Montana Journalism Review

Volume 1
Issue 21 Issue 21, 1978-1979

1978

Montana Journalism Review, 1978-1979

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

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Gurnie Moss was a teacher, coach and school administrator who at age 35 decided that he wanted to publish a weekly newspaper. So he bought the Whitefish Pilot on Oct. 1, 1919, and served as its editor and publisher for exactly 40 years.

Mr. Moss was born Feb. 1, 1884, in Forest City, Mo. A recipient of several college scholarships, he earned a degree in science from Drake University and a degree in philosophy from the University of Chicago. He did graduate work in education at Columbia University.

After teaching at the Culver Military Academy, Mr. Moss moved to Great Falls to become a high school teacher and football coach. He later was superintendent of schools at Valier.

He was elected in 1925 to the Montana House of Representatives, where he served for 14 years and was named minority leader. He then served 12 years in the Montana Senate, where he was majority leader and president pro tempore. He is remembered for his influential role in bills on highway construction and school finance.

During his first term in the House, he participated in the impeachment of his friend Secretary of State Charles T. Stewart. Mr. Moss observed: “You’ve got to have honesty in public office.”

Mr. Moss served as president of the Montana Press Association in 1922 and in 1924 became a member of the executive committee of the National Editorial Association. In 1925 he declined an invitation to become president of the NEA because he thought his duties as a state legislator were more important.

Mr. Moss’ news editor from November, 1950, to March, 1953, was Dorothy M. Johnson, who achieved national stature as a novelist and short-story writer.

After his retirement in 1959, Mr. Moss remained active in community affairs. He helped found the Whitefish Housing Authority and became one of its directors.

In November, 1972, a month and a half before his death at age 88, Mr. Moss insisted on being taken from his nursing home to the polls, noting that his first presidential vote was for William Howard Taft. Mr. Moss died Dec. 26, 1972.

Gurnie Moss
1884-1972
Twenty-Second 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 every two years. A candidate may be nominated five years after his death.
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The first journalism review in the United States—established 1958.

The Montana Journalism Review is published 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 the University. Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles and for the accuracy of statements rests solely with the individual authors.

Warren J. Brier, Editor

Published by ScholarWorks at University of Montana, 2015
The Media and Montana

By NATHANIEL BLUMBERG

Dr. Blumberg served as a University of Montana journalism professor from September, 1956, through June, 1978, and as dean of the School of Journalism from 1956 to 1968. This speech, subtitled “A First Farewell Address,” was given May 5, 1978, at the 21st annual Dean Stone Night journalism awards banquet. The following comments came after introductory remarks that included, inter alia, the statement that he is “fulfilling a plan made several years ago to resign from the University of Montana in order to do other things.”

A few weeks ago when I asked my friends on the journalism faculty what I should talk about, one of them replied: “Talk about the things you have come to believe.” Well, I wrote the speech and I figured it ran about 2 hours and 27 minutes and it would turn into Dean Stone Week if I used all of it. So I took out a long chapter about the University of Montana, and then another long part about the School of Journalism, and then the part about the nine stories I’m afraid—genuinely afraid—to publish. Then I ripped out my lists of the Ten Biggest Stories of the Year That Never Made the Wire Service Lists of the 10 Biggest Stories of the Year. For instance, one of the biggest stories of 1976 was published far back in the newspapers I examined, if it was published at all. It reported that the New York State Medical College was introducing its first course in history on the subject of nutrition. Well, you can read that story as if it were announcing that a medical school was adding another course to its curriculum, which is the way a lot of people must have read it. But if you stare at that story, what it tells you about the medical profession and its approach to health and illness for lo these many years ought to astonish any reader. One of the 10 biggest stories of 1977 never made any list either. That was the Associated Press report of a survey done by Nursing magazine—a survey of more than 10,000 nurses that found that 38 percent of them would not like to be patients in their own hospitals. Concerning health care across the country, only 3 percent of the nurses thought it was excellent. That’s not a big story; it’s a terrifying story.

If you saw those stories, you would recognize them as forerunners of one of the biggest stories here in Missoula thus far in 1978—the seminar on self-care, the wave of the future that the American Medical Association and hospital executives are never going to hold back. I have a hunch that the press is going to play a larger role in the crusade for preventive medicine, the doctrine that you keep yourself healthy by treating the body as a temple instead of as a garbage dump for franchised and processed food.

Two of my other nominations for the biggest stories of the year during the same period never made any lists either. The first was the observation of the Chief Justice of the United States that 50 percent of the trial lawyers in this country are incompetent. And when the estimate comes from Chief Justice Warren Burger, you can be sure it’s a conservative estimate. The second story was that the American Bar Association conducted its own survey and disputed Burger’s figure—the ABA contended that only 20 percent of the trial lawyers are incompetent. How I wish Lenny Bruce were alive to report all these statistics. “Whew!” he would say. . . .

In the course of all this trimming, I also took out 34 enormously hilarious lines (like this one: You know, the journalism faculty seems to spend a lot of time worrying that the person who thought up Interpersonal Communications may be thinking about something else).

If what remains strikes you as dull and uninspired, I hope you will accept this explanation. . . .

One of the things I have come to believe is that the news media (a term I use reluctantly, but as shorthand for newspapers, newsmagazines, and radio and
television news programs) in the United States have been caught up in the most significant cultural revolution of this century. The progress in news reporting since the start of this decade has been greater than the improvements made in all of the first six decades of the 20th Century. I refer to the incredibly rapid—and supremely satisfying—transformation in the approach to subjects that formerly were ignored, overlooked or even regarded as taboo to the press. As a student of press performance for the past 30 years—during which I frequently felt like a very lonesome academic proctologist—the conclusion that I could not escape, although others escaped it with the ease of a Houdini, was that the daily press and newsmagazines reflected essentially the views of the wealthy and the powerful—the corporations and the government. When it came to editorial support of political candidates for high office, we had a one-party press, an overwhelming majority of daily newspapers editorially committed to preserving the status quo and the interests of those who profited from the status quo. In the approach to news, the sins were essentially ones of omission: The basic issues almost never examined, the institutions rarely investigated, the politicians hardly ever challenged, the law-enforcement officials and courts and jails and prisons subjected only to brief flurries of exposure, usually sensational and usually quickly forgotten by both press and public.

In this atmosphere we got Dwight Eisenhower and Dick Nixon and Joe McCarthy and the Korean War and the pathetic congressional witch hunts and the apathetic 50s and then the civil rights struggle and the assassinations and Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey and Dick Nixon again.

Literally, it has been only in recent years—and in some cases, only in recent days—that the large-circulation press has reported without reservation, for example, about the candy and cereal and snack companies that offer to rot the teeth of our children and fill their stomachs with crap. It is safe to say, from a careful reading of many publications, that millions of Americans have had their eyes opened to the fact that there are along Madison Avenue and its environs human beings who are perfectly willing to profit from the exploitation of the minds and bodies of the very young, especially on the television tube, and who growl savagely when it is suggested that they are making their living in a way that is fundamentally immoral. And that goes double for the corporations that manufacture and distribute those dangerous substances.

taboo smashed

We can rejoice in the fact that the news media in this decade, for example, have smashed the two most persistent taboos of our society: The public discussion of matters relating to death and matters relating to sex and sexuality. With it has come the vast cultural alteration in which the traditional burial practices of our society are no longer being followed by many persons, and no documentation is necessary to prove the widespread and open discussions of human sexuality, homosexuality, sexual dysfunctions, abortion, the assaults on wives and women and children and infants, to mention a few topics long buried by the press.

The difference between the extensive coverage of environmental issues of every kind in the 1970s and the refusal to face those issues in the 1960s is as day and night. One need only look back on the reception given by the mass media and other corporate advertisers to Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* in the early 60s. The massacre of that book and that lovely woman is a monument to stupidity, cupidity and callousness that stands high in the garbage heaps of modern journalism. And that book was a comparatively gentle, moderate warning of what we were doing to the earth and to the inhabitants of earth—including ourselves. She went to an earlier grave, perhaps, but she gave us an early warning of what the chemical industry was doing—manufacturing in great quantities both dangerous poisons and dangerous lies.

Look at the stunning change in attitudes toward the weeds of death—cigarettes—now widely reported and sometimes aggressively denounced in the opinion columns of the press. Much space has been given to the problem of alcoholism, although the media have exposed only the tip of the icicles. [I just stuck that in to see if you were hanging on my every word.] It is interesting that Betty Ford—that marvelous woman! What is she doing married to him?—seemingly has now thrice scooped the press, setting off a flurry of stories about radical mastectomies, the problem of alcoholism among women and the widespread suffering from drug “over-medication”—a euphemism of classic proportions. Her magnificent candor has turned the spotlight on the fact that the major drug problems in America are not what the government and law-enforcement officials have been trying to hard-sell to us, but are rather the problems of drugs prescribed by physicians, and of alcohol and tobacco—all of which are pushed by the mass media, are highly addictive, inevitably harmful, and intrinsically as dangerous to mind as they are to body. (And just yesterday Mrs. Ford said she is getting excellent results from acupuncture—another subject treated as only a step above a joke in much of the mass media.)

The record of news coverage of government and corporations is a mixed bag. Enormous strides have been made in both areas, but it is a sad fact of life that whenever the spotlight is turned off, even briefly, more shenanigans take place in the dark.

My favorite humor magazine, the *Harvard Business*
Montana Journalism Review, for some months has been running very funny articles about how the press is mistreating the corporations of America and how furious the executives have become at the news media. Then Atlantic magazine, traditional spokesman for the snug and smug along the eastern seaboard, joined the act in April with one of the silliest articles that even that magazine has dared to publish. It is a piece written by a management professor who once was managing editor of Fortune magazine. No good purpose would be served by taking time here to point out the ludicrous evidence, the fallacies, the failures of logic, the convoluted arguments that come around to bang into each other, and the basic premise, which is that the media provide "a perverted picture of the nation's principal achievement," which is Big Business. As a result, he informs us, "it will be very difficult indeed to keep alive the yeast of corporate enterprise and the rate of growth and creation of wealth to which society has become accustomed." It is hopeless to argue with one of this kind or a Milton Friedman, who openly, unashamedly insists that the only social function of a corporation is to meet demands and make a profit.

Rather, let me suggest what has happened to the reporting of news in recent years.

Until this decade, the corporations had almost nothing to fear from the organs of mass circulation or mass audience, which aided and abetted them in several important ways: First, open hostility in their reporting of those persons and organizations who brought forth new ideas or were trying to bring a greater degree of social or economic justice to this nation. (The words of H. L. Mencken, published in 1920, rang true for 50 more years: "What chiefly distinguishes the daily press of the United States from the press of all other countries pretending to culture is its incurable fear of ideas, its constant effort to evade the discussion of fundamentals by translating all issues into a few elemental fears, its incessant reduction of all reflection to mere emotion. It is, in the true sense, never well-informed.")

A second way news media helped to secure the status quo was by not printing or broadcasting unfavorable stories, or if killing the stories was too blatant they buried them alive next to the classified ads.

The third technique was simply not to encourage reporters to do the kinds of investigative reporting that would reveal to the public the countless infamies that have become the staple of reporting in the 70s. There were, of course, some notable exceptions, but instead of being regarded as almost routine, as they are now, they would be nominated for Pulitzer Prizes. The coverup of Richard Nixon by major newspapers and magazines between 1946, when what Mike Royko recently termed "Our National Wart" first appeared, until after the 1972 election was safely tucked away is a matter of record that has been lost in the self-congratulations following Watergate. Even more obsequious treatment was accorded to the corporations.

**Millions of Protesters**

In the tumult of the 60s, the gap between the values of the corporate state and the values of growing numbers of citizens became a central fact of our time. Millions of people, mostly young, began protesting the fact that the corporations of the United States had been deputized, in effect, by the federal government not only to supply the munitions for the military machine but to take control of other aspects of our daily life, without either the advice or consent of the voters. And the news media were perceived by many to be in league with the corporations and the government.

Then it came to pass that subjects rarely discussed in the mass media of the 1960s are rampant everywhere in the late 1970s—on our front pages, in general-circulation magazines, in movies, on television, in books and on radio. The iconoclastic journalism of a decade ago—the seemingly outrageous eagerness of the underground or alternative press to explore subjects long kept hidden from millions of Americans by the orthodox press—now appears tame as many of the artifacts of the so-called counter-culture of the 60s have become familiar to the common culture of the 70s.

In the aftermath of the national quake of the 60s, the news media began to really report on some of the things that were happening in this country. The established press, staffed by a new breed of young reporters and some editors and publishers who delighted in throwing off their shackles, without any apparent embarrassment transferred the philosophy and techniques of the alternative press to their own papers. But other factors contributed to the transformation. The corporations were mating obscenely in public or were swallowing one another like the fish of the ocean until all we could see were sharks (the corporations restlessly cruising in search of more to devour) and the whales (the conglomerates so huge and so obese that they could barely breathe through their blowholes). The excesses of these corporations and their contempt for the laws of the land led the more enlightened editors and publishers to part company from their friends at the country club. And I suspect there was yet another reason for the transformation of the news columns—one that isn't expressed in public very often by journalists, but which I believe should be said. It is that men and women of the working press had finally had it up to here from the armies of public relations specialists attached to the corporations like barnacles on boat bottoms.

To put it bluntly, most of these people have an
entirely different set of values from most newsmen. Members of the working press, like everyone else, have some minor prejudices—a lot of them, for instance, don’t like professors—but I can safely say that the major, almost universal prejudice is an unmitigated dislike for the requirements of the occupation pursued by people in public relations. Not all of them, but too many of them, stand in the way of most journalists’ pursuit of the truth. Add that one fact to the other fact that we had a lot of new journalists with—as they say—a “raised consciousness” and you get a sum that explains why we suddenly had a press that was telling a bit of the truth about corporations.

Now the front pages and Walter Cronkite and even the newsmagazines tell us about oil spills and cars being recalled almost as fast as they are peddled and illegal campaign contributions and indictments of FBI agents who violated the law and how sugar and chemicals and dyes and preservatives are pumped into a myriad of products and Ford Pintos that explode in rear-end collisions and corporation executives indicted for helping overthrow a foreign government that led to the murder of a democratically elected president (although the Justice Department let the man most responsible, the head of ITT, go scot-free) and on and on and on. . . .

The government and the corporations, needless to say, don’t like it. But that’s what the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States is, in part, about. Now in the ads and commercials we are getting all these commitments to the environment and health and conservation and solar energy and naturally we hope they are sincere. If they are sincere, they will prosper; all the signs I see point in the direction that the concept of individual responsibility and social responsibility is going to be a paramount consideration of the next decade.

The basis of that heartening belief is that the news media at long last have begun to emphasize the positive aspects of life, the ways in which we can improve the conditions of life. The agenda that was set in the 60s emerged from a vision of this magnificent country in which everyone, regardless of origin or age or sex, could share the opportunity to live and work in a way of their choosing, so long as they did no harm to others. The goal at that time was also to see that never again would our young males be sent off to be maimed or to die on foreign battlefields for causes that are not and never have been in our national interest. Our sources of information of wide circulation are doing an infinitely better job of telling us not only about the demonstrations but also about the reasons for the demonstrations. One lesson that has not been lost is that the American people suffered the agonies of Vietnam because the news media provided a vast forum for the official views of the State Department, the Pentagon and the White House, but failed to report the arguments, the opinions and the information provided by those committed to peace.

Another reason that news coverage has improved so impressively is the large number of women in journalism who finally have been given a chance. They have had a notable influence in enlarging and civilizing the definition of news by bringing into question traditional male values, particularly the more macho values. It has been most evident in television news, where the Barbara Walters breakthrough opened the way for a lot of women and, come June, the departure of Harry Reasoner. (Imagine: Within the space of a single year, we are rid of Reasoner and Eric Sevareid, and it is clear that Howard and David are hanging on by their fingernails.) A lot of stories are being reported that weren’t reported before, and the women journalists are doing many of them. The enormous improvements in so-called women’s pages are another reflection of rapidly changing societal values; and if you want to enjoy a pleasurable shock, go to the library and check the women’s pages—or “society pages,” as they used to be called—of 20 or even 10 years ago.

One can be equally sanguine when looking at prospects for journalism in Montana. In the smaller towns with daily newspapers, there have been encouraging signs that some of them are willing to tackle serious local problems both in the news and editorial columns. And some of the weeklies are getting more feisty. It was a weekly newspaper publisher, Larry Bowler of the Daniels County Leader, who recently told his readers about how the law-enforcement officers in Scobey were derelict in their duties, were concealing or not recording public records, and were pushing people around (led by the “bully boy chief of police”). Larry went through a tough libel suit and the Montana Supreme Court exonerated him in a unanimous decision, which ought to give heart to all those timid papers and stations out there when confronted with lawbreakers. Montanans are an exceptionally tolerant breed, by and large, but from the days of the copper barons through the 1972 gubernatorial campaign to the present, we have been far too tolerant of corruption in our midst.

the lee newspapers

A few candid words about the Lee newspapers: Back in 1956, when I came to Montana, all three branches of the state government were wholly-owned subsidiaries of the Montana Twins—the Anaconda Company and the Montana Power Company. In addition, Anaconda owned the daily newspapers in six cities, including four of our five largest cities—all except the then locally-owned Great Falls Tribune. One reason I accepted the position of dean here was that I had a substantial tip from friends in the nation’s capital that Anaconda had definite plans to get out of the newspaper business. Three years later, Anaconda sold its papers to Lee, and we
can be thankful that it was Don Anderson and not any of the several other bidders who won out. The Anaconda Company performed two great public services to the state of Montana: It sold its papers to the most decent of the chains that were bidding for them, and it subsequently began its withdrawal from state politics, except to retain a lobby to pursue its legitimate interests. The Lee newspapers have been good for Montana, and I sincerely hope that Lloyd Schermer does not succumb to the tempting offers from larger chains. The Lee papers deserve a large amount of the credit for many of the progressive and even exemplary happenings in this state in recent years.

