism made our jobs both easier and more difficult. Confining all actions to a single house helped the press and thus the public follow proposals through the convention process. We were better able to pinpoint important committee work. During the legislature, reporters often found it difficult to follow committee action since separate House and Senate committees frequently worked on similar bills but took opposite approaches.

Despite its advantages, the unicameral approach imposed certain difficulties on reporters. Because there was no second house to scrutinize measures it had passed, the convention reconsidered many decisions. Delegates often reversed themselves, killing proposals that had passed and reviving once-dead measures. This flip-flopping made it difficult and confusing to write editorials or analytical pieces in advance. Stories written in the morning often were outdated by afternoon. The Montana convention, for example, approved a measure to have the state finance campaigns of Supreme Court candidates, but delegates killed it later the same day. It was revived and passed a few days later, only to be killed again for good. Such reversals severely limited the value of newspaper breakdowns of how individual delegates voted.

Two other departures from legislative tradition helped reporters as well as the public. Unlike the legislature, the convention hired professional research analysts for each committee, and they were valuable sources for stories. Even more importantly, delegates looked to the researchers for expert advice instead of to the lobbyists roaming the Capitol halls. Delegates also passed a rule requiring three days advance notice for committee hearings. Consequently, constitutional convention hearings were well publicized in advance. (The legislature, pressed for time, occasionally calls hearings with no advance notice. Citizens often are unable to attend those hearings, and reporters sometimes are unaware the meetings have been scheduled.)

All convention meetings were open to the public and the press—at least all but one. This rule went far beyond the state's open-meetings law, which allows boards to hold secret sessions about personnel and other sensitive matters. But the delegates believed that all of their work should be conducted openly. It was a move that many Montanans appreciated and one that might have ensured passage of the constitution. The convention set an example of open government that should be followed by all state agencies from school boards through the legislature.

Holding a completely open convention was not entirely painless, as Graybill, the president, has written. He, after all, was the central figure in several unpleasant incidents that were widely reported. Even so, he later said that "the value of the image of an open and accessible convention proved to be great."

Graybill, a highly intelligent if somewhat insensitive and abrasive leader, sparked one incident when he fired a secretary, who learned of the dismissal as she was taking minutes at a meeting. Nearly all of the 60 staff members signed a petition condemning the "rude and arrogant" manner of her dismissal. Convention officers and staff held an emotional two-hour meeting, which reporters covered.

a torrent of hostility

The firing released a torrent of hostility that had been building up for weeks among the staff. Some delegates contended that these internal problems should not have been so extensively reported. Yet this meeting was a turning point of sorts. Had the officers not made some conciliation, key staff members might have quit and the convention could have degenerated into a partisan battle. Delegate Fred Martin, a newspaper editor, advised the factions to come to some kind of understanding: "The longer it [the squabble] goes on and the longer it blows up in the press, the people of Montana are going to think we're a

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bunch of damn fools." Some of the differences were settled at that meeting and did not flare up again.

When John Kuglin, then chief of the Great Falls Tribune Capitol Bureau, tried to attend a daily officers' briefing in the president's office, Graybill ordered him to leave and insisted the briefing was not a meeting and therefore not subject to the rule. After Kuglin wrote a critical story, the president issued a vindictive press release attacking Kuglin, who had run unsuccessfully as an independent candidate for the convention. Kuglin's defeat "perhaps . . . colors his writing," Graybill said. Kuglin replied: "I would say I believed enough in the convention to run and to request a leave of absence from my job to serve in the convention." An unfavorable incident again was reported widely but forgotten soon by most people.

Relations between Graybill and the press were strained at other times. The president had suggested earlier that delegates voluntarily submit all public statements to the convention's Public Information Committee before or after they were released. Committee members would be able to keep track of delegates' public statements, Graybill said, and if one person "is running down the convention," they could "ask him not to do this." The president insisted he was not attempting to gag delegates: "I'm not trying to stop anyone from saying anything. [But] I don't want some guy grabbing a reporter every time he wants to and saying anything he wants to. . . ." Graybill's comments spurred a storm of editorial protest from Montana newspapers. The editorials criticized what was regarded as an attempt to manage news.