The goal of the Lee newspapers has been clearly delineated—and I speak with some knowledge, having worked for three years in Nebraska as associate editor and editorial writer for the Lincoln Star, a Lee newspaper. That was long ago, but I have detected no significant change in Lee personnel policies: They seek to produce good newspapers. In almost all cases, they have succeeded. The Lee papers in Montana rank well in quality compared with papers of similar circulation in the country. However, at the risk of bringing up a sensitive point with a man who buys newsprint by the carload, I would like to humbly petition Lloyd Schermer to raise the goal a bit higher: That Lee in Montana should produce not just good newspapers but great newspapers.

One of the pleasures of my time here has been knowing almost all of the editors of the Lee papers. They generally have been good and decent men, and given the fact that they operate on budgets, even as you and I, they are justly proud of what they call “the bottom line”—the profits that go to Lee from Montana. They are equally proud of their autonomy, which is another of Lee’s splendid policies. But if they had a little more money, and cooperated just a bit more with one another, it is possible that they could solve one of Montana’s long-standing and continuing difficulties.

I refer to the matter of provincialism bordering on hostility within the state, primarily but not exclusively Western Montana versus Eastern Montana. It shows up in politics, in elections, in all three branches of state government, and especially in higher education. Those Montanans concerned with environmental issues have broken through this curtain of sectional rivalry and have demonstrated an interest in anything that might affect the condition of any part of Montana. However, they are communicating with each other in their private publications. When I think of how the papers in Billings, Butte, Helena and Missoula could help us all, I am eager to plead for their attention. It is as simple as this: Break down the artificial barriers of provincialism and consider all of Montana as your news beat.

It would cost not a cent, or at worst, only a few cents. It would simply entail giving the readers of the Missoulian, for example, a chance at the best and most significant stories published in the Gazette, the Standard and the Independent Record. Instead of relying on the Associated Press for truncated versions the following day or—as most often happens—nothing at all, readers in every part of Montana would acquire a sense of oneness that is now lacking. I submit the proposition that there are countless stories that never get out of the city that should be given the prominence statewide that they received in their original publications. I think that writers like Rick Foote and Don Schwenneken and the other fine writers on the Lee newspapers deserve a far wider audience than they now enjoy. It would help to ease the sectional ignorance and rivalries fostered by some politicians or those with narrow special interests in one area of our state. It would, in sum, enlighten the citizenry, and that should be the first function of any newspaper that aspires to public trust and confidence. And I’m sure it would boost the morale of the really outstanding writers on the Lee papers.

Another way to deal with the problem of regional animosities is to beef up the State Bureau in Helena. Many of us have been saddened by what appears to be a policy abandonment of hard-hitting investigative reporting, of muckraking, of discovering and delving into stories that now go unreported. Let me say without reservation: I believe that the adoption of the Montana Constitution—the most enlightened state constitution in the United States—and the passage of the series of environmental laws of the early 1970s—laws that distinguish Montana from its neighboring states—stem directly from the extraordinary earlier reporting out of our state capital by Jerry Holloron and Dan Foley, whom I believe to be the two best investigative reporters in the history of this state. They deserve, along with the Lee newspapers that gave them a free hand, a good share of the credit for making possible the kind of open, honest environment that subsequently made possible the kind of legislation that served the public interest, rather than corporate interests. It is beyond proof, but some politicians and lawyers and judges never would have been able to get away with some of the things they have gotten away with in the last three or four years if there had been in Helena tough, skilled investigative reporters who asked the next questions after other reporters stopped asking questions. If for no other reason, the Lee newspapers should take steps to end the dominance of the Great Falls Tribune State Bureau in Helena, which seems to be winning every match there by a score of thirteen to three.

And now to add a new verse to an old song. The Lee newspapers seek to attract investors by advertising impressive net profits from their extensive holdings. A significant part of those profits comes from Montana. I’m not knocking that fact; if there is one thing I like very much it is a newspaper making a lot of money.
The more money it makes the more easily it can reject the heavy hand of advertisers or pressure groups. All I am suggesting is what others and I have suggested many times before, and that is the pressing need for at least a one-person bureau in Washington, D.C., to cover both the performance of our elected representatives and the legislation that affects the future—and indeed, some would say, the very existence as we know it—of the state of Montana. Now, more than ever before, even desperately, we need an early-warning system to alert us to the efforts being made, openly and especially covertly, to turn this state into an energy engine for the rest of the country.

A conspiracy

What I have just suggested is no exaggeration. For example, we in Missoula have suffered since 1958 from a pulp mill that literally is killing some of us—if not all of us. That pulp mill is the result of a conspiracy between the company that built it and the Anaconda-owned Missoulian. The citizens of this town were intentionally kept in the dark and then lied to until the plant was an accomplished fact. I cite that bit of ancient history as only a small example of what can happen if the media of this state do not protect us, and it is nothing compared to the corporate plundering now in the hopper and intended for execution with the aid of agencies of the federal government. We in Montana need a first-rate reporter—someone like Dan Foley or Jack Cloherty—to tell us what is going on in that Gomorrah-on-the-Potomac, and if the Lee newspapers don’t provide that service, I hope Bill Cordingley and the Great Falls Tribune will. Or, better yet, both of them.

Speaking of the Tribune, it has had its problems, but it appears to be coming out of them with renewed strength. Some of the points directed at the Lee papers would apply equally to the Tribune, for it is the only paper that circulates through almost all of the state. Its major problem will be solved when its new presses go into operation next year and the paper no longer looks as if it had been printed by John Peter Zenger.

A vigorous, independent press is absolutely essential if Montana is to save itself. This fact became clear six months after I arrived in this state 22 years ago. I chose to stay, to work, and to rear my children here. Every decision has its cost, but the only price I paid was giving up greater financial remuneration. It also meant that enough dues were being paid so that I could say to the seniors every year, in good conscience, that they should devote their talents and energies to Montana. To those who wanted to leave, I said goodspeed, but when you are ready to return, after seeing what is going on in Denver or Boston or L.A. or wherever, come back and devote your efforts to keep all those things from happening to Montana.

Here’s a story:

Montana Journalism Review

Back in the 50s, as some of you may recall, I used to suggest that Montana ought to secede from the Union. It was half as a jest and half as a philosophical exercise akin to debating how many angels could dance on the head of a pin. Even in those days of the silent generation of students, I would note how, toward the end of a class period, some eyes would take on an unusual glint, as if they had seen something they hadn’t known was there.

Then in the 60s some of us moved on to ponder briefly the principle of non-violent resistance to the federal government. I say “briefly” because when we wondered whether federal troops would fire on an unarmed Montanan, we quickly realized that there hardly is such a thing as an unarmed Montanan.

So we moved on to the possibility of seceding and then immediately applying for foreign aid—noting that the United States government is infinitely more generous to other countries than it is to its own needy citizens.

Then one student urged armed rebellion for the simple pleasure of seeing which side the Havre Daily News would editorially support.

Would soldiers from Georgia and Ohio and Vermont fire on the Montana Militia? We weren’t certain, although we were confident that the boys from Texas would fire on anything. We examined Thoreau and Ghandi and Tolstoy to see if civil disobedience or passive resistance would work, and accepted the conclusion of a student from Troy, Montana, who said that any philosophy based on the writings of two foreigners and a nut who ate berries was doomed in this state.

Another student suggested we should be open and above board and issue a declaration of war on the United States. But we backed off pretty fast when we saw what happened to Vietnam and Cambodia without a declaration of war.

Then came a close study of the Civil War, to see what merit there might be in the arguments of the seceding states of the South when they invoked the principle of “interposition”—that is, the right of a state government to “interpose” itself between the federal government and the citizens of a state. That doctrine has found little favor in the United States Supreme Court, which, interestingly enough, is a branch of the federal government that is a party to the case. We agreed unanimously to abandon that strategy, especially when we considered what the Union troops did to Atlanta when the South tried it.

In the early 70s we examined the theories of Charles Reich in The Greening of America, a book not without a certain sappiness but nonetheless a book that did not deserve being savaged by the reviewers and hatchet-mongers who bitterly resent anyone who writes as clearly as Reich on some sensitive subjects. Perhaps his most fascinating concept was that there is a revolution under way that is unlike revolutions of
the past, that has originated with the individual and with culture, and that if it succeeds will change the political structure “only as its final act.” The corollary to the thesis was that it will not require violence to succeed and cannot be successfully resisted by violence. The ultimate creation, he concluded, could be a more human community with a higher reason, and a new and liberated individual. In some observable ways his predictions are coming true.

And then, in the throes of serendipity, I stumbled across the concept that may offer a way to prevent Montana from becoming a duplicate of all the other states of America ravaged by congestion, crime, screaming sirens, pollution, fast-food franchises, shopping centers and a way of life that millions of our fellow citizens find unsatisfying, stultifying, depressing, even humiliating. From out of the discussions over many years came the ultimate rallying cry: “The solution is not revolution; the solution is not just evolution; the solution is devolution!”

Devolution is the key to the tactics and strategy of the Scottish Nationalists who are struggling to give Scotland a chance to decide its own destiny. In fact, devolution is the transfer of authority from a higher level of government to a lower one and is close to—but not exactly—what we call home rule. In Montana we have debated and voted on the issue of home rule for cities; but no one, to my knowledge, has attempted to apply the same principle to the strained and now often antagonistic relationship between state government and the federal government. The idea is to begin seriously and strenuously pressing the government of the United States to devolve power on its subdivisions—that is, the states. The case for Montana is perhaps most clearcut (and I use that word advisedly); but if other states want to secure the same benefits, more power to them. One quick example of what could be accomplished would be in the payment of income taxes. We now send all that money to Washington, where it passes into the tunnels of bureaucracy and some of it is returned in the guise of “revenue-sharing” so that we can pay for unessential projects while essential services are strapped or scrapped. With devolution, a percentage of that money automatically would stay right here to do what we in the state think is best. Other benefits of the devolutionary movement are even more tangible and inviting. We can adopt the aphorism: Ask not what your country can do for you—do it yourself.

I’m going to have a lot more to say about the future of this state in months to come, but what we need are more crackpots like Tom Paine, probably the greatest journalist this country ever produced, who changed the perceptions of thousands of colonists when he became the first person to write the words: “United States of America.” His writings rallied a citizen army, but more importantly he demonstrated that what was taking place was not a civil war but a revolution. As then, we need a press to match the vision of what tomorrow could be.

**The vision of Camus**

One man with that kind of vision was also one of the greatest journalists of this century, Albert Camus. He was the most brilliant writer of the underground press during the Nazi occupation of France, and the articles that ran in his clandestine newspaper reflect his extraordinary vision of the future—a vision he did not live to see and a vision that Charles De Gaulle made certain did not come true. Camus was a fiercely independent man who protested with equal vehemence the authoritarian excesses of the Soviet Union and the misguided foreign policies of the United States. He typified, it seems to me, the fact that journalism is far more than reporting, editing or writing for newspapers or magazines or books or radio or television. It is any medium that communicates information to others. It is the propagating of ideas, no matter how it is done. That is why I have often repeated in my classes the words of Albert Camus in Stockholm in 1957 when he accepted the award of the Nobel Prize for Literature on behalf of all writers:

> “Whatever our personal frailties may be, the nobility of our calling will always be rooted in two commitments difficult to observe: refusal to lie about what we know and resistance to oppression.”

Many of us in this room tonight chose the profession of journalism or education for journalism because we believed the press could change our society for the better. After all these years, I have come to believe more firmly than ever that the quality of the press directly affects the quality of life. The amount of corruption in a society, a nation, a state, a city, a campus, is precisely the amount tolerated in the news and editorial columns of its press. In a speech I made almost exactly eight years ago today at Pennsylvania State University, in the dark hours after the invasion of Cambodia by American troops and the slaughter of students on two American campuses, I predicted what I thought would happen to the press in the 70s. We are not yet through the decade, and far from my being a cockeyed optimist, most of my hopeful predictions have been fulfilled. I see now an even more golden era in the 80s, and I want to do everything I can to greet it at its dawn.

It is time to go from this place. These 22 years at the University have been interesting, to put it mildly; when I came to Montana my hair was black. I dare not thank all of you—faculty, students, graduates, friends of the press—for fear of overlooking even one to whom I am indebted. The list is a long one, and you know who you are and I hope you know how grateful I am. I have learned far more from all of you than I have taught. The special blessing of being a professor at the
University of Montana is in its students—those tough, resilient kids from Butte, those splendid young men who come from Roundup and Ronan and Forsyth and Shelby and go on to become among the best journalists of the nation; and the intelligent, beautiful women who seem to come from everywhere and leave, alas, always too soon. . . .

I am not retiring. Next year I may be in the old-fashioned letterpress print shop my wife and I built with our hands and the help of a loving daughter and son-in-law and friends who pitched in. There we hope to craft books of beauty and grace and, perhaps, foment a tiny revolution with our little printing presses. . . .

I might finish the novel—two-thirds completed, about Butte at the time of the clash of the copper kings—started in 1958 and put aside in 1964 when writing fiction seemed irrelevant at a time that madness was descending upon this nation. . . .

Or some place in Montana or possibly on a trip so exotic I hesitate to startle you with a description of it, covering a story I want to report. . . .

Or, if that is the way it happens, I may be back as a visiting professor next spring, stopping someone in the hall to warn about a misspelled word or a misplaced modifier or a misused sentiment. . . .

Or even dancing on the shore of a lake or sea, celebrating solstice or equinox, rejoicing with grandson and godson, and shouting above the whir of the frisbees the words of Carl Sandburg: “A man’s life? A candle in the wind!”

No, I am not retiring. Just moving on to another life. I took the first step some time ago by returning to the name given me by my mother and the name by which she always called me, Nathaniel. Thereby I corrected a terrible mistake I made 51 years ago when I pleaded with my slightly older brother, who was taking me to kindergarten at Cheltenham School in Denver, to tell the teacher that my name was Nathan, because I feared Nathaniel was a sissy name. I will not confess my many other subsequent mistakes, because I also survived them, but I will tell you this: Almost all the mistakes we make are the result of fear. That is why I also tell the seniors about another great writer/journalist, Nikos Kazantzakis, on whose monument are engraved the words: “I fear nothing. I hope for nothing. I am free.”

The Old Testament tells us of the cycles of life that are of seven years, and the mystical philosophers write again and again of the cycles of 28 years in the lives of all of us. Oddly enough, I was 28 years old when I started teaching and I now have been a university professor for 28 years. And so, for the next 28 years—or whatever—I choose to live more closely to the words of Kazantzakis, one of the themes of Senior Seminar in my years here:

Let Death come down to slavish souls and craven heads with his sharp scythe and barren bones, but let him come to this lone man like a great lord to knock with shame on his five famous castle doors, and with great awe plunder whatever dregs that in the ceaseless strife of his staunch body have not found time as yet to turn from flesh and bone into pure spirit, lightning, deeds, and joy.

The Archer has fooled you, Death, he’s squandered all your goods, melted down all the rusts and rots of his foul flesh till they escaped you in pure spirit, and when you come, you’ll find but trampled fires, embers, ash and fleshly dross.

The person who introduced me to Nikos Kazantzakis, who wrote to me that perhaps I would find him exciting, in a letter from Nebraska many years ago, has come to me as my beloved wife. Now she, my student, teaches me, and together we will go from this place, knowing that we shall always return to this place, for this place many of you have made our home.

Shalom. Salaam.

The Nez Perce

While we hope to see his band annihilated, we cannot forbear giving the Nez Perce chief [Joseph] credit for his achievements. We know of no Indian of recent days who has handled his warriors and moved a cumbersome camp of squaws, papooses and stock so successfully, and his band have shown a heroism worthy of a better cause. Either the war against him has been conducted very badly or he is the best Indian fighter that has turned loose recently.

—The Deer Lodge (Mont.) New Northwest, July 27, 1877, commenting on the Nez Perce as they passed near Deer Lodge during the Indian War of 1877.

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High School Journalism After Tinker

By TOM ANDERSON

The writer, a 1977 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, submitted this report as part of the requirements for the Senior Seminar. He discusses the historic Tinker decision and subsequent court decisions, emphasizing their effect on students, publications advisers and school administrators. A final section deals with high school journalists in Montana. Mr. Anderson restricts his discussion to official student publications and underground newspapers in public schools. (First Amendment rights often are more limited in private schools.) Official student publications are produced on school grounds, with school money, with the aid of a school-sponsored supervisor, and as part of a school course or as a school-sponsored extracurricular activity. Underground newspapers are produced by students on their own time and with private funds; they have no connection with school activities. In decisions on the high school press, courts often have referred to rulings on the college press, and some of those decisions are cited in this article.

Before the civil-rights, free-speech and anti-war movements of the 1960s and 1970s, few court cases involved the freedom of high school publications. In 1969, in Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community District, the U.S. Supreme Court dealt for the first time with student rights of expression not connected with religion. The case did not involve a publication, but the decision has been cited in lower-court rulings on the rights of student journalists.