Many of Graybill's problems with the press preceded the convention. He and his hometown newspaper, the Great Falls Tribune, had disagreed in the past, and the feud continued after the convention adjourned.

In fairness to Graybill, he was helpful to convention reporters on other occasions. He was as accessible for interviews as possible, given the convention's busy schedule. He also held several press conferences. As the presiding officer, Graybill was eminently fair and nonpartisan under trying conditions. His administrative skills and leadership were major reasons why the convention not only completed its work on time but also stayed well within its limited budget.

a tedious process

In covering a convention, reporters and editors must recognize that the pace often is slow, especially compared with the legislature. The use of a single word may be debated for hours. This tedious process does not always make for exciting news stories every day. The excitement comes when the entire document is written and everything falls into place. Though much of the coverage is dull by journalistic standards, extensive coverage is vital. A new constitution, unlike the hundreds of bills passed by the legislature, faces an ultimate test at the polls. Since voters will have the final say, convention news coverage must emphasize and interpret, as best it can, all arguments for and against proposals. Voters should not be forced to rely on the campaign propaganda disseminated by supporters or opponents of the new document.

Convention coverage tended to be more issue-oriented than did legislative reporting. Issues took precedence over politics as partisanship was repressed. Reporters found constitutional issues more complex and difficult to explain than most legislative proposals.

Reporters also discovered quickly that some delegates planned to use the convention as a springboard to run for other offices. Some of these would-be candidates tried to use the press to promote their political ambitions, but reporters generally were able to separate legitimate convention comments from blatant political grandstanding. As it turned out, a Montana Supreme Court decision following the convention prohibited delegates from seeking other offices in the 1972 election.

The convention's public-information office was of limited value to reporters except as a clearinghouse for official reports and other printed material. The office did send material to weeklies and radio-television stations that did not staff the convention. When reporters encountered problems, they usually went directly to one delegate, Fred Martin, a member of the Public Information Committee. Whether it was to get copies of roll-call votes or to lend a sympathetic ear, Martin, a long-time newspaperman, helped reporters.

Montana wire editors must have been tempted sometimes to discard or bury stories about dull topics such as separation of powers and self-government charters. But to the credit of most dailies, they ran nearly all stories filed and gave them good play.

Surprisingly, the Billings Gazette, with the largest daily circulation in Montana and one of the largest news holes, played down convention news. The state's next largest dailies, the Great Falls Tribune and the Missoulian, not only ran more convention stories than did the Gazette but displayed them more prominently, according to one study.2

Many convention stories, though, were anything but dull. Writing lively stories sometimes required a different approach. The Montana convention, for example, solicited suggestions from citizens throughout the state. Frank Adams of the Great Falls Tribune and Dennis Curran pored over these 2,000 proposals and came up with unusual and sometimes humorous accounts. Kuglin compared the 1972 convention with Montana's previous efforts at constitution writing. Adams interviewed lobbyists, who, not surprisingly, predicted the constitution would not pass.

Other stories were provided by right-wing lobbyists concerned about the League of Women Voters and other "subversive" groups promoting "one-world government."

Testimony before committees sometimes brought surprises. A sobbing woman at one hearing, for example, described her father's long, painful death and appealed for

The media in other states should learn from this Montana debacle.

legalized euthanasia. Her testimony provided a human-interest story that appeared on front pages across the country the next day. The episodes of one delegate, Robert Kelleher of Billings, could always liven a dull day. He devoted his abundant energies to an unsuccessful fight to have Montana adopt a parliamentary form of government.

The Associated Press moved stories about the North Dakota convention to Montana newspapers. When the unicameral issue came up for debate, AP carried a Nebraska reporter's assessment of his state's one-house legislature.

News coverage varied as delegates proceeded through different stages of the convention. During the several weeks of hearings, there were not enough reporters to cover all 10 committees even if we had pooled our efforts. As a wire-service reporter, I attended what I considered the most important hearings. To avoid duplication, other capital reporters did not attend the same meetings. Little time remained for enterprise reporting during the hearings, but some speculative stories, based on polls of committee members, were written.