Before Tinker, few advisers and textbooks made students aware of the extent of their First Amendment rights. A textbook printed in 1967, High School Journalism Today, discusses libel, copyright, privacy and lotteries in its section on press law, but not censorship.1 Since Tinker, several books have discussed the rights of student journalists.2 A commission was established in 1973 to study the state of high school journalism. In 1974, the Student Press Law Center began to collect, analyze and distribute information about the First Amendment rights of high school and college journalists and provide legal assistance to students and advisers coping with censorship problems.3

The Tinker case involved three students who wore black armbands to school Dec. 16, 1965, to protest the Vietnam War. They were suspended until they returned without the armbands. A rule banning the wearing of armbands was made December 14 after principals at the students' schools had heard of their intent. The students sued the school board.

In February, 1969, the Supreme Court overruled an appeals court, which had said that school officials,

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2Alan H. Levin, The Rights of Students (New York, 1973) has an excellent section on high school publications and First Amendment rights.

fearing the armbands would create a disturbance in the schools, had the right to suspend the students. The Supreme Court noted that students in the schools had been allowed to wear political buttons as well as the Iron Cross.

Justice Abe Fortas, writing the majority opinion, said that students do not "shed their constitutional rights to freedom of expression at the school house gate. . . . In the absence of a specific showing of constitutionally valid reasons to regulate their speech, students are entitled to freedom of expression of their views." Fortas said the students' expression could have been prohibited only if they "materially and substantially" had disrupted the work and discipline of the schools.

Justice Hugo Black, dissenting, wrote:

If the time has come when pupils of state-supported schools—kindergarten, grammar, or high schools—can defy and flout orders of school officials to keep their minds on their own school work, it is the beginning of a new revolutionary era of permissiveness in this country fostered by the judiciary.

Lower courts later applied the Tinker decision to cases involving underground and official high school publications.

The courts clearly have ruled that censorship of high school publications by school administrators is unconstitutional unless the material censored "is obscene, libelous, or disrupts school activities." The courts are divided, however, on whether material that is libelous, obscene, or disruptive can be censored. They also are divided on whether school officials can require prior review of unofficial newspapers and pamphlets.

Prior restraint of expression—or censorship—is not unconstitutional per se. Although the Supreme Court has said that a "heavy presumption" exists against the constitutionality of prior restraint, prior restraints are allowed in time of war, when the material is obscene or when there is incitement to violence or to overthrow the government. Prior restraints are allowed when the facts have led school officials reasonably to predict substantial disruption.

The courts are divided on whether schools may require prior review of expression. One line of rulings, typified by Nitzberg vs. Parks, holds that school officials can require a review, prior to distribution, of material that would cause substantial disruption of the school.

In the Nitzberg case, the Baltimore County Board of Education had banned distribution of two underground newspapers. The staff members sued, challenging the board's rule that required prior review of underground newspapers. In the spring of 1974, a U.S. District Court upheld the board's action, saying censorship was permissible when regulations provided "narrow, objective and reasonable standards by which the materials can be judged."

The students appealed and on April 14, 1975, an appeals court reversed the decision, saying the rule was vague, too broad and, therefore, unconstitutional. The court said the administrators could block distribution of materials only if they reasonably could assume that their distribution would substantially disrupt the school. It required the board to define disruption specifically and to adopt procedures that would allow students to appear and argue their case. It required that the rules call for prompt hearing and appeal of cases. Notably, no U.S. Court of Appeals ever has approved as constitutional a set of rules implementing a system of prior review of underground newspapers.

In another series of cases regarding prior review by school officials, typified by Fujishima vs. Board of Education, courts have held that the Tinker decision rejects prior review of student expression.

In the Fujishima case, three Chicago high school students were suspended after they distributed an underground newspaper and anti-Vietnam War leaflets. A school board rule stipulated that "no person shall be permitted . . . to distribute on the school premises any books, tracts, or other publications . . . unless the same shall have been approved by the General Superintendent of Schools."

The Seventh Circuit Court, in declaring the rule unconstitutional, said:

Tinker in no way suggests that students may be required to announce their intentions of engaging in certain conduct beforehand so school authorities may decide whether to prohibit the conduct. Such a concept of prior restraint is even more offensive when applied to the long-protected area of publication.

Fujishima allows school authorities to regulate expression by disciplining students after unprotected

4Tinker vs. Des Moines Independent Community District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969). Note on footnote style: Court cases are cited in the style used by the American Civil Liberties Union. In the citation 393 U.S. 503 (1969), for example, 393 refers to the volume number. Similarly, P. 2d, F. 2d and F. Supp. refer to other series of volumes and the numbers refer to volumes, pages and years. These series are available at the University of Montana Law Library.

5See Scoville vs. Board of Education, 425 F. 2d 10 (1970), and Wesolet vs. The Board of Trustees, South Bend Community School Corporation, Civil Action No. 735101 (1973).

6Wesolet, loc. cit.


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(libelous, obscene or disruptive) expression has occurred. 10

Generally, interference with student publications by school officials on grounds of libel involves material that officials consider insulting, tasteless or erroneous, but which is not legally libelous. Harold L. Nelson and Dwight L. Teeter, in Law of Mass Communications, define defamation as "communication which exposes a person to hatred, ridicule, or contempt, lowers him in the esteem of his fellows, causes him to be shunned, or injures him in his business or calling." 11 Libel, generally, is printed or written defamation.

public officials

In 1964, the Supreme Court ruled that public officials could collect damages in libel cases only if publication were done with actual malice. 12 The court later included public figures and public events. 13 The courts have not ruled on whether those decisions extend to high school newspapers. In 1966, an Arizona court extended the rule to college newspapers in a case involving the University of Arizona Wildcat and a member of the student senate. The Arizona Court of Appeals discounted the plaintiff's contention that student government was a play government and, therefore, the Supreme Court's public-official rule did not apply. 14

In deciding libel cases involving the high school press, however, courts might decide that student governments are play governments or that high school students are immature and the public-official rule does not apply. If it did apply, the definitions of public official, public figure or public issue for the high school press are not clear.

Traditional defenses for the general press in libel cases, other than lack of malice in cases involving public officials, public figures or public issues, are qualified privilege, fair comment and truth of the material. Under qualified privilege, news media may publish defamatory statements made in legislative, judicial or other official proceedings without fear of facing libel judgments if the reports are fair and accurate and contain no malice. Fair comment on matters of public concern protects criticism of works offered for public approval or works that affect the public interest. This protection is generally denied when so-called facts are misstated or false or when malice is present in the accounts. Truth is a complete defense to high school press cases, and the situations in which they would apply are not clear.

Obscenity is also a legal term. To be judged obscene, material must lack "serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value," 15 must, "to the average person applying contemporary standards, ... [appeal] to prurient interest," 16 and must portray sexual conduct in a "patently offensive manner." 17

The Supreme Court, in Ginsberg vs. New York, said that different standards for obscenity could be set for minors and adults. 18 Using that ruling, school officials have blocked distribution of articles dealing with sexual information and planned parenthood. A district court in New York ruled in 1974 that school officials had violated the rights of school newspaper staff members by seizing and prohibiting distribution of a sex-information supplement. The court said the supplement was "obviously intended to convey information rather than appeal to prurient interests." 19

Substantial disruption is not a legal term. It is, therefore, the only term that school officials have discretion in defining, and definitions must be specific. Courts have said that school officials cannot interfere with student expression by censorship or subsequent punishment unless they can show that the expression has or would have caused disruption. 20 However, one court ruled that university officials were correct in suspending eight students who had distributed pamphlets urging students to "assault the bastions of university tyranny," though the officials offered no evidence of disruption. 21

One court said students have the right to publish, even if other students are hostile to the publication, if they publish and distribute the material in an orderly, non-disruptive manner. It said the school should punish those who overreact, not the publishers. 22

Courts differ on whether school officials can interfere with or discipline students for publication of profanity. Profane words, by themselves, are not obscene. Therefore, to justify their actions, school officials generally must show that publication of the words has or would have caused substantial disruption of the school. One court said "the occasional presence of a few earthy words cannot be found likely to cause substantial disruption of school activity or materially to impair the accomplishment of education

10Fujishima vs. Board of Education, 460 F. 2d 1355 (1972).
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Another noted that the school library contained J. D. Salinger's Catcher in the Rye and said underground newspapers that use similar words could not be banned.24

In Baker vs. Downey City Board of Education, however, a judge upheld the suspension of two students for distributing a newspaper called Oink near the high school. The judge said publication of profane language could “impair the school's educational process” and thus interfere with the rights of other people.25

School officials use two arguments to justify limiting student expression. One is that the school, with other segments of society, serves as an alternate parent. As such, it is justified in controlling student behavior. The other is that the school owns the publication and has the right as publisher to control it. The first argument applies to official and underground publications, the second only to official school publications.

The courts have limited the right of school officials as alternate parents to control expression. In the Tinker case, the U.S. Supreme Court held that students in school are protected under the First Amendment. Another court, ruling on a college case, said “the state is not necessarily the unfettered master of all it creates.”26 Some courts, considering high school students to be less mature than college students, have been less reluctant to restrict the authority of high school officials.

bans rejected

Courts have rejected administrative bans on articles dealing with sex and birth control, criticism of school officials and editorial advertisements.27 Such bans are well within the rights of commercial publishers.

School officials argue that they should be regarded as publishers of school publications because the schools generally are liable for statements and pictures published. In many states, however, schools are immune to libel suits and other civil actions. In Law and the Student Press, George E. Stevens and John B. Webster say they found only one judgment against a school district for libel in a student publication. That case involved a yearbook that had printed a student’s picture with the caption, “A good fisherman and a master baiter.”28

Christopher B. Fager, director of the Student Press Law Center, argues that school-sponsored newspapers, rather than being owned by the school, are “owned” by the public. No one stands in the position of publisher of a student newspaper, because the state does not possess absolute control over those aspects of publishing that are always within the exclusive control of a commercial publisher. ... Absent substantial disruption of the school, officials may not censor content, suspend staff, withdraw funds, or require prior review as a means to control format.

Fager argues that school officials do not enjoy the rights of commercial publishers, so they should not face the same liabilities. Fager supports that argument by citing a 1959 broadcasting case in which the Supreme Court held that it would be “unconscionable” to allow a broadcast station to be civilly liable for defamatory remarks made during a political speech that it had been prohibited from censoring. He adds that although the broadcasting case involved a statute, “it would seem that a constitutional restriction [First Amendment] on such action would be of equal force.”29

One California case is of special significance because of the rulings of several courts that school officials can prohibit material that is obscene, libelous or disruptive. The California Education Code provides that material that is “obscene, libelous or ... creates a clear and present danger ... of substantial disruption of the school, shall be prohibited.” Acting under that provision, a principal refused to allow distribution of a newspaper that contained a potentially libelous article. A student sued. On Dec. 6, 1976, the California Supreme Court upheld a lower court’s decision that the statute did not authorize prior restraints.30 That decision indicates that other court decisions that contain language similar to the California law could be interpreted as not permitting prior restraints.

An analysis of court cases might indicate that administrators and advisers have little legal power to control student expression. But that does not appear to be the case. Administrators cannot make flat bans on distribution of underground publications. But they can place reasonable restrictions on time and place of distribution of such materials.31 And they can ban distribution of printed materials by non-students.32 Administrators also can discipline students for publication of obscene, libelous or disruptive material. Rules governing such discipline must give precise definitions of those terms and generally...

31Jacobs vs. Board of School Commissioners, 420 U. S. 128 (1975).

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should allow discipline after distribution of the publication.

An administrator’s ultimate power is his authority to suspend or expel students. Two federal courts have ordered schools to reinstate students suspended or expelled for distributing underground newspapers. Another court, however, has held that school officials were within their rights in expelling a student for distributing an underground newspaper.33

The U. S. Supreme Court has not ruled on cases involving suspension or expulsion of high school journalists. It has ruled, however, regarding an Ohio case, that students must receive due process of law when suspended or expelled. It also has held that students can collect damages from school officials when their civil rights are violated.34

In the Ohio case, nine students were suspended under a rule that allowed suspension without prior notice and permitted appeals only to the school board. The Supreme Court ordered that the students be given a hearing and, if they deny the charges, an explanation of the evidence and a chance to present their sides. The court did not require schools to allow students to retain counsel or to call or cross-examine witnesses in connection with suspensions of 10 or fewer days. It added, though, that “longer suspensions or expulsions . . . may require more formal procedures.” Justice Powell, speaking for the minority, condemned the decision, saying it “unnecessarily opens avenues for judicial intervention in the operation of our public schools.”35

Advisers for official publications are caught between the students and the administrators. They may be sued by students for refusing to publish material, or they may be fired by school administrators for refusing to censor material. They may have discretion in choosing publication staff members, but they may not be able to fire them.

A Wyoming court upheld a school board’s action dismissing an adviser after the adviser permitted publication of a photograph of a row of urinals and a letter to the editor criticizing school officials.36

In another case, an adviser who had refused to stop publication of a series of articles dealing with sexual problems was told her contract would not be renewed. She sued the school board but settled out of court.37 Another court ruled that school officials had not been justified in interfering with publication of an article concerning planned parenthood.38

A case involving the dismissal of an editorial-page editor from that position is pending. The adviser dismissed the editor after he tried to print items despite the adviser’s objections. The student filed suit in California and was reinstated pending a decision.39

Some journalism educators think that publication advisers can be more flexible than administrators regarding student press rights. They urge advisers to rely on making students aware of their responsibilities, so any errors of judgment can become opportunities to learn.40

I conducted a survey of Montana high school newspaper advisers and editors in 1976 and 1977. Questionnaires were sent to 171 Montana high schools. Sixty advisers and 48 editors responded. Most of the questions dealt with three areas: responsibility for the publication, restrictions on the publication, and availability of alternate means of expression.

Advisers also were asked to comment on two press-freedom controversies, both discussed in Captive Voices.41

Most advisers and editors said editorial policy was determined by student staff members with the supervision of the faculty adviser. Sixty percent of the advisers said they made the final decision on whether articles would be published. Another indicator of the adviser’s influence: The two most common requirements for being on the staff are enrollment in a journalism course and approval by the adviser. In addition, all advisers said they had the right to review all articles before publication.

Sixty-eight percent of the advisers and 63 percent of the editors said the advisers had refused to allow publication of some articles. The most common reasons were potential libel or “obscene language.” Since, under court definition, words themselves are not obscene, “obscene language” must be interpreted as obscenity or profane language.

Nearly 40 percent of the editors and advisers said the advisers limit the subjects that may be covered by the publication. The most commonly banned topics were those considered in poor taste or not of student interest and material that is libelous or damaging to character or obscene. Bans on obscenity and libel are approved by the courts. The other restrictions must meet court tests of material and substantial disruption. Courts have approved high school publications as proper forums for discussion of sex, politics, teachers, school policies, and religion.

In three out of every four schools, the administra-
tion has the right to review articles before publication. In addition, 30 percent of the advisers said an administrator had banned publication of articles. The most common reasons given were fear of an adverse public reaction, potential libel, controversial issues and poor reflections on the school.

Administrators had a part in determining editorial policy in 24 percent of the schools, according to the advisers. Eight percent of the advisers said administration approval of all staff members is required.

Only one adviser said a staff member had been suspended or expelled because of an article. That occurred a few years ago when the first letters of each line in a poem in the official school newspaper spelled out an objectionable sentence.

In addition to direct control of content by advisers and administrators, 34 percent of the editors said they had refused to publish articles because they thought the adviser or the administration would object to them. Their reasons included: Articles were unfavorable to teachers, poorly written and contained offensive or obscene language.

All advisers and editors responding to the survey said no underground newspapers existed in their schools. One adviser said his district had strict rules prohibiting distribution of anything on school property without approval from the district or the principal involved. Courts have rejected such comprehensive bans.

Thirty-six advisers said electronic media were available in their schools, but only four said students could use them without restriction. Nine said students must get approval from the administration or use them just for school business.

Some advisers and editors may have interpreted some of the questions differently. One question was intended to determine whether advisers were defining students' First Amendment rights, especially as they have been determined in recent court decisions. Some advisers apparently interpreted the question to mean whether students are informed about school policy regarding school publications; hence, 85 percent said students are informed of their rights.

One adviser said a lawyer was brought in to discuss student rights with the staff members. Others said books, such as Captive Voices, were recommended or required reading.

Those who said they did not inform students of their rights regarding censorship said because censorship is not practiced, it is not important, or that a discussion of student rights was not needed because "they're good kids." One adviser said she was not aware of the students’ rights.

In the two controversies taken from Captive Voices, one became a case that was decided by a court. The other did not get that far because of public pressure on the school.

In the first instance, Jan Wesolek, editor of a school newspaper in Indiana, wrote a short article on planned parenthood, quoting from Planned Parenthood materials and giving the address of its local office. She failed to persuade the adviser or counselor to approve her article. So she finally filed suit against the school board. The judge ruled, "The School Corporation shall not prohibit publication of articles . . . on the basis of subject matter unless the article or terminology used is obscene, libelous or disrupts school activities." Seven percent of the Montana advisers said they would refuse to publish the article. Ten percent said they would refer the decision to the administration. Forty-eight percent said they would publish the article as written. Most of the others said they would print the article with certain modifications.

The second example involved Janice Fuhrman, editor of an official school newspaper in California. Her principal had banned distribution of one issue of the county-supported newspaper because of profanity and an article critical of the Vietnam War. Fuhrman wrote an editorial critical of the principal. After the editorial was printed, the principal told her it was libelous and suspended her. She retained a lawyer, who gave the details of the incident to a newspaper that printed the story. After the story appeared, the principal called Fuhrman's father and said the school wanted her back.