Once the debates began, I covered the floor action and whatever sidebar material developed. Because of time limitations and the nature of wire-service coverage, my role was more of a straight news reporter and less of an analyst. Other reporters were free to write more interpretive stories about the sections of the constitution as they were approved. They also analyzed roll-call votes, elaborated in depth on some issues and wrote personality sketches about some delegates.

Late in the convention, a backlash against the press developed over a controversial right-to-know proposal. The Montana Press Association had decided not to push for an anti-secrecy provision; members believed such a section belonged in the statutes, not the constitution, and considered the First Amendment guarantees of press freedom to be adequate. Delegates proposed a section anyway. It stated that persons should not be denied the right to inspect documents or attend meetings of public agencies "except in cases in which the demand for individual privacy clearly exceeds the merits of public disclosure."

editorials criticize measure

No press opposition surfaced until the measure had passed through committee and was on the floor. Robert C. McGiffert, a University of Montana journalism professor, warned that the proposal could lessen the public's right to know. Immediately, the state's daily newspapers took up the cause. A barrage of editorials blasted the measure as "a right to conceal." The publisher of the Billings Gazette, Strand Hilleboe, wrote letters to the Yellowstone County delegates threatening to oppose the entire document unless they deleted the section. His newspaper also carried a rare front-page editorial criticizing the proposal. Many delegates considered the publisher's actions heavy-handed. They also resented the Press Association manager using his reporter's floor privileges to lobby against the section. Not about to be intimidated, the delegates overwhelmingly voted to retain the right-to-know section as it was proposed. Unfortunately, it is part of Montana's new constitution.

As an editorial in the Missoulian noted, convention reporters had mixed feelings. They hated to see the right-to-know section pass but had to laugh at the bumbling lobbying efforts of the publishers and the Press Association. "They felt ashamed at the conduct of some of the brass of their own business and resented the inclination of some delegates to think reporters were acting as lobbyists for the papers they serve," the editorial said.

Press and broadcasting organizations in other states should learn from this Montana debacle. They should stay on top of the right-to-know issue in constitutional conventions and legislatures since it affects them more than any other group. They should make their stand known during committee hearings and not wait until the last minute as Montana newspapers did. Others found time to testify during committee hearings. There is no reason why Montana press and broadcasting organizations did not follow the same rules. After all, Montana newspapers have criticized other businesses for receiving special treatment from state agencies so they should not expect privileges themselves.

The ratification campaign for Montana's new constitution was intentionally short—two-and-one-half months. Delegates settled on the June primary date because they feared interest might wane by November, especially in competing for attention with the national and state races in 1972. They also knew that a short campaign would hinder attempts to organize opposition to the document. As a result, postconvention coverage took on added importance.

The Associated Press ran a 10-part series, and the Lee State Bureau carried a 21-article series to explain the new constitution. Those articles attempted to popularize and explain in simple terms how the new constitution would affect the average citizen. To explain the complicated voter-review section of the local-government article, one AP story began: "Maybe voters still can't beat city hall or the courthouse, but they can do away with them under the proposed constitution."

Opponents of the new constitution, while hard-pressed for time, had no trouble airing their views in the newspapers and on radio and television. They had plenty of spokesmen, including nine of the 100 convention delegates. Those nine delegates came out against the document though they signed it during formal closing ceremonies.

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Most of the opposition focused on the taxation article. Many farmers and ranchers feared the implications of shifting the administration of property taxes from the county to the state. They also worried about removal of the two-mill limit on property-tax levies and believed their taxes might skyrocket if the constitution passed.

Joining them in opposition to the new document was the powerful highway lobby, comprising contractors, trucking firms, oil companies, car dealers, the state’s American Automobile Association and some labor unions. They objected to a modification of the existing anti-diversion section, which earmarked fuel- and vehicle-tax funds for highway construction only. The new constitution allows earmarked highway funds to be spent for other purposes by a three-fifths vote of the legislature.

While anticipating opposition to the anti-diversion section, reporters somewhat underestimated the unpopularity of the property-tax changes in rural Montana. The new constitution failed in 44 of the 56 counties, most of them rural, largely because of those taxation sections. Other controversial issues—such as gun control, capital punishment and gambling—drew more heated debate on the convention floor. But reporters relearned an old lesson: A voter’s reaction to a proposal usually can be measured by how much he thinks it will cost him.