To make the situation applicable to advisers today, Vietnam was not mentioned in the questionnaire. Most advisers said they would let the editorial be published with restrictions, which ranged from insistence that the editorial be factual to approval by the principal. Only four advisers said they would let the editorial be printed with no restrictions. Of those who indicated whether they would support the editor if the principal tried to suspend her, 71 percent said they would support the student.

The survey responses show that some Montana students, advisers and administrators apparently are not aware of court cases that have limited the right of school officials to censor or restrict student expression. Officials have made restrictions that have been declared unconstitutional by some courts. No Montana high schools have been involved in court cases because of those restrictions.

The Commission of Inquiry into High School Journalism made several sound recommendations, including these:

- All students should be made aware of their First Amendment rights as well as limitations on their rights.
- The First Amendment rights of high school students should be fully observed by administrators and faculty members.

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Students, journalism teachers and advisers should consult lawyers when they encounter First Amendment problems. Lawyers also could provide valuable information before problems arise. The American Civil Liberties Union and the Student Press Law Center have provided free assistance to students and advisers in court cases.

Christmas Letter

By Henry G. Gay

Greetings to everyone:

I've always thought that the nice thing about writing these letters to you each Christmas is that when I reflect on all the year's happenings the good seems to outweigh the bad. That's a blessing that seems appropriate during the holidays, although the trouble at Harold's plant almost tipped the balance the other way this year.

There was a big strike at Harold's plant last summer and right in the middle of it someone blew up two-thirds of the plant with 98 sticks of dynamite smuggled into the building in a coffin.

The management, which is always out to get Harold, accused him of the crime because he had said the day before in the company lunchroom that somebody ought to blow up two-thirds of the plant with 98 sticks of dynamite smuggled into the building in a coffin. It was a sticky situation for a time because they had a tape recording of what Harold said, but they finally said they wouldn't press charges if he took early retirement and paid for the dynamite, which was taken from the company's storehouse.

It's been an exciting year for Jeff, the "brain" of our family. He's in his twelfth year at the university and finally made it into a fraternity. He was voted Greek of the Week following a two-day performance when he set a beer-drinking record, fell off the rim of the stadium and participated in a gang rape with a broken leg and internal injuries.

Again this year we didn't get a summer vacation. We were all set to load up the camper and head for Hawaii when Harold's uncle died and we had to pick up Harold's aunt and bring her to our house to live. She's the one who robs all-night groceries while walking in her sleep, so we brought her cage along and haven't had a bit of trouble so far. Knock on wood, Harold says.

Sharon, who decided not to go to college, is still working in an insurance office in the city. She put the baby up for adoption and now has a new roommate. His name is Nino and he's a great big guy. He's a spiffy dresser with his black shirt, yellow tie and two-tone shoes. Sharon says he's an enforcer, so I guess he works for some sort of government agency.

The kids who are still at home are really a joy. Lucy, our eleven-year-old, won the state baton-twirling title and got a nice card from Roman Polanski after she appeared on television. The twins still can't talk but the doctor says it is nothing to worry about since they are maintaining a C average in high school and were voted all-league in football. Harold Jr. has been much happier since we bought him a motorbike to ride on his weekly visits to the juvenile officer.

One thing we can all be thankful for is good health. Not one of us had anything worse than the normal measles, mumps and flu, although Harold did pick up hepatitis at the plant before it disappeared into the next county. He thinks he may have gotten it from a dynamite fuse he held in his mouth so he could use both hands to load the coffin.

Aside from Harold's uncle, there was only one death among those near and dear to us (unless you count Harold's 23 union brothers who worked the graveyard shift at the plant). My cousin Lester drowned while he was being baptized. He had read a book by Charles Colson about being born again. Aunt Margaret said she read the book after Lester's unfortunate accident, and there was not one word in it about holding your breath.

Well, that's about it for this year. When you consider all that could have happened, we had a pretty good time of it. Harold has his retirement to look forward to, the kids are developing personalities of their very own, and I have found peace of mind through an organization called Primal Screamers Anonymous. It's more practical than transcendental meditation, which I was into last year. I'll tell you more about it in next year's letter from our house to your house.

Love to all,

Mildred

The Jean Muir Case in Retrospect

By KATHY CRUMP

The writer, a senior in the School of Journalism, submitted this report for the course Introduction to Radio and Television. Professionally, she raises trout on a ranch in the Mission Valley.

Controversy is inevitable and ordinarily healthy. In commercial broadcasting, though, controversy can have an unhealthy, debilitating effect on programming when advertisers overrespond to inconsequential or ill-founded opposition.1

The close of World War II was followed by a cold war at home, "by a hunt for traitors, who might be anyone, including your neighbor—probably your neighbor."2 It produced a milieu that spurred loyalty-security checks of federal employees, lists of organizations considered subversive by the attorney general and hearings before the House Committee on un-American Activities, such as the 1947 public hearings on communism in the film industry.

The search for Communists spread from the film world to broadcasting. Clifford Durr, a member of the Federal Communications Commission, warned in 1947 that the witch hunts were fighting "communism by employing the methods upon which we profess to base our abhorrence of communism."3

The years from 1948 to 1952 have been called "the Freeze," when television programming patterns and engineering and policy decisions were shaped.4 It was also a time in which television as well as radio learned caution and cowardice. It was the beginning of the blacklist period—described as "broadcasting's darkest hour."5

One of the first instances of Communist-hunting in broadcasting occurred in January, 1950, when Ed Sullivan booked dancer Paul Draper on his variety program, "Toast of the Town," sponsored by the Ford Motor Co.6 This was essentially a venturous move for Sullivan: Draper and harmonica player Larry Adler had appeared in Greenwich, Conn., in late 1949, but only after meeting the objections of Mrs. Hester McCullough, a housewife who thought they were "pro-communists"7 and "supporters of various communist fronts."8 She had protested the "idea of mixing art with politics," and as a "very worried young woman, decided to do something about it."9

McCullough had written numerous letters demanding cancellation of the Greenwich appearance of Draper and Adler, but both gave the Associated Press statements that they were not Communists. The show went on, and they sued Mrs. McCullough for libel.10

When Draper was booked for "Toast of the Town," McCullough enlisted the help of Hearst columnists Igor Cassini ("Cholly Knickerbocker," who wrote the society column in the New York Journal-American), George Sokolsky and Westbrook Pegler to try to force the Ford Motor Co. to cancel the booking. Ford and its advertising agency decided to proceed with the Draper appearance.

The telecast brought a barrage of protesting letters and telegrams (through the efforts of the Hearst columnists), but many of those letters were duplications, both in Post Office origin and wording. Nonetheless, they caused much concern to both the sponsor and the agency, and steps were taken to avoid

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4Head, op. cit., p. 162.
5Tape by Erik Barnouw, December, 1975.
9"Draper and Adler," Newsweek, May 1, 1950, p. 23.
further incidents. Sullivan began to screen doubtful artists by enlisting the “guidance” services of Theodore C. Kirkpatrick of Counterattack.\(^1\)

In 1947, Kirkpatrick, John G. Keenan and Kenneth M. Bierly, three men who had resigned from the FBI at the end of the war, set up a firm called American Business Consultants with $15,000 capitalization from a staunch backer of Sen. Joseph McCarthy. The firm, which intended to expose the “Communist menace,” published a weekly newsletter entitled Counterattack: The Newsletter of Facts of Communism and investigated cases for clients. The American Business Bureau described ABC’s services, in addition to the newsletter, as “information on subversive activities to newspapers, periodicals, radio, and other public-opinion media . . . [and offering] to business firms research services on subversive activities on a fee basis.” The fees often totaled thousands of dollars.\(^2\)

Counterattack was a financial success from its beginning (conservative estimates were $50,000 to $100,000 annually).\(^3\) It hammered endlessly at dangers of Communist “infiltration” and scolded businessmen for laxness and stupidity. The publishers did not originally intend to concentrate on broadcasting; this emphasis came gradually as it bore rich fruit. The visibility of the broadcasting industry, and the economic and political tensions surrounding it, made it a likely target.\(^4\)

### “front activities”

It listed artists with “citations” of their “front activities,” stating that Communist actors, announcers, directors, writers, producers, etc., whether in radio, theater, or movies, should all be barred to the extent permissible by law and union contracts.\(^5\)

Counterattack never offered real proof of allegations; it usually referred to mysterious, unidentified sources and vague innuendo.

This, then, was the organization that subsequently published Red Channels.

With a paper cover featuring a red hand closing over a microphone, the 215-page index entitled Red Channels: The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television appeared June 22, 1950. Counterattack had published it; it listed 151 writers, actors, singers, dancers, producers and network executives and their reported associations with front organizations. The book, which sold for $1,\(^6\) was offered as evidence that Communists had been able to infiltrate radio and television.

Advance hints in Counterattack had led many to “expect revelations of insidious underground activity,”\(^7\) but actually it was something of a farce. “Even the flimsiest connection with a suspect meeting or movement or benefit performance was enough to earn a place” in Red Channels.\(^8\)

Calm appraisal would have shown that the “citations” were ambiguous, unproved (often from unidentified sources) and absurd. Most charges pertained to public activities. A listed individual perhaps had “signed a petition, supported a candidate for office, or written a book or broadcast a program praised by the Communist Party.”\(^9\) One observer wrote that it was a list of the most talented and admired people in the industry—mostly writers, directors, performers . . . people who had helped to make radio an honored medium, had played a prominent role in its wartime use, and had been articulate American war aims . . . It was a roll of honor.\(^10\)

But this was a time that thrived on the preposterous. It was the beginning of the McCarthy era.

Mere innocence of charges was of no help to the listed artist. There was no prior consultation with any of the persons listed to determine if the allegations were correct; there never was any attempt after publication to vouch for the facts.\(^11\)

Every Counterattack subscriber received a copy of Red Channels. A few were sold in stores. Most copies went to executives at networks, advertising agencies and sponsors. Artists seldom received a copy, and few persons discussed its contents. It sometimes took an individual weeks to learn he was on the list.

“Networks, ad agencies and advertisers feared to have themselves identified with anyone accused, however justly or unjustly of Communist sympathy,”\(^12\) and, as a result, nearly everyone on the list soon found himself unemployed.

Proving that listings were false (as many of the accused did), showing that the circumstances were entirely innocent (as many did), or disclaiming any Communist leanings (as many tried to do) did not suffice to “clear” names once clouded.\(^13\) Careers of many innocent persons were permanently damaged. Some committed suicide. Others left the country to

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\(^{11}\)Barnouw, Tube of Plenty, pp. 117-121; The Golden Web, pp. 262-265.
\(^{13}\)Ibid.
\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 255, quoting Counterattack, October, 1947.

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Jean Muir, an actress with 20 years' experience, was listed in Red Channels. "The Aldrich Family," after 11 seasons on radio, was scheduled to start on television on NBC Aug. 27, 1950. Young and Rubicam, advertising agency for the sponsor, General Foods Corp., chose Muir for the role of the mother and announced it in a press release three days before the scheduled premiere.

Kirkpatrick of Counterattack urged certain individuals to call the network and/or sponsor to protest the hiring of Muir. Among those he called was Hester McCullough of Greenwich.26

On the strength of a few complaints about Muir (estimates ranged from 20 to 200),27 General Foods canceled her contract, contending that Muir, as a controversial personality, necessarily would hinder rather than promote the sale of Jell-O on the "Aldrich Family".28

General Foods, who acceded to various anti-communist protests and supplanted her, has a neat formula for dispatching the difficulty: "The use of controversial personalities...in our advertising may provoke unfavorable criticism and even antagonism among sizable groups of consumers."29

Immediately after the cancellation of Muir's contract, publisher Bennett Cerf and others said they were certain that General Foods would realize its mistake in banning Muir "because a small group of the country's outstanding reactionaries made her a target for their usual brand of vilification and organized persecution."30

Apparently, that opinion was wrong. General Foods and Young and Rubicam thought they were facing a divided public when they were "merely yielding to a handful of busy bodies."31 General Foods incorrectly assumed it was staying out of a hassle, but not enough persons knew about it to create a hassle:

In the midst of all the publicity, General Foods itself commissioned a Gallup opinion survey. Less than 40 percent of the sample had even heard of the case, and of those who had heard of it, less than 3 percent could tie it in with the correct sponsor.32

Most Americans did not know about the Muir listing until after General Foods acted as if it never had heard of the Bill of Rights and fair play.33 "Someone had said 'boo,' and for stalwart organizations like NBC, Y & R, and General Foods that was quite enough."34

Red Channels had become an unofficial but effective blacklist in the radio and television field.35 Some referred to it as the "Bible of Madison Avenue."36

The New York Times said Red Channels was engaged in character assassination, while the New York Herald Tribune said it was so gross a violation of every decent democratic standard of freedom of speech and individual right as seriously to undermine sound efforts to bring proper and reasonable restraints on Communist conspiracy.37

The Herald Tribune also accused the radio industry and related industries of "appalling moral cowardice."38

Networks and agencies grew weary of being attacked and decided to take charge of the whole business rather than cope with another Muir-type controversy. Blacklist administration became part of the built-in machinery of the industry, complete with security chiefs who approved all names before anyone was approached for hiring.39 The networks and agencies began strict advance-screening procedures, even with child actors,40 to avoid the kind of publicity the Muir case provoked.41

Every artist was checked and a sponsor would reject "controversial" personalities on other grounds rather than mention the blacklist—for example, an actor was "not tall enough" or "the leading man is too short."42 The blacklist gradually dropped out of the headlines:

1Head, op. cit., p. 305.
2Galantiere, op. cit., p. 77.
5Carson, op. cit., p. 23.
8Barnouw, Tube of Plenty, p. 129.
10Head, op. cit., p. 302.
11Barnouw, Tube of Plenty, p. 130.
but remained a felt presence in the broadcasting industry. Meanwhile, an organization known as AWARE, Inc., was formed in late 1953 and took up where Red Channels had left off. Its stated purpose was to oppose and expose Communists in the entertainment world. Several AWARE officers were members of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, and three held AFTRA offices or board memberships.

"AFTRA was almost torn apart by the controversy. A pro-blacklist group of officers proved to represent only a minority of the members," but few would speak out against blacklisting for fear of being blacklisted themselves.43

In January, 1956, CBS newsman Charles Collingwood and WCBS disc jockey John Henry Faulk, a frequent participant on television panel shows, took office as president and vice president of AFTRA’s New York chapter. Faulk, especially, and Collingwood had organized a “middle-of-the-road anti-blacklist, anti-Communist ticket, declaring themselves non-Communists but repudiating the tactics of AWARE. Faulk had sensed the need for that type of ticket but was quick to say, “Don’t call me Moses.”44

Their election angered AWARE members. Though Faulk (who had received widespread acclaim for his homespun philosophy and amusing anecdotes) never had appeared on any blacklists, AWARE issued a bulletin denouncing him with seven “citations” of Communist activities. All were false, but sponsors quickly deserted Faulk. In June, 1956, he did something no one had dared to do—he sued AWARE, its leader, Vincent Hartnett, and its patron, Laurence Johnson, “a Syracuse supermarket operator active in the vigilante-style movement.”45

Faulk had been advised not to file suit, but he stated that he “knew these guys couldn’t stand to be brought out in the open. Why shucks … I’ve heard tell they build statues in this country for folks who were controversial.”46 CBS fired Faulk.47 His income dropped from $36,000 a year to zero.48

Attorney Louis Nizer took the Faulk case, but Faulk remained unemployable. Edward R. Murrow was outraged; with Collingwood, he had sought to stay the action. Murrow contended that CBS should finance the Faulk suit; having lost that argument, he sent $7,500 to Faulk so he could retain Nizer. Most of Faulk’s listeners knew only that he had vanished from CBS. The lawsuit dragged on for six years with little public attention.

In June, 1962, all seven charges against Faulk were proved false. The jury awarded unprecedented damages of $3.5 million, even more than Faulk had sought.49 It was an extraordinary vindication for Faulk, who had devoted several years of his life to clear his name, and for those like Murrow, who had not hesitated to help him. The verdict was upheld at every level, although the damages eventually were reduced to $550,000.50

Though the verdict came too late to help the main victims, it did “expose in retrospect the incredible flimsiness of the professional blacklists’ ramshackle guilt-by-association edifice.”51

“Thousands in the television industry breathed a sigh of relief. The blacklist machinery appeared to be disintegrating. Many an artist emerged from long obscurity.”52

Nizer, who so carefully exposed the defendants’ motives and methods, proved that they and the organization actually were quite weak without the complying response of the sponsors, agencies, networks and stations.53 “They simply surrendered to pressure without firing a shot”;54

A parade of witnesses had laid bare methods by which self-styled patriots had conducted a purge of the industry, with much help from within the industry. Executives who had at first taken the “security” claims seriously, but had since sickened of the operation, testified in illuminating detail.55

in retrospect

With the advantage of hindsight, one can see that the advertisers, agencies and networks thought they were financially vulnerable. If General Foods had ignored the charges against Jean Muir, economic repercussions probably would have been minimal. The sponsors and advertising agencies apparently didn’t want to take even a slight risk.

Should broadcasting be run only as a business? That seems to be one of the main questions that emerged from the blacklist period: “We return once more to the advertisers, agencies and networks thought they were financially vulnerable. If General Foods had ignored the charges against Jean Muir, economic repercussions probably would have been minimal. The sponsors and advertising agencies apparently didn’t want to take even a slight risk.

Should broadcasting be run only as a business? That seems to be one of the main questions that emerged from the blacklist period: “We return once more to the advertisers, agencies and networks thought they were financially vulnerable. If General Foods had ignored the charges against Jean Muir, economic repercussions probably would have been minimal. The sponsors and advertising agencies apparently didn’t want to take even a slight risk.