While reporters never hesitated to criticize the work of the convention, most believed the delegates had done a fine job. Some reporters would have preferred more reforms, but most, if not all, regarded the new constitution as a substantial improvement. Capital reporters, perhaps more than many delegates and residents, were aware of the numerous shortcomings of the old constitution.

But reporters did not, as some opponents charged, carry the torch for the new constitution. They pointed out its weaknesses, reported embarrassing incidents and provided a forum for opponents as well as supporters of the new charter after the convention adjourned. One reporter aptly described the role of the press and the convention’s image at a meeting before working sessions began. Speaking to members of the convention’s Public Information Committee, Dan Foley said: “We are not interested in creating a good image; we are interested in creating an accurate image. We hope an accurate image will be a good image; but if it is a bad image, we will report it accurately.” That is what reporters tried to do at the 1971-1972 Montana Constitutional Convention.

A Note on Language

By Arthur Schlesinger Jr.*

The intellectual exhaustion of the Foreign Service expressed itself in the poverty of the official rhetoric. In meetings the men from State would talk in a bureaucratic patois borrowed in large part from the Department of Defense. We would be exhorted to “zero in” on “the purpose of the drill” (or of the “exercise” or “operation”), to “crank in” this and “phase out” that and “gin up” something else, to “pinpoint” a “viable” policy and, behind it, a “fall-back position,” to ignore the “flak” from competing government bureaus or from the communists, to refrain from “nit-picking” and never to be “counterproductive.” Once we were “seized of the problem,” preferably in as “hard-nosed” a manner as possible, we would review “options,” discuss “over-all” objectives, seek “break-throughs,” consider “crash programs,” “staff our” policies—doing all these things preferably “meaningfully” and “in depth” until we were ready to “finalize” our deliberations, “sign on to” or “sign off on” a conclusion (I never could discover the distinction, if any, between these two locations) and “implement” a decision. This was not just shorthand; part of the conference-table vocabulary involved a studied multiplication of words. Thus one never talked about a “paper” but always a “piece of paper,” never said “at this point” but always “at this point in time.”

Graceless as this patois was, it did have a certain, if sometimes spurious, air of briskness and efficiency. The result was far worse when the Department stopped talking and started writing. Whether drafting memoranda, cables or even letters or statements for the President, the department fell into full, ripe, dreariness of utterance with hideous ease. The recipe was evidently to take a handful of clichés (saying something in a fresh way might create unforeseen troubles), repeat at five-minute intervals (lest the argument become clear or interesting), stir in the dough of the passive voice (the active voice assigns responsibility and was therefore hazardous) and garnish with self-serving rhetoric (Congress would be unhappy unless we constantly proclaimed the rectitude of American motives).

Carnahan and the Custer Massacre

By ARTHUR L. STONE

The late Arthur L. Stone founded the Montana School of Journalism in 1914 and served as dean until his retirement in 1942. This article appeared in the January, 1915, issue of the Quill.

Fifty-three years of continuous service at the telegraph key, most of it in western frontier offices, is the record of John M. Carnahan of Missoula, Montana, who retired January 1, 1915, under the pension system of Western Union Telegraph Company. This record, of itself, would be sufficient to make noteworthy the life work of John Carnahan, but it is not the quantity of his labor so much as the quality that merits recognition, by newspaper workers, of the performance of this veteran of the key.

During his long years of frontier service, Carnahan handled many important messages, but of them all there is none of greater historical or news value than the telegram that he clicked off, on the night of July 6, 1876, from the office in Bismarck, North Dakota, when he gave to the world its first word of the Custer Massacre on the Little Big Horn in Montana.

For it was Carnahan who broke this news to the east. Without warning this great story flashed and the way it was told to the east is well worth permanent record in newspaper history.

Carnahan was in charge of the Bismarck telegraph office, the west end of the wire at that time. He was manager and operator and clerk. When Custer, in June, 1876, led his famous Seventh Cavalry from the fort to punish the Sioux, Carnahan and Dr. Porter, the post surgeon, rode 12 miles with the expedition. Then they said their good-byes and turned back, while the troops rode on into the Bad Lands of Eastern Montana.