I think not, especially after examining the negative influence of sponsors who followed the urgings of a few persons who made money by professing to be superpatriots.

46Head, op. cit., p. 304.
48Barnouw, Tube of Plenty, pp. 208-209
50Ibid.
51Head, loc. cit.
52Ibid.
53Barnouw, Tube of Plenty, p. 323.
54Nizer, op. cit., p. 225ff.
55Head, loc. cit.
56Ibid., p. 305.
57Ibid.
Covering the Opening of the Pipeline

By WARD T. SIMS

The writer, an Associated Press newsman for 28 years, was named correspondent at a new bureau in Fairbanks in January, 1977, and chief of bureau for Alaska in December, 1978. He had been an editor at the General Desk in New York for seven years. As the correspondent in Juneau, Mr. Sims was responsible for much of the AP's coverage of the Alaska earthquake in 1964. He described coverage of that story in a 1965 Montana Journalism Review article, "Havoc on Good Friday: Reporting Alaska's Earthquake." Mr. Sims is a 1950 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism.

Just about everyone expected some minor problems when the trans-Alaska oil pipeline went into operation in the summer of 1977. What works of man were without minor flaws? But the problems that beset this largest private construction project in history after oil started flowing June 20 were to tax to the utmost the energies and resources of reporters.

The very nature of the pipeline gives some clues to the problems that faced the media during the hectic month and a half that followed.

The line snakes its way for 800 miles through Alaska, from Prudhoe Bay on the arctic coast to Valdez, an ice-free port on Prince William Sound.

It spans fragile arctic tundra, where a footprint lasts for years; it runs through mountain passes, forests of birch and spruce, and thickets of willow; it crosses mighty rivers such as the Yukon.

North of the Yukon, the only access is a gravel road to which the public is denied entry.

South of the Yukon, the line intersects public highways at several points, but the route of the pipeline takes it, generally, some distance from public thoroughfares.

The public is denied access on connecting roads. While the builder of the $7.7 billion line, the Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., was generous in giving reporters access during construction, this policy was tightened as the operational phase neared.

To complicate matters for reporters, Alyeska told its contractors that all information about the line must emanate from Alyeska, on penalty of loss of contract.

The same policy existed for Alyeska employees, on penalty of loss of job.

The Source, then, was Alyeska headquarters in Anchorage. Alyeska public-affairs offices in other cities, such as Fairbanks and Valdez, generally were ill-prepared to answer questions of immediacy.

Against this background, I found myself back in Alaska—after a nine-year absence—as the Associated Press correspondent in Fairbanks, at about the midway point of the pipeline.

I had served as AP correspondent in Juneau from June, 1960, until April, 1968, then had assignments in Philadelphia and New York before returning to Alaska to open the new Fairbanks correspondency in January, 1977.

When the first Prudhoe Bay crude entered the pipeline June 20, 1977, I was in Valdez, at the huge marine terminal from which tankers laden with Alaska oil would leave for refineries in the Lower 48.

We had won approval to be in the Operations Control Center at the time of "oil-in," but it had taken the personal intervention of Alyeska's president, Bill Darch.

Kerry Coughlin, an Anchorage-based free-lance photographer hired by the AP, and I were the only outsiders allowed into the OCC, the hub of oil-movement operations. It was there, on a day free of major problems, that I made contacts that would prove to be of tremendous value in the coverage of pipeline problems to come.

From June 20 until July 4 the pipeline operated almost, as one would say, by the book. There were no
major problems, no major hitches.

On Independence Day, I decided to spend the holiday with the crew following the progress of oil through the pipeline, the “hogwatchers.” They drew their name from a metal device that was preceding oil through the line, a device known in the oil industry as a “batching pig.”

Ahead of the pig was nitrogen gas, to purge the line of combustibles before it filled with highly flammable crude oil.

I picked up the hogwatchers north of Fairbanks and accompanied them to a point south of the city, where for no apparent reason the pig stopped, an indication that the flow of oil had ceased.

I tried without success to find out why. In Anchorage, the AP's chief of bureau for Alaska, Bob Weller, tapped his sources and found that a workman at Pump Station 8 had let supercold liquid nitrogen enter the line instead of gaseous nitrogen.

The shock of the supercold fluid cracked the pipe, and the line was down for two and a half days while workmen dug up and replaced the damaged pipe.

the worst of the problems

It seemed as if the pipeline was back on track, but the worst of the problems was only a day away.

On July 8, while workmen were cleaning a strainer in the pipeline at Pump Station 8, someone opened a closed valve by mistake and crude oil gushed into the pump room. There was an explosion and a fire. The pump house and thousands of dollars in equipment were destroyed, and one man died. This we found out later; Alyeska was mum. The firm couldn't, or wouldn't, provide details of the disaster.

I had been out to the University of Alaska for a late interview, and by luck I stopped by my office off the *Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*’s newsroom rather than heading directly home.

When I walked into the newsroom, City Editor Dick Robinett greeted me with "Pump Station 8 just blew up."

Managing Editor Kent Sturgis, a former AP chief of bureau at Seattle, was on the phone to Weller, relaying details the News-Miner had learned in the 15 minutes since the blast. He turned over all of the News-Miner's resources, news and pictures to the AP.

I ran to my car and headed down the Alaska Highway to Pump Station 8, about 40 miles southeast of the city.

Two roadblocks had been set up on the public road that provided access to the pump station, one by Alyeska security men and one by the Alaska State Troopers.

At the first, just off the Alaska Highway, an Alyeska guard stopped me from going farther by car, but he had no objections to my continuing by foot.

In the distance, about five miles away, I could see a great, black plume of smoke.

Alyeska and emergency vehicles whizzed back and forth between the pump station and the Alaska Highway. I flagged down a pickup truck and found that the driver was a resident who lived far short of the pump station.

When he reached his turnoff, I got out and flagged a truck. It turned out to be an Air Force vehicle carrying fire-fighting foam to Pump Station 8. The driver agreed to take me through a roadblock manned by a State Trooper near the pump station, if I were asked no questions.

I tucked my notebook, camera and recorder under my legs and sat silent when we reached the roadblock. The State Trooper passed us through without a word to me when the driver told him the truck was carrying foam.

Only two other reporters and one photographer gained access to the pump-station area, but Alyeska refused to allow us onto the pump-station grounds.

What information the reporters on the scene received came from Alyeska and contractor personnel who had been in the general area at the time of the explosion and now had gathered outside the pump-station gates.

In Anchorage, Weller and the AP staff kept the phones busy trying to find out what had happened and why.

Neil Cook of radio station KJNP, North Pole, one of the two other reporters at the pump station, had told his station to relay his reports to the AP. After I arrived and collected new material, I did some live remotes, which were used on KJNP and phoned to AP Anchorage.

Alyeska refused to let us use its telephone at the pump station, and there were no other telephones within 10 miles.

When I figured I had to reach a telephone to get additional details to Anchorage and to get pictures moving on the AP's Laserphoto network, I hitched a ride out in a pickup truck.

The driver told me he had been in the pump house when oil first started spurting from the line, and what he related corroborated details I had heard earlier. I had stumbled quite by chance into a gold mine of information on what had happened. The why of it was elusive. He simply didn't know.

The information provided a key element to our wrapup lead, an element unmatched by anyone else but subsequently confirmed by the official report on the accident.

The shutdown lasted 10 days, while the explosion was investigated and preparations were made to start the oil moving again by bypassing the pump house at Pump Station 8.

Oil started moving July 19, only to stop again a few hours later when a piece of heavy construction equipment tore a vent from a check valve on the
pipeline just south of the Prudhoe Bay field. Crude oil sprayed over the tundra.

Alyeska reluctantly gave only the barest of details. While the AP's sources indicated a spill of major proportions, Alyeska maintained that it was only a minor accident.

The only way to make a judgment was to go to the scene. A News-Miner photographer and I flew to the area, but Alyeska would not let us land on the pipeline pad, the only feasible landing area near the leak. We made several circles around the accident scene to take pictures and to make as accurate an estimate as we could of the area affected by the spurting oil.

We flew on to Deadhorse, on the Arctic Ocean, to refuel and phone in story material. Then we headed right back to Fairbanks on what was an 800-mile round trip.

The spill was substantially larger, both in volume and in area, than Alyeska had reported.

The next problem on the line, the first publicly acknowledged sabotage attempt, was even more vexing to reporters. On July 20, the day after the spill on the Arctic Slope, explosive charges were detonated on the line some 17 miles north of Fairbanks. The explosions dented vertical support columns on that section of the elevated pipeline and tore some 60 feet of insulation from the line. The line itself was not damaged, however, and the flow of oil was not interrupted.

Incredibly, the incident was not reported to police—and hence not known to the media—until July 25, despite the fact that Alyeska security patrols pass the spot several times daily.

Alyeska said, even more incredibly, that its workmen and security men had not recognized the damage as being the result of an act of sabotage.

After the sabotage attempt was reported to the Alaska State Troopers, Alyeska went mum. And the scene of the blasts was sealed off.

The only way, again, to observe the damage was to take to the air. This time it was a much shorter flight.

The State Troopers were cooperative all the way, but Alyeska's contribution to the public's knowledge of the damage and how such an act of sabotage could have been carried out was virtually nil.

There were other, minor problems before the leading edge of oil reached the sprawling marine terminal at Valdez, and in dealing with them reporters had to tap every conceivable source.

The pipeline had been planned and constructed in the glare of public attention, and Alyeska seemed to be almost rabid in its hopes that the operational phase come off smoothly. The environmentalists would be waiting.

But as the problems piled up, the Alyeska public-relations people—whether by design or simply through a lack of communication from above—were unable on many occasions to say what was going on.

I am inclined at this date to subscribe to the latter theory, although there were incidents that give me reason to harbor some reservations about whether that is the correct assessment.

no names

The contacts I developed at the Operations Control Center were extremely helpful several times, but they were adamant that their names not be used.

I was absolutely certain of the validity of their information and we used it time and again. But the use of facts without a source always leaves doubt in the mind of the reader.

Other Alyeska employees also risked their jobs to provide accurate details to AP staffers when company management went silent.

With four other AP staffers, I was in Valdez July 28, when the first oil arrived at the marine terminal.

Alyeska closed the terminal to outsiders—no reporters, no photographers for the end result of $7.7 billion in expenditures. But the AP still had a graphic word picture of the scene in the Operations Control Center when oil started flowing into the terminal.

Contacts Weller and I had made over the months honored a promise to meet with us after oil-in and tell us about it.

There were side assignments as we awaited the arrival of the first tanker to take on Alaska oil, the Arco Juneau.

I did a story comparing present-day Valdez with the Valdez of 13 years ago, nearly wiped out in the great earthquake of Good Friday, 1964.

The old town had been built on highly unstable ground, and after the quake it had been moved about two miles to its present site. The old townsite was leveled.

I also flew to Cordova for a story on the fears of that community of fishermen about the parade of tankers about to start through the rich fishing grounds of Prince William Sound.

On the evening of August 1, I packed my gear and clambered aboard the Arco Juneau at the invitation of the Atlantic Richfield Co. to ride the ship to the Arco refinery at Cherry Point, Wash.

The three-and-a-half-day trip was a routine voyage for the tankermen of the Arco Juneau, most of them veterans of the oil run to the Middle East. For them, there was only one novel feature to our trip—the 824,803 barrels of crude in the Arco Juneau's huge cargo tanks were the first of the some 9.6 billion barrels of recoverable oil in the Prudhoe Bay field.

For a landlubber like me, it was a fascinating but uneventful glimpse into life on a tanker on the high seas.

When the Arco Juneau docked at Cherry Point August 5, I relinquished the story to Mary Marzano of the AP's Seattle staff, except for a feature sidebar I had

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not phoned in from the ship as she made her way south.

I had not dictated it for good reason. My calls from the ship went to Seattle via satellite, at $10 a minute.

When I stepped off the plane at Fairbanks August 6, I had logged more than 3,500 miles on a story that had been nonstop for a month and a half.

On the line, everything went smoothly until February 15, 1978. There were no major problems, no major hitches. But on that day at a relatively inaccessible point on the line six miles east of Fairbanks, someone placed a plastic shape-charge under the insulation on the pipe and set it off using a slow-burning fuse. More than 550,000 gallons of crude oil spurted from the pipeline before the flow could be stopped.

Again, reporters played a cat-and-mouse game with Alyeska security forces in trying to assess exactly what had happened and the extent of the spill.

With Scott Yates of television station KTVF in Fairbanks, I dodged a security block on the pipeline right-of-way two-and-one-half miles from the blast site by shouldering my way through heavy brush, timber and snow at night.

Once around the security block, Yates and I walked the pipeline right-of-way to a point near the explosion. Three times we had to dive into heavy snow to avoid being seen by the crews of helicopters flying the line.

Once near the scene, we again took to the brush and were able to get within 75 yards of the spurting oil without being seen. We got vivid description, but no pictures.

Only one other newsman, Eric Muehling, got to the scene. The News-Miner photographer had hitched a ride in with the Alaska State Troopers, and his pictures were displayed around the world after I moved them on AP Laserphoto.

Though Alyeska offered a reward of $25,000 for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for the explosion, no arrests had been made as of this writing.

The long and expensive reconstruction work on the destroyed pump house at Pump Station 8 was completed in late February, and Pump 8 went back on the line in early March.

When it resumed operations, I was on the Arco Juneau, heading south from Valdez to Cherry Point to experience winter sailing conditions on the Gulf of Alaska. I picked the wrong trip. There were smooth seas all the way, with several days more suited to suntan oil than to the foul-weather oilskins of the sailor.

With Pump Station 8 again in operation, Alyeska boosted the daily flow through the pipeline to 1.1 million barrels, up from about 750,000 barrels with Pump 8 down.

Since then, there have been no further major incidents.

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Vanity

They say that hens do cackle loudest when
There's nothing vital in the eggs they've laid;
And there are hens, professing to have made
A study of mankind, who say that men
Whose business 'tis to drive the tongue or pen
Make the most clamorous fanfaronade
O'er their most worthless work; and I'm afraid
They're not entirely different from the hen.
Lo! the drum-major in his coat of gold,
His blazing breeches and high-towering cap—
Imperiously pompous, grandly bold,
Grim, resolute, an awe-inspiring chap!
Who'd think this gorgeous creature's only virtue
Is that in battle he will never hurt you?

—Hannibal Hunsiker (Ambrose Bierce)
As professional, college and scholastic sports grew swiftly in early 20th Century America, newspapers expanded their coverage and altered their treatment of them—changes that led within a decade to the emergence of the modern sports page or section.

Among Montana dailies, the change was not rapid or consistent. On a progressive newspaper like the Anaconda Standard, which from its beginning had emulated the big Eastern dailies, coverage was expanded markedly in a few years. It took several years for others to develop a sports page or section.

There is no doubt that the growth of sports pages paralleled the growth of professional baseball and college football. Both rose to prominence in the early 1900s, and newspapers tried to accommodate the national interest in them.

In the years before the sports boom, coverage was sparse. Stories were chronological, leads often were dry and topical and important information was buried deep in the story. In this story about an 1891 crew race between Yale and Harvard, the Missoula (Mont.) Gazette writer saved the results for the final sentences:

HARVARD AND YALE TEST THE MUSCLE OF THEIR OARSMEN

Harvard Wins the Race Easily, Beating Yale by Fifteen Lengths

NEW LONDON, Conn., June 26—Seldom have conditions been more favorable than prevailed this morning for the great annual contest on the water of muscular strength of Yale and Harvard. A very light breeze was blowing and scarcely a ripple was noticeable on the water. At 11:30 o'clock the crews began to get into position amid the enthusiasm among the spectators on the hundreds of heavily loaded steamboats and yachts and thousands of friends of the contestants on shore. The starter's boat soon cleared the way, and at 11:40 o'clock the loud cry of "they're off" announced the race under progress.

It was soon seen that Harvard's men were more than able to handle their adversaries, putting four lengths between them at the end of the first mile, and, finally, winning by fifteen lengths.

Great was the enthusiasm manifested by Harvardsites and their college yell was made to loudly ring again and again as they carried their victorious conferees.

Actually, rowing events and other Eastern collegiate sports rarely were reported by Montana newspapers during the 1890s. Boxing was the most popular sport, and most newspapers ran lengthy stories, often on the front page. Here is the beginning of one in the June 25, 1891, Missoula Gazette:

HIT HIM ON THE JAW

Cockney McGuire Bests Tom Devine in Four Rounds
A Rattling Contest with Four Ounce Gloves from Light Tap
First to Sockdolager Finish

There was a glove contest last night at the gymnasium of Lawrence Smith under the auspices of the Missoula Athletic Association. It was between Cockney McGuire, a race horseman, and Tom Devine, from Helena, both lightweights. It was one of the prettiest contests ever witnessed and won by McGuire in four rattling rounds.

The word sockdolager, once used frequently in boxing stories, is rarely seen today. It means "something that settles a matter; a decisive blow or answer; finisher; something outstanding or exceptional."

Boxing stories of the late 1800s usually were long and detailed, with major fights described round by round.
By 1900 sports reporting had begun to change. Baseball and football stories appeared on news pages with more regularity. The writing was tighter. Leads, less topical, gave the score or results in the first sentence. A 1903 boxing story in the Anaconda Standard shows how leads were changing:

FREDRICKS IS WINNER

Helena, Oct. 9—"Kid" Fredricks of Buffalo defeated Jack Clifford of Butte to-night in the seventeenth round in one of the prettiest fights that was ever seen in Helena. In fact, it is said that the bout was one of the cleanest ever pulled off in this city.

Writers still made no effort to keep their opinions out of sports copy. Many subtle and not-so-subtle remarks appear in these dispatches in issues of the Anaconda Standard in 1903:

Cambridge, Mass., Oct. 3—Harvard made a lamentable showing against the University of Main [sic] to-day, winning by a score of 6-0. The game revealed none of the features in Harvard's play, but it emphasized the fact the Crimson line is far from impregnable. The Harvard backs worked well together, but as the Harvard team was much heavier their showing was very disappointing.

Seattle, Sept. 30—Harmon's wildness lost the game to-day. Twice he filled the bases, and three-base hits by Ferris and Hulseman cleared them, making enough runs to win the game. [This was followed by a box score showing that Spokane defeated Seattle 6 to 3.]

Salt Lake City, Sept. 30—The Elders simply slaughtered Pitcher Martin of Butte to-day. He was hammered all over the lot for a total of 21 hits, which, with a couple of costly errors by the Miners, made the game a total walk-away for the Elders. [Salt Lake beat Butte 14 to 1.]

a sports logo

During 1903, the Anaconda Standard began using a sports logo to separate sports news from other stories. However, the page often contained stories about society and the courts, and sometimes days would pass before another sports page appeared. The Anaconda Standard began in 1906 a column called "Comment and Gossip on Athletics," and it clearly was an attempt to entertain as well as inform the reader. It did not carry a by-line—few stories did—but it seems to have been a forerunner of contemporary sports columns. It contained many brief items about forthcoming events, player trades, salary reports, etc. The column also contained the first attempts to portray the personalities of athletes. An example from the Feb. 14, 1906, issue:

Napoleon Lajoie is the recipient of the largest salary paid to any living ball players, and try as he may, not a sporting writer in Cleveland seems able to get an inkling of the amount.

"Would you mind saying whether its [sic] four, five or six figures?" he was asked.

"I am free to say I have no intention of purchasing a private yacht."

"Then we'll make it $15,000."

"But it will be a great plenty to keep me in chewing tobacco."

"That raises it to $25,000."

"Right here I want to positively deny the rumor that I will buy a home for my old folks, and to state further that I will travel a little slower than the pace set by Cassie Chadwick."

"How would $20,000 be? Isn't that getting closer to the mark?"

"You are certainly clever at guess work. Your persisting is so admirable that without meaning to break any confidence, I'm going to make a statement on the authority of President Kilfoyle. I am at liberty to say that it won't break the Cleveland Club no matter what you call it. Have a chew?"

Writers still made no effort to keep their opinions out of sports copy. Many subtle and not-so-subtle remarks appear in these dispatches in issues of the Anaconda Standard in 1903:  

By 1908 the Anaconda Standard was running a regular sports page. The gossip column of 1906 was replaced with a "Sporting Editor's Column" in which topics and opinions were discussed in greater detail. Many of the Eastern college teams were covered extensively. In fact, the 1908 Harvard-Yale football game was preceded by stories for four consecutive days. The game story rivaled the coverage of just about any news event of the year—it appeared on the front page with a two-line banner and sub-

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headlines:

HARVARD DEFEATS YALE FOR FIRST TIME IN SEVEN YEARS

CLOSELY CONTESTED GAME RESULTS IN SCORE OF 4 to 0

CRIMSON TRIUMPHS OVER BLUE OF YALE IN MIGHTY BATTLE

Kennard, Fresh From Side Lines, Brings Victory to Cambridge Eleven by Sensational Goal From the Field in First Half of Terrific Struggle

Winners Outplay New Haven Team in Every Department of Game, but Blue Fights Desperately to Very End—Even Coy Fails to Stem Tide!

NEW HAVEN, Conn., Nov. 21—In the dying light a crimson tide of banners swept in triumph over Yale field this afternoon for the men of Harvard, after seven long years, had beaten Yale, 4-0.

Baseball, too, had its share of the fanfare, and coverage of the 1909 World Series between Pittsburgh and Detroit is one example. The following pregame lead could be written about any World Series town:

Pittsburgh, Oct. 6—With the world’s championship baseball games but one day off, Pittsburgh tonight has practically abandoned business and turned its attention to baseball.

The series lasted seven games, and the Anaconda Standard placed many of the stories on page one. On the day of the final game, the Standard ran two large drawings on the front page—one a huge pirate holding a “pussy cat” by the tail, the other a tiger fiercely swiping at an intimidated pirate. The caption: “Which will it be?”

The next day the question was answered with another front-page story:

The dean said that much of her recent work was in “conceptualizing new thrusts in programming.” Beware the conceptualized thrust. I saw one that had gone berserk and it took six strong men to hold it down. Inputs of course are everywhere. It is my observation that for some reason there are far more inputs than there are outputs, which means that a large number of puts are disappearing somewhere in the process.

—Edwin Newman
Missoulian Coverage of Hoerner Waldorf, 1956-1973

By LARRY ELKIN

The writer, a newsman for the Associated Press in Helena, submitted this report as his senior paper in the Senior Seminar. It provides a critical analysis of the Missoulian’s coverage of the Hoerner Waldorf paper mill northwest of Missoula as well as an evaluation of the newspaper’s reporting of environmental matters in the Missoula valley. Mr. Elkin is a 1978 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism.

Residents of Missoula, Mont., awoke Oct. 22, 1956, to learn they soon would be sharing their valley with a new neighbor. The Waldorf Paper Products Co., a Minnesota-based firm, had announced the day before that it planned to build a pulp mill about 10 miles from Missoula on the western edge of the Missoula valley. The firm’s decision was the culmination of efforts by local business interests and local and state politicians to attract new industry.

This union of political and business interests was symbolized in the announcement, which was made by Montana Gov. J. Hugo Aronson in Miles City—455 miles from Missoula, far from the western Montana forests on which Missoulians and the proposed pulp mill were in large part financially dependent.

Most residents had learned about the proposal in August, when the Missoulian reported that the city’s Chamber of Commerce had asked the Waldorf company to build the plant. That invitation followed a series of meetings between the firm’s officers and local business and political interests.

There were no stories about the negotiations, no analyses of the mill’s potential impact, no opportunities for those who might oppose construction of an odorous, sprawling pulp mill. The plans were presented to Missoulians as a fait accompli.

This was not unusual in the 1940s and 1950s, at least in some of the less-industrial sections of the United States. In many areas, particularly in the South and the West, newspapers actively joined local chambers of commerce to promote new industry, which was regarded as an almost unadulterated good.

Hodding Carter wrote in 1948 about his newspaper’s devotion to the industrialization of Greenville, Miss.: 

That is why we never mention our long-ago strike in Greenville, and why I should feel like a Judas when my newspaper reports that the CIO is seeking an election at the mill. Such stories may be upsetting to the next delegation from Toledo. We need the pay rolls. A dollar-an-hour minimum would be nice, but even fifty cents an hour, multiplied by 500 workers whom mechanization is shunting from plantations, would add much to the local economy. And so our handful of dissenting Machiavellians do not protest too loudly. After all, if we get them here on a fifty-cent premise, the CIO and the AFL will come along soon.

So it was in Missoula. A small, elite group, having decided what was best for the community, worked in silence to achieve its goal. Nathaniel Blumberg, who had become dean of the University of Montana

1 Hodding Carter, Southern Legacy (Baton Rouge, La., 1948), p. 160.
School of Journalism one month before Aronson made his announcement, recently called the Missoulian’s failure to warn the public the product of “a conspiracy of silence.”

The impact of the new pulp mill on Missoula was enormous. At its opening in 1957 the plant employed 1,200 persons—in a community that had not quite reached its 1960 population of 44,665. This is not in any way intended to be a precise measurement of the effect Hoerner Waldorf, as the firm later became known (the Hoerner box company was in effect a silent partner in the 1956 decision to build the mill), had on Missoula. But it is obvious even from a superficial, educated guess that the mill would change the community—and the community, by and large, was given nothing to say about it.

There are two more matters to consider regarding the Missoulian’s initial non-coverage of the arrival of Hoerner Waldorf: The mill’s impact on the already-present lumber industry and the role of the Anaconda Copper Company in determining the tone, if not the specific content, of the Missoulian’s news coverage.

The mill was of great importance to western Montana sawmill operators because it burned leftover wood scraps. This gave the sawyers a market for what was normally a waste product disposed of in “teepee burners,” large, smoke-belching, pyramid-shaped structures that not long ago were the hallmark of a lumber town and exist still in some outlying districts. The new mill purchased the wood scraps, known as “hogged fuel,” from sawmills ranging more than 100 miles from Darby to Polson. Supporters of the mill made ample use of this arrangement, although I have not been able to find any scientific study that measured the importance of this new market to the region.

Anyone who knows anything about the history of Montana is familiar with the Anaconda Company’s role in the state’s press. Those who are most familiar with it also are most disgusted by it. K. Ross Toole, a University of Montana historian who knows much about the Company-controlled press, calls it “the Great Gray Blanket.” He says the Company’s role in Montana’s press is a monument to an earlier era when the state’s copper kings used their newspapers to attack one another with considerable vituperation.

The vituperation was gone from the state’s press long before the Waldorf Paper Products Co. arrived. According to Toole the Anaconda Company’s domination of the state was essentially unchallenged by the mid-1930s. The need for vituperation was gone. So the Company press—eight newspapers, including four of the state’s five largest—lapsed into silence regarding any potentially controversial local or state issue. The papers followed a Company policy, spoken or unspoken, of not rocking the boat.

In 1956 the Missoulian was owned by the Anaconda Company. It was not going to place in an unfavorable light a business venture that had the backing of state and local officials, whom the Company had no reason to antagonize and who probably were doing the Company’s bidding anyway.

So it was that the climate of the times, which favored business, was brought to an extreme in Montana’s press. The Missoulian played the tune called by the business interests.

The arrival of a firm as large as the Waldorf Company could not go unnoticed, even in an Anaconda-owned newspaper. In fact, it would not serve to have it go unnoticed, when the newspaper was a perfect medium for favorable publicity. The Missoulian’s early stories usually said whatever the local business interests wanted them to say. There was no critical analysis of what the mill might do to Missoula, no discussion of whether the proposed site was appropriate, and if there were opponents, they went unmentioned.

The Missoulian’s reference to the proposal suggested a close relationship between Waldorf and the Missoula Chamber of Commerce. The Missoulian used only one source for the story—Chamber of Commerce President William A. Thornton.

The story, on page three August 9, 1956, reported that the Chamber of Commerce had sent a telegram.

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1 Nathaniel Blumberg, Dean Stone Night address, Missoula, Mont., May 5, 1978. Blumberg’s speech appears as the lead article in this issue of Montana Journalism Review.


4 The World Almanac, 1968. The figure is for Missoula County, which much more accurately measures the community’s population than do figures for the severely circumscribed city. The plant is about eight miles from the city limits.


6 The World Almanac, 1968. The figure is for Missoula County, which much more accurately measures the community’s population than do figures for the severely circumscribed city. The plant is about eight miles from the city limits.

7 "C of C Invites Waldorf to Build Plant," Missoulian, Aug. 9, 1956, p. 3.
to the Waldorf firm in St. Paul, inviting it “to establish a multi-million dollar pulp mill 10 miles northwest of Missoula.” The decision essentially had been made, as the story clearly showed: A bulletin sent to Chamber members asked them to “personally convey their appreciation of the selection made by the Waldorf people.”

The bulletin says that Waldorf, which is an old, established firm, is fully cognizant of the necessity of good public relations in the area and is asking, “Would you like to have us invest our capital in Missoula?” The bulletin said the chamber board sent its wire in response to the unspoken inquiry.

The story said the plan was the product of meetings between company officials and business leaders of Missoula and St. Paul.

The series of conferences led to the chamber calling a meeting of representatives of Missoula business, industry, press [emphasis added] and radio to present the project. At that meeting Perry F. Roys, director of the state Planning Board, said the plant was “the very latest in design with virtual elimination of undesirable water and air pollution.”

There it was, in print: It appeared as if the press had joined with business interests to study the project, with the press providing publicity once the deal had been completed. And those who stopped to think probably could see that the public was being methodically lied to: There was no such thing, in 1956, as a pulp mill that “virtually eliminated” pollution. In fact, they were notorious polluters, as larger cities methodically lied to: There was no such thing, in 1956, known. But the Waldorf firm in St. Paul, inviting it “to establish a multi-million dollar pulp mill 10 miles northwest of Missoula.” The story clearly showed: A bulletin sent to Chamber members asked them to “personally convey their appreciation of the selection made by the Waldorf people.”

The story also quoted Robert E. Jones, identified only as “of the company,” as saying that “because of the modern design of the plant, air and water pollution will be held to an absolute minimum.” But no one made an effort to determine what an “absolute minimum” was. Nor did anyone note that “an absolute minimum” is not the same as having “virtually no” pollution. As time drew near, spokesmen backed away from their lies without volunteering the truth. The practice resembles what has come to be known as “stonewalling,” although no one was seeking answers behind the stone wall.

production begun

The mill began production Nov. 9, 1957, unnoticed by the Missoulian. Hogged fuel was bought, converted to pulp, and shipped to Minnesota to be converted to paper. The mill pumped money into the city’s economy and noxious odors into the atmosphere, which, with the seasonal air stagnation, allowed the vapors to collect over the city.

A Missoulian story in late winter finally acknowledged the mill’s presence—and that of the odors. The story aptly pointed out, albeit indirectly, that company officers were very interested in reducing emissions, when they could save money by doing so:

The smell is a painful topic for officials of Waldorf Paper Products of Montana, Inc., for more than one reason. They don’t like the public reaction, and they don’t like to have their chemicals escaping into the Western Montana atmosphere.13

Even when the Missoulian mentioned the odor, it generally did so in the context of what the mill was doing for the area’s economy. The same story characterized the mill as “a source of bad smells on occasion, and a solid shot in the arm to the economy of the area.”14

Even in the area of economics, the Missoulian reported only what the company wanted widely known. It was not until 1959 that the Missoulian revealed that the Hoerner Box Company of Keokuk, Iowa, owned a one-quarter interest in the Missoula mill.15 The Missoulian continued to refer to the company by its old name, despite the fact that it was incorporated in Montana as Waldorf-Hoerner. The newspaper never explained the delay in announcing Hoerner’s role in the plant.

Most of the coverage through the 1950s simply amounted to publication of Waldorf’s propaganda. The Missoulian gave page-one play to the firm’s claim that it boosted the local economy, restated in March, 1958, though this had been reported before.16 It also

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12Ibid.
13“Waldorf-Hoerner Plans Expansion,” Ibid., July 25, 1959, p. 1. This was the first time the name Waldorf-Hoerner was used, and it was not explained until the fifth paragraph of the story.
14“Pulp Mill Adds $10,000 Daily to City Income,” Ibid., March 6, 1958, p. 1.

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gave the firm's president, Nels Sandberg, a chance to explain the odor problem:

Sandberg explained that since the plant has not yet achieved full production, the control devices incorporated in the plant to minimize odors have not yet been fully effective. He pointed out that Waldorf has already spent several hundred thousand dollars in equipment aimed at reducing odors. In addition, he emphasized that the company will spend any reasonable amount necessary for odor control equipment. ... But, he pointed out, it is impossible to eliminate all odors in a kraft sulphate type pulp mill.¹⁷

The Anaconda Company was not the sole villain, for the news without favor to special interests. In large part, it eventually succeeded. But between 1959 and 1964 there was only one Missoulian article about the pulp mill, and it touched on the odor problem only tangentially.

The 1950s and 1960s were generally prosperous, and the Missoulian reported the plan July 25, 1959. (That story, which first mentioned the Hoerner Company's involvement, said Hoerner was increasing its share from 25 percent to 50 percent.) The story did not mention the pollution problem, nor did it raise the obvious question of whether the expansion would worsen the problem. (Mill opponents later charged that it did.)²⁰

The Missoulian's shortcomings were no longer attributable to the Anaconda Company. On June 1, 1959—seven weeks before the announcement—Lee representatives explained in the Missoulian newsroom that they now owned the Missoulian and that the newspaper's policy would be to cover the news.²¹

What happened? It appears as if the habits of a professional lifetime were hard for the Missoulian staff to break. Probably no one thought of asking whether the expansion would increase the valley's air pollution. Certainly there is no evidence that anyone in the Lee chain wanted to avoid causing trouble. It just took a long time to eliminate the tradition of inept, incomplete environmental reporting.

(Environmental reporting was not widespread anywhere in the country in 1959. Rachel Carson's Silent Spring was three years from publication, and the war in Southeast Asia had not convinced many that the policy of letting business run the country could be a mistake. In short, not many people were thinking about the environment.)

Residents apparently had become accustomed to the smell in Missoula. They did not like it, and visitors did not understand how anybody could stand it. The Missoulian wrote nothing about it; there was a virtual five-year news blackout regarding the pulp mill.

The smell, by all accounts, was awful. Sam Reynolds arrived in Missoula in 1964 to become Missoulian editorial-page editor. He recalled that one morning in March, 1964, he smelled what he thought was rotting wood in the house. Reynolds searched the house and checked the plumbing. No luck.