No word came to the fort from the expedition until the night of July 5, when the steamer Far West arrived at Bismarck bearing the wounded of Reno's command and the official reports of the terrible battle that had utterly wiped out the finest regiment in the United States service. It was like a bolt from a clear sky. Nobody had dreamed of the failure of Custer's punitive expedition.

It was late in the night of July 5 when the Far West docked at Bismarck. On the morning of July 6, Carnahan found on his desk a carpetbag filled with official dispatches, containing the news of the fearful disaster which had occurred days before in the broken country on the Little Big Horn.

It was a discouraging prospect for a one-man telegraph office. But Carnahan attacked the big job and the way he got away with it is one of the remarkable records of telegraph service. He flashed the news of the massacre to the St. Paul office, then bent to his task.

With scarcely a break, Carnahan pounded the key for 21 hours before he took a bit of rest. At 5 o'clock on the morning of July 7, he lay down for a three-hour nap. At 8 o'clock he was again at the key and he sent continuously for 20 hours before he reached the end of the last official dispatch. It was 4 o'clock on the morning of July 8 when the last signature was checked off.

The office report showed that 80,000 words had been sent by this one man during those two sessions at the key. The tolls amounted to more than $3,000.

Meanwhile, the eastern newspapers had been clamoring for the story of the battle. Official business had the right of way over anything else, and it was not until he had disposed of the official dispatches that he could give any attention to the newspapers, imperative as were their demands.

Tired as he was, Carnahan, with characteristic good nature, complied as best he could with the call of the press. He framed and sent a summary of the official story of the battle.
This was sent to the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, the *Chicago Inter-Ocean* and the *New York Herald*. This done, he sought his bed and rested. While he slept, the world read the news that he had sent.

He wakened to face orders for more news. He responded as best he could. Then came the special correspondents of the eastern newspapers. And their stories had to be transmitted by wire. It was a busy month in that little old office in Bismarck.

The *New York Herald*’s correspondent, O’Kelley, came to the railway terminal and went on up the Missouri and the Yellowstone, there to see for himself the scene of the encounter. It was late in July when his story got back for Carnahan to handle. O’Kelley had made it up into two books, each an inch thick, with sheets 12 inches long and 6 inches wide. There was nothing omitted—that was no skeleton report—every comma and every article and preposition had to be sent. The *Herald* wanted complete copy. There were scores of pages and each sheet was written on both sides. Carnahan checked 22,000 words in this dispatch. The tolls to the *Herald* were $1,320. There were other correspondents and other stories, but this was the biggest one of the lot. When Carnahan had sent the signature, O’Kelley handed him a fifty-dollar bill for himself.

**On Betraying Confidences**

By Russell Stannard*

I take most satisfaction in the fact that I have never betrayed a confidence, that I have never given away, no matter how great the pressure put upon me, anyone who has secretly, and in good faith, given me information for the newspapers I have worked for. To be faithless to such a trust I regard as the cardinal sin of journalism. A few cases of this kind that I know of personally were to be deeply deplored. The really bad offenders have never prospered.

*From Mr. Stannard’s book, *With the Dictators of Fleet Street*. Mr. Stannard was editor of the *Daily Express* in London.
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Robert C. McGiffert  
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B.S., M.S., University of Wisconsin; M.S., Columbia University. Mr. Reynolds, editorial-page editor of the Missoulian (Mont.) Missoulian since 1964, also served as a visiting lecturer at the journalism school in 1967 and from 1970 to the present. A former reporter for the Wisconsin State Journal at Madison, he has contributed articles to the Masthead and to Montana Journalism Review.
The media view the women's movement as an event, a spectacle—often an amusement—instead of the root of a possible revolution in living styles. . . . The press should be the predictor, the digger, the announcer of injustices, of movements, of changes. But it is not; it is often the last to change. The subject of women has received more than its share of press resistance to change. Gloria Steinem said to the American Newspaper Publishers Association: "We don't see much innovation in journalism." She was too kind.

Ronnene Anderson