"When I opened the door to bring in the paper, it hit me," Reynolds said. "The smell was outside the house, not inside. And it stank."²²

But little was said and nothing was done. A banner headline May 27, 1962, must have surprised some Missoulians: "Mill Decision Deals Blow to Air Pollution."²³ But the story did not announce a new project, pledged by Sandberg in 1958, to reduce the odor. It announced the mill's decision to add a boiler, which would in theory finally

²²Interview with Sam Reynolds, Missoula, Nov. 22, 1977.
have eliminated Missoula's teepee burners (they were
still pouring smoke into the air). The newspaper also
carried a front-page picture of a teepee burner, with an "x" superimposed.

As it turned out, this claim was false. The burners
remained in operation for several more years, until
the city passed an ordinance banning them. This
never was pointed out by the Missoulian. Instead, it
was two years before another article about Hoerner
Waldorf (as it soon would be known) appeared. That
story, on May 31, 1964, was the first in six years to
mention the odor problem. The story reported that
the plant had installed a new turpentine recovery unit,
which "certainly helps" reduce odors. But the story
offered no figures, no interviews with scientists or
environmentalists and no evidence to support that
claim beyond the statements of company officials.
The same problems occurred six months later in a
story that described the operation of a new $70,000
oxidation tower.

The Missoulian was not learning from experience.
In June, 1965, the company announced plans to
increase production at the mill. And, incredibly, the
Missoulian merely repeated the official statements
that the change would increase the efficiency of the
anti-pollution equipment, without asking if the total
pollution in the valley would increase. The
Missoulian would not address that question until
militant groups would force it to several years later.

In the spring of 1966 the companies that shared the
Missoula mill, Waldorf and Hoerner, announced
plans to merge. The new firm would be incorporated
in Delaware (like many American firms, for tax
purposes). The merger was approved in May, and
Roy Countryman was placed in charge of the Missoula
mill. In August the directors changed the name of
the Missoula subsidiary from Waldorf-Hoerner Paper
Products Co. of Missoula to Hoerner Waldorf Corp. of
Montana.

(The change played havoc with the newspaper's
style. Editors for years after the merger vacillated
between hyphenating Hoerner Waldorf and leaving
out the hyphen.)

For still another two years the Missoulian ignored
Hoerner Waldorf's pollution, although several other
stories were printed. In 1967 a one-day walkout at the
plant was reported ex post facto in the Missoulian.
Six months later a valuable acid was discovered among
the mill's wastes. The Missoulian carried an AP story
about the discovery and followed it three days later
with its own report that recovery of the acid would not
reduce pollution in the valley.

Finally, in late 1968, came the first full-fledged
pollution story about Hoerner Waldorf. A group of
Missoula citizens, working through a nationwide
environmental organization (the Environmental
Defense Fund), filed suit in federal court requesting
an injunction to prohibit "the emission of noxious sulfur compounds.

Here was the first environmental "issue" about
Hoerner Waldorf—the first news peg that did not
require the newspaper to decide that the odor was a
newsworthy subject. The EDF had made that decision,
and the Missoulian could follow the developments of
the case. It did a fairly adequate job, considering the
case was before a federal judge in Butte.

The Missoulian printed stories about the suit
November 2, 1968 (before it was filed) and
November 14, after it was filed. Another story gave
an address to which tax-deductible contributions to
the EDF could be mailed.

reaction swift

Reaction from the mill was swift and vitriolic. It was,
of course, well covered by the Missoulian—perhaps
not to the mill's advantage. The Missoulian quoted
Roy Countryman:

Recent publicity appears to be the culmination of a
series of unfounded statements made by a few people of
the Missoula community who have appointed themselves
the custodians of the environment.

I am shocked by the allegations made by the
Environmental Defenders of Western Montana. . .. I want
to assure the community that Hoerner Waldorf and its 438
employees respect this community and its natural,
economic and social environment.

Countryman's remarks probably did not win him or
his firm many friends among readers who had not
already taken sides in the struggle. Many readers
probably wondered about the identity of the

33"Valuable Multipurpose Acid is Found In Pulp Wastes at Hoerner
2.
35"Missoulians Plan Suit Against Hoerner Waldorf," Ibid., Nov. 2,
1968, p. 2.
36Ibid.
38Ibid.
39"Manager of Pulp Mill 'Shocked' by Charges," Ibid., Nov. 17,
"custodians of the environment." They may have questioned the existence of an "economic environment" in Missoula or elsewhere. And Countryman's reference to the firm's 438 employees may have smelled faintly of economic blackmail.40

Despite the rash of environmental stories, the coverage remained superficial. The Missoulian allowed mill officials to get away with public pronouncements that were patent nonsense—and it did not give much scrutiny to the EDF's claim that western Montanans were being deprived of their right to clean air.

An example came in the coverage of a speech Countryman made in 1969 to the Kiwanis Club:

Discussing odorous gases produced, Countryman said that the operation here is one of only eight mills in the country that have perfected a unique system to collect and burn odorous noncondensible gases. He said the present system is 99 percent efficient, compared with an earlier scrubbing system that was only 90 percent efficient.

He said that pollution at the plant is a matter of continuing concern and also is "a very costly proposition. Last year, for example, we spent over $115,000 just to maintain and improve the efficiency of our existing air protection equipment.

Countryman said the plant constantly is on the alert for any new methods or new equipment that might make pollution control more efficient than at present. He said that although industry admits its responsibility to further reduce atmospheric emissions, it hopes that residents of the area recognize that there are a great many factors that both contribute to and compound the problem in the Missoula Valley.

He pointed to the inversion problem which existed before the plant was installed here, the cars and furnaces that add to pollutants in the atmosphere, and other types of combustion.

He said that although the plant has doubled its capacity during the period, visibility at the Missoula Airport during the past three years has been better than it was the previous three.41

Countryman used percentages that sound impressive but do not explain what must be done to eliminate the odor. And he made the silly implication that visibility at the airport had improved because Hoerner Waldorf had cleaned up. No one was accusing the mill of reducing visibility in the valley.

Perhaps the pressures of spot-news reporting can account for printing such misleading remarks without clarification, but there is no reason why they never were subsequently placed in perspective. The Missoulian was allowing the firm to use the press as a forum for its own public-relations efforts.

The Missoulian continued to report developments in the EDF case, which lasted through the summer of 1970. In February the environmentalists withdrew their request for a temporary injunction that would have forced the closing of the mill until the suit was decided.42 This was the first time that the request for a temporary injunction and its implication of massive layoffs were reported.

The lengthy story also outlined, for the first time, the EDF's specific complaints: The fund alleged that the mill polluted the Missoula environment with sulfur compounds (a substance soon to be the center of more controversy), that the compounds are hazardous to animal and plant life, and that citizens have a constitutional right to a clean and healthy environment. The constitutional claim was based on the equal-protection and due-process clauses of the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments and on the entire Ninth Amendment (which says the enumeration of certain rights in the Constitution does not mean citizens do not also enjoy other rights).43 This story marked the first time the Missoulian printed an allegation that the mill's emissions were hazardous, not merely malodorous.

A more specific allegation against the mill was made about six weeks later and was relatively well covered. In a pre-trial deposition in the case, University of Montana botany professor Clancy Gordon said he had gathered evidence that sulfur emissions from the mill were damaging trees in the area.44 According to the news accounts, Gordon offered no opinion whether the emissions were injurious to animals or people.

A company deposition put Hoerner Waldorf back in the news the following day. The firm announced that it was considering a $3 million investment in a new pollution-control system.45 Missoulian reporter Dennis Curran wrote, without attribution, that the new system could lead to "odorless" and "pollution-free" operation of the mill.46

The story also reported that Countryman, who gave the deposition, admitted that the plant did not meet state standards for emissions of suspended particulates. However, those standards were not scheduled to take effect for one year.

In late May the Missoulian carried a Lee State Bureau story that described the resolution of a dispute about the plant's water pollution.47 The state had agreed to allow the firm to dump its effluents into the Clark Fork River during high-water periods, provided

40Toole, in Twentieth-Century Montana, describes the Anaconda Company's 1903 bludgeoning of Montana. The Company wanted a change made in the state's laws on mining and the disqualification of judges. When the governor refused to call a special session of the Legislature, the Company closed all its Montana operations except its newspapers. Toole estimates 80 percent of the state's wage earners were affected.


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it did not dump them during the remainder of the year. The writer, Jerry Holloron, filed another story, in July, describing a state official’s dissatisfaction with Hoerner Waldorf’s progress against pollution. Benjamin F. Wake, the state air-pollution-control director, told Holloron that the firm had not obtained equipment, available for three or four years, that would have substantially reduced emissions—although he conceded that the company was waiting for the results of tests on newer equipment that could prove even better. The story did not contain a response by Hoerner Waldorf officials.

Late that summer the mill had its first major strike—a 14-day walkout over a contract. The strike was thoroughly covered by the Missoulian, with 10 stories in 14 days.

The community was beginning to pressure Hoerner Waldorf to clean up its emissions and eliminate its odor. It was in response to this community pressure that the Missoulian stepped up its coverage of the issue, although its response was slow, its coverage shallow and its news judgment subject to question.

Earlier in 1969 some Missoula women had formed a group known as Gals Against Smog and Pollution (GASP) and had staged several protest marches in town and at the plant. The Missoulian, brushing them off as activists looking for a cause, ignored them at first. But by the fall of 1969 they no longer could be ignored. Against the backdrop of rising discontent, the community was beginning to pressure Hoerner Waldorf to clean up its emissions and eliminate its odor. It was in response to this community pressure that the Missoulian stepped up its coverage of the issue, although its response was slow, its coverage shallow and its news judgment subject to question.

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The announcement did not deter GASP from organizing a large rally at the mill—the first covered by the Missoulian. GASP had impressive state and local political support, with endorsements from Sen. Mike Mansfield, Gov. Forrest Anderson and state Sen. Elmer Flynn of Missoula. Flynn was among the estimated 200 marchers who gathered Oct. 28 at the mill. The Missoulian called the protesters “clean air enthusiasts.”

K. Ross Toole told the marchers that the time for compromise was past. The Missoulian also reported that Toole had said the obvious (although the Missoulian never had pointed it out): That state and company officials had lied to or misled the people of the community when Waldorf first came to Missoula and that they had been lying and stalling ever since. Perhaps the demonstrators touched a nerve. One week later, Hoerner Waldorf announced it would spend $2.5 million to buy the equipment it had said it was studying six months earlier.

There are inconsistencies between the stories of April and November, 1969, but the Missoulian never pointed them out—the biggest one was that company officials in April had estimated the cost of the equipment between $3 million and $5 million. Now it was $2.5 million. Also, someone had changed his mind about the effectiveness of the new equipment. In April, Dennis Curran had written that if the equipment was installed the plant would be “odorless” and “pollution-free.” But in November he wrote that the new equipment would eliminate half of the plant’s odorous emissions. He never explained that inconsistency.

Several days after Hoerner Waldorf’s announcement, the Missoulian carried a follow-up story that announced the firm’s investment in its Missoula facilities would reach $30 million.

By late 1969 the Missoulian was devoting considerable space, and frequently giving front-page play, to environmental issues such as those at Hoerner Waldorf. But environmental issues are generally complex, and a reporter who does not specialize in them may soon lack sufficient expertise. This is what some Missoulian staff members today believe happened to Curran, who was further handicapped because he was one of only five reporters on the staff.

When the emphasis of the Hoerner Waldorf pollution story began shifting from the odor to the dangerous sulfur dioxide compounds, Curran did not place the matter in perspective. He did not seem to realize the significance of the development.

In December, 1969, a company official acknowledged that the new anti-pollution measures could increase the amount of toxic sulfur dioxide released into the air. That point should have been the lead of the story, but it wasn’t. Curran’s lead gave rise to the headline “Pulp Mill’s Pollution Plan Questioned.” The story read much like the minutes of the state hearing it purported to report. Curran did not try to determine the hazards of sulfur dioxide. He did not give additional details about the revelation. As 1969 closed, Missoulians learned nothing more about the prospects of increased sulfur-dioxide emissions in their valley.

In January, 1970, an internecine split in the EDF organization threatened that group’s suit against Hoerner Waldorf. Curran reported the ouster of Victor Yannacone, a Washington, D.C.-based

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52 Ibid.
54 Ibid.
attorney, from the suit. The story indicated increasing attention to the organization itself, rather than merely its more sensational efforts against the paper mill.

**a surprise**

Missoulians received a surprise January 30: The Missoulian reported that the Missoula County commissioners had agreed to sponsor $14 million in industrial revenue bonds to finance new pollution-control equipment at the plant. This was the first of several such bond issues for Hoerner Waldorf, and it and its successors angered some residents who argued that Hoerner Waldorf was using tax-subsidized bonds to replace aging equipment that would need replacement anyway. But as long as the Missoulian reported the authorization of the bonds after the fact, there was little the opponents could do.

Under federal law, holders of county-sponsored bonds do not pay taxes on income derived from them. This makes the bonds more attractive to investors and allows the firm to sell them at a lower interest rate—thus saving money. The firm gains, the federal government loses and the county does not pay a cent. Missoula’s county commission historically has been amenable to those conditions. The bonds were reasonably well explained in the story as were the objections of bond-issue opponents. But the general public did not learn about the matter until the point was moot.

Curran followed the EDF suit, although he evidently had difficulties because the court action was taking place in Butte, 119 miles away. He noted on March 19 that U.S. District Judge W. D. Murray had set an April 9 hearing, but he did not cover it. There was no mention of it in the Missoulian. The next story on Hoerner Waldorf was Curran’s coverage of an Earth Day rally in late April in which Countryman told a crowd of 400 that the firm wanted clean air as much as it did. He disputed the “contention” of Clancy Gordon that sulfur dioxide from the plant was damaging vegetation.

Gordon’s findings later were corroborated by the U.S. Forest Service.

On April 26 Curran reported that Murray had taken under advisement a Hoerner Waldorf motion to dismiss the EDF suit. The story did not offer the argument in the motion.

In May, 1970, Curran added to the confusion about the expected effectiveness of Hoerner Waldorf’s new pollution equipment. He wrote that the equipment “is expected to reduce the present levels of odor and particulate emissions by more than 90 per cent.” First it was virtually total control, then 50 percent, then 90 percent.

Despite the decision to acquire new equipment, it was obvious that Hoerner Waldorf could not comply with the new state emission standards to take effect in June, 1972. It claimed to support those standards but asked for a one-year variance.

By the middle of 1970 the firm had moderated its stand on environmental laws, as the support for the state standards indicates. It no longer could label environmentalists “self-appointed custodians of the environment,” nor could the Missoulian dismiss them as “clean air enthusiasts.” Environmentalism in Missoula had made tremendous gains in a remarkably short time. It would have made a good story, but it never was written.

In the early 1970s the Missoulian stories about the firm’s cleanup efforts often mentioned company claims to be the first in the industry to use the modern anti-pollution equipment. Several stories quoted federal officials who said Hoerner Waldorf’s record was superior to those of other pulp and paper producers in the Pacific Northwest. But with the increasing attention being devoted to Missoula’s pollution problems, the Missoulian should have looked for information beyond the valley’s confines. Curran should have visited pulp mills in other states, contrasting their problems and plans with those of Hoerner Waldorf. The Weyerhaeuser pulp mill in Lewiston, Idaho, is a three-hour drive from Missoula.

The failure to seek information outside Missoula and Helena gave license to local news sources to say whatever they wished about conditions elsewhere, secure in the knowledge that no one was likely to contradict them.

In mid-1970 the Lee newspapers state bureau was staffed by Jerry Holloron and Dan Foley, who paid considerable attention to environmental questions. This meant the Missoulian was well prepared to follow Hoerner Waldorf’s actions at the state level. At the end of May, Foley reported from Helena that the firm had requested three variances from two water-discharge regulations. The local staff in Missoula did not get reactions from the city’s environmentalists.

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62"Effects of Sulfur Emissions on Douglas Fir Near a Pulp Mill in Western Montana," U.S. Forest Service (Washington, 1974). The study corroborated Gordon’s finding that some 5,000 acres of timber had been damaged by Hoerner Waldorf emissions.
The following week Hoerner Waldorf announced plans for a second phase in its cleanup program, to cost a whopping $11 million. The story was perhaps a little too generous to Hoerner Waldorf, particularly the headline: “H-W Aims At 1972 Clean Air Deadline.” The firm had just requested a one-year variance from that deadline, as the *Missoulian* had reported.

The story said “detailed engineering plans of the project were submitted to state pollution control officials” the previous day. It offered no comments on the plans, which was understandable given the complexity of the plans and the limited time available.

There was a June hearing in Missoula on the firm’s request for variances from the water-discharge regulations, and again the *Missoulian* failed to forewarn the public. Nevertheless, about 200 persons attended the hearing. Reporter Charles S. Johnson covered the meeting, writing a comprehensive story about the firm’s pledge to meet water standards. Hoerner Waldorf needed the variances because a drought had reduced streamflows below the levels required by state law to assure proper dilution of pollutants. The variances were granted.

In the final days of August the EDF’s suit against Hoerner Waldorf was thrown out of court. Judge Murray ruled that the plaintiffs could show no constitutional question or deprivation of due process and that they had recourse through state-government action. The dismissal was thoroughly covered—a short page-one story August 29, a longer page-one story the following day, a story on an inside page September 2 and a front-page “news analysis” September 4.

The first three stories merely examined the decision and reported that an appeal was unlikely because of the expense and because Hoerner Waldorf had announced major anti-pollution moves since the suit had been filed.

The “news analysis” deserves additional comment, because it set interpretive reporting back at least two decades. It was essentially a recap of the previous three stories, mingled with some questionable background information. At one point, news analyzer Curran concluded that the EDF’s case had rested on “the obscure and little-used Ninth Amendment.”

Despite the dismissal, protests against the mill’s pollution continued to increase as did the *Missoulian’s* news coverage. A September, 1970, story reported the contention of the city pollution control director, Jim Nelson, that Hoerner Waldorf was the single greatest contributor to Missoula’s air pollution and that company figures claiming the mill produced only 7 percent of the valley’s pollution were “grossly inaccurate.” But the story offered no figures on how much pollution Hoerner Waldorf actually did contribute, nor did it indicate that Nelson was asked to supply them.

On that same day the *Missoulian* printed a story headlined “Hoerner Waldorf Under Surveillance,” but the story did not say anything about surveillance. It just reported that the city Air Pollution Control Advisory Council had expressed fears that the plant was violating the terms of its air-pollution variance by producing more paper than it was allowed to. The council requested a meeting with company officers to discuss the issue.

The *Missoulian* promptly followed up, reporting the firm’s denial of the charge.

The last Hoerner Waldorf story of 1970 was a report December 12 that the plant soon would shut down for two weeks for economic reasons, putting 470 persons out of work. The newspaper devoted a discreet five paragraphs to the story.

On Jan. 10, 1971, the *Missoulian* published an unusual national story about the findings of the Washington-based Council on Economic Priorities. The group criticized America’s pulp mills for their delay in eliminating pollution problems, but it said the Hoerner Waldorf mill soon would be “one of the cleanest mills in the country” because of community pressure, particularly the EDF lawsuit.

Surprisingly, Hoerner Waldorf was not happy with the council’s conclusions. The *Missoulian* reported four days later on Countryman’s meeting with the Air Pollution Control Advisory Council, at which Countryman had assailed the Washington group for saying Hoerner Waldorf had been unnecessarily dirty for 13 years.

That would have been a good time to point out Wake’s observation that some cleanup equipment was available perhaps four years before Hoerner Waldorf took steps in that direction. Or, someone could have called the manufacturers of such equipment.

68*ibid.*
74*ibid.*
equipment to ask when it became available.

The Missoulian continued to follow the progress in construction of the anti-pollution equipment, but it was forced to rely on the company's statements for its information.81

plans described

In late January Curran wrote a good, comprehensive article describing the mechanics of the firm's cleanup plans. It was easily the best analysis to date of Hoerner Waldorf's pollution and cleanup efforts.82

A month later the Missoulian reported that Phase I of the pollution-control plan would go into effect soon.83 It reiterated the company's claim that 99 percent of the particulate emissions would be captured but perhaps not for several months while engineers worked on problems in the system.

In a seriously flawed followup story March 14, the newspaper noted Countryman's claim that Hoerner Waldorf's mill was the first in the country to adapt its production methods to pollution controls without at the same time increasing production capacity.84 That statement, though truthful, strongly implied that the company did not gain financially from the alterations. Environmentalists pointed out that the new equipment replaced equipment that would have had to be abandoned by the mid-1980s. Replacement of the boilers, with the aid of county-sponsored revenue bonds, allowed Hoerner Waldorf to defray its depreciation expenses. The story failed to mention those points.

In April, 1971, a story told about Hoerner Waldorf's field of water wells adjacent to the plant. It reported the results of a study (funded by the firm and conducted by University of Montana researchers) that concluded that mill effluents were not polluting the groundwater reservoir. The article, which capably explained the complexity of groundwater patterns in Missoula,85 was the first in which the Missoulian questioned whether effluents from the mill's "settling ponds" were perhaps escaping to contaminate surrounding wells or the Clark Fork River. Because much of Missoula's population gets household water from wells in that area, it was a question that should have been raised and answered 13 years earlier. (As it turned out, one family's private well was contaminated. Hoerner Waldorf paid for the drilling and inspection of a replacement.)

When the Phase I equipment was turned on for the first time, Curran was there. He produced an article of questionable value.86 Company officials told him it was too early to tell how well the equipment was working and that the results would not be known for several weeks. But Curran sought some preliminary sign, and he quoted one company official who said the mill's plume looked smaller than it had before. Did that mean it contained less pollution? Maybe, said the official. That was good enough for Curran. The story inconclusively said that preliminary signs were good but final results would not be known for several weeks. And when those weeks had passed, Curran neglected to do a story.

A court suit that received little coverage had delayed issuance of the revenue bonds, but the suit was resolved in June. The Missoulian then reported the issuance of the bonds.87

In August the Missoulian finally reported that Phase I was not doing as well as Hoerner Waldorf had predicted. But you had to look closely for that fact, for it appeared under the headline "H-W Presses Huge Project."88

The story said the new equipment was working at 95 percent efficiency, not 99 percent. The difference, in terms of the amount of dangerous microscopic particles released into the area's air, was substantial. Engineers were working to correct the problem, Curran reported.

It was nearly a year before the Missoulian returned its attention to Hoerner Waldorf—an incredible gap, considering the unresolved question of Hoerner Waldorf's equipment, the anger of the community and the firm's sluggish reactions to environmental prodding. No one at the Missoulian in 1978 could explain the gap, except to point out that the newspaper's 1971-1972 staff of five reporters and one city editor was severely overburdened.

In May, 1972, Curran reported that the firm had been given a one-year particulate-emissions variance, despite the protests of environmentalists.89 The variance was to allow the firm to hook up Phase II in the fall and solve mechanical problems by June 1973. Opponents wanted officials to force the firm to comply with the law by December 1972.

A story written by reporter Gary Langley in June showed that Hoerner Waldorf was receiving a large tax break from the county as an "incentive" to install the new pollution-control equipment. (The story did not explain why the firm needed an incentive to install equipment that would bring it into compliance with

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89 "Hoerner-Waldorf Gets 'Breathing Room,'" Ibid., May 13, 1972, p. 3.
the law.) Because the new equipment would be severely underassessed, the firm would pay $177,000 a year in taxes on it, rather than $760,000.90

The fall of 1972 was an ill-smelling one in Missoula. The mill’s odors, trapped in the valley beneath a layer of stagnant air, plagued the city for days. It was obvious that Phase I had not solved the odor problem. The Missoulian returned its attention to the mill, where company officials blamed the weather and said Phase II would solve the problem.91

Work on Phase II was completed November 3. Countryman, who gave the press a tour of the new facilities, warned of a “several month” debugging period before the equipment would be fully effective.92

The Missoulian did a nice job on the story. A large photo of the mill, with the various buildings and pieces of equipment labeled, accompanied the page-one story and made it much easier to understand.

The following day Curran followed up with a story that clarified—actually weakened—a claim Countryman had made the day before. Countryman had promised 99 percent control of “emissions.” Spokesmen said the next day that the figure applied only to odor and that they were not sure how much of the particulates would be captured (although subsequent stories said the equipment was guaranteed to capture 99 percent of the particulate matter).93

In retrospect, it seems fitting that Curran’s last stories on Hoerner-Waldorf would be about the completion of Phase II. The company finally had completed the transition from an unabashed polluter, whose justification was its payroll, to a firm committed at least in theory to operating in a clean, safe manner.

The Missoulian had completed a transition, too. Environmental reporting had become extremely important to the newspaper. The environmentalists who marched and rallied and complained had forced the newspaper to confront issues it never had thought important to the newspaper. The environmentalists who marched and rallied and complained had forced the newspaper to confront issues it never had thought important to the newspaper. The environmentalists who marched and rallied and complained had forced the newspaper to confront issues it never had thought important to the newspaper.

A graduate of Trinity College, Schwennesen had worked as a reporter for the Hartford (Conn.) Courant before coming to Missoula to study for a master’s degree in journalism. He had enough science background to understand environmental issues, and he had an experienced reporter’s ability to write in simple terms while retaining precision and accuracy.

His first article on Hoerner Waldorf appeared Jan. 3, 1973. It was a technical piece that reported the company’s decision to install another boiler that would run on hogged fuel. He reported the company’s claim that the boiler would reduce the mill’s emissions of sulfur dioxide to four tons a day, compared with the 650 tons a day emitted by the Anaconda Company smelter at Anaconda.94 There were flaws in the article, the most noteworthy being that he did not say how much sulfur dioxide the Hoerner Waldorf plant was then emitting or how dangerous it was. But it was the kind of comprehensive, well-balanced article that would become Schwennesen’s trademark.

Two days later a wire story reported a planned merger between the Intermountain Company and Hoerner Waldorf. No one checked that day to determine the effect, if any, of the merger of two of Missoula’s largest employers.95 That question was not answered in a followup story two months later.96

The proposed merger brought the president of Hoerner Waldorf, John Meyers, to Missoula in early April. That led to a story by Schwennesen, who interviewed Meyers about GASP, the group most responsible for hastening the firm’s cleanup.

Meyers told Schwennesen that “it takes a certain amount of militarism like this to move society.” Hoerner Waldorf had come a long way since the day it assailed the “custodians of the environment.”97

The company’s change in attitude did not mean its problems had ended. In the spring of 1973, Hoerner Waldorf was under heavy pressure to eliminate the odor that it still produced in distinctly noticeable quantities. The new boiler installed in Phase I was plagued by breakdowns, which forced the company periodically to choose between using the two old, high-polluting boilers installed in the 1950s or closing down. As a matter of policy, the company chose to use the old boilers. To do so, however, it needed another renewal of its state-granted pollution variance. By 1973 there was a strong, well-organized opposition to the renewal, at least to the firm’s request for another full year. This time the Missoulian covered the debate.

Dr. Kit Johnson, Missoula County’s health officer, proposed that the firm be given a variance of not more than six months. The Air Pollution Control Board agreed, and Schwennesen covered the story.98

In 1973 fewer than five inches of rain fell in western

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Montana in 10 months, and streamflows again were too low to permit proper dispersal of the mill's effluents. On May 2 the Missoulian published a State Bureau story that said Hoerner Waldorf had gotten a variance to allow it to empty its settling ponds.99 The reporter, Art Hutchinson, pointed out that the firm had been given a similar variance in 1966 (another drought year) and that the high concentration of waste had led to a decreased marine life below the plant. The Missoulian never had mentioned the 1966 variance or the subsequent damage to the river.

The sudden granting of the 1973 variance outraged some western Montanans, including Missoulian state editor Dale Burk. On May 4, 1973, Burk wrote a news story that criticized the Health Department for issuing the variance and especially for failing to consult the Fish and Game Department about the possible consequences of the discharge. Burk did not include an explanation by the Health Department.100

The story never should have been printed. Burk had an editorial-page column where he could have presented his arguments. He had no particular expertise regarding this story, since it involved a procedural—not an environmental—question.

Four days later Burk reported a conservation group's request that the Health Department revoke the variance. Burk again failed to call the Health Department.101

The following week brought an unprecedented flurry of news about Hoerner Waldorf. A story May 15 reported a modification in the plant's Phase II equipment to increase its efficiency (it still was not performing to specifications).102 Then the release of the plant's effluents brought a protest from some University of Montana students and a vote of confidence from the Fish and Game Department. Developments were reported May 16,103 May 17,104 May 18,105 and May 19.106

With the effluent released and en route to the Pacific Ocean, the Missoulian returned with unusual promptness to the subject of air pollution—but the unusual was becoming commonplace at the Missoulian. A May 23 story reported a hearing had been scheduled July 13 on the firm's request for another one-year air variance.107 On June 16 the pollution control board reversed itself and supported another one-year variance, following a meeting with Hoerner Waldorf officers.108

As the dry summer was ending, Hoerner Waldorf announced plans for a major expansion. The announcement touched off an outcry among Missoula environmentalists, who thought they were about to lose the little ground they had gained in their long fight to clean up the city's air. The debate has dragged on, with the company apparently getting the best of it. The plan eventually was delayed not by the environmentalists but by the recession in 1974. From the first announcement, Missoulian coverage of the proposal has been unbiased, systematic and thorough.

The story broke Aug. 28, 1973. Charles S. Johnson wrote the lead article reporting Hoerner Waldorf's plan for a $40 million expansion project.109 Schwennesen wrote a long sidebar that analyzed the environmental-impact statement submitted to the State Board of Health (whose approval was necessary to allow construction). Both stories were on page one.110

Schwennesen reported that particulate emissions would increase from 9,000 pounds a day under the Phase II controls to 14,000 pounds a day. But he pointed out that the firm still would be operating within state standards, and he compared those two figures with the 53,000 pounds of particulate that the plant emitted each day in 1970 before the Phase I controls were hooked up.

Schwennesen wrote the following day that the firm's report contended water pollution would be reduced if the expansion was approved, because the project would include a secondary sewage-treatment plant.111 On August 31 Schwennesen wrote that the mill would burn only waste wood after the expansion, enlarging a local market and reducing consumption of fossil fuels.112

Two weeks later Countryman attended a Chamber of Commerce luncheon to answer questions about the expansion. The session produced nothing new, but Schwennesen took the opportunity to present a brief refresher course on the expansion proposal.113

The following day the Missoulian printed two stories about Hoerner Waldorf—and reversed the headlines. One was headlined “Settling Ponds Suspected as Source of Hoerner Odor,” but it did not mention settling ponds. It reported Countryman's assertion that Hoerner Waldorf was not polluting the

110"Atmospheric Emissions to Increase 50 Percent," Ibid.

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groundwater.\textsuperscript{114} The second, headlined “HW Water Problems Minimized,”\textsuperscript{115} reported a finding that the settling ponds produced the odor not being captured by the new pollution-control devices.\textsuperscript{115}

On September 20 the Democratic Central Committee of Missoula County called for a “moratorium” on Hoerner Waldorf’s expansion.\textsuperscript{116} It was an indication of the strength of the environmental movement in Missoula.

The county commissioners on September 28 approved another $10 million in industrial revenue bonds to finance the expansion.\textsuperscript{117} The following day Schwennesen reported the formation of a citizens’ group, led by University of Montana professor Ron Erickson, to review the proposed expansion.\textsuperscript{118} The group later became known as Concerned Citizens for a Quality Environment, and it fought the expansion with vigor and, for awhile, considerable success.

In early October Schwennesen covered a tense meeting between the Air Pollution Control Board and the Hoerner Waldorf consultant who wrote the environmental-impact statement for the expansion proposal.\textsuperscript{119} The board members questioned some conclusions and assumptions in the report, particularly the assumption of a constant “light breeze” to disperse pollutants.

Schwennesen did a good job explaining the mechanics of the assumption and the complaints of the critics, but he did not document the fallacy of the assumption itself. Any assumption of a constant, year-round light breeze in Missoula is not based on fact. Valleys throughout the western United States are subject to inversions—periods of extremely stable air conditions with little or no wind. There is ample evidence in National Weather Service records to document the fallacy of a constant “light breeze.” Missoula’s average wind speed is only half that of Great Falls, and inversions have been noted every year in weather records.

\section*{critics question bonds}

Critics questioned the issuance of industrial revenue bonds to finance an expansion that had not yet received state approval. Schwennesen interviewed Hoerner Waldorf’s lawyers, who said the firm had sought early approval of the bonds to arrange financial backing at favorable terms.\textsuperscript{120}

The Air Pollution Advisory Council voted in mid-

\textsuperscript{114}Ibid., Sept. 16, 1973, p. 6.
\textsuperscript{115}Ibid., p. 7.

October to recommend that the county not permit the expansion until after Hoerner Waldorf complied with all current emission standards (the firm possessed a variance effective until July 1, 1974).\textsuperscript{121} The city-county Board of Health voted two days later to delay a decision on the permit until the state review was complete.\textsuperscript{122} Schwennesen covered both stories.

One of the company’s old “pooh-pooh” comments came back hauntingly at a county health board meeting when a Forest Service researcher testified that the agency had discovered the mill’s sulfur emissions were damaging trees. Schwennesen’s story on that testimony made page one, although it lacked a comment from the company.\textsuperscript{123} Schwennesen should have followed up with a story on the company’s earlier attack on Clancy Gordon’s findings.

Schwennesen also examined the economic implications, reporting that two University of Montana researchers maintained the expansion would not do much to increase local employment, despite the company’s claims. It was a well-written story.\textsuperscript{124}

In less than two months after the expansion was announced, the \textit{Missoulian} had printed 24 stories about the potential environmental and economic effects of the project. Schwennesen had explained the mechanics of government regulations, the firm’s pollution-control plans and the weather patterns in the Missoula valley. Concerned citizens were acting through their government to oppose (and support) the proposal, and their efforts were being reported by the newspaper, encouraging similar efforts.

Just eight years earlier, the company had announced a different expansion. Despite the omnipresent pollution from the mill, despite several previous broken promises and misleading statements, the \textit{Missoulian} had printed only one story about the plan—the day after it was announced.

How had the improvement come about? Americans were certainly more concerned about the environment than they had been a decade earlier. In 1969 the federal government had passed the National Environmental Policy Act, creating the Environmental Protection Agency. Montana quickly had followed with its own environmental laws—tough ones, notably tougher than those of surrounding states. And those laws had particularly strong support among outdoors-loving Missoulians, many of whom had foregone higher salaries to live in the Garden City.
The Missoulian was never in the forefront of this move. In 1968, when most of the country was realizing that Rachel Carson had known what she was talking about, a Missoulian reporter labeled GASP supporters "clean air enthusiasts." It was like calling anti-cancer organizations "long life enthusiasts" or civil rights workers "freedom aficionados."

The Missoulian's readers must be given their due. Environmental coverage improved mainly because they insisted on it.

The Missoulian's editorial staff deserves credit, too. When the paper belatedly tackled environmental issues, it did so aggressively. The questions that went unanswered did so because the small staff was under great pressure, not because the staff lacked talent or ambition. The hiring of a full-time environmental reporter set a precedent in Montana—and set the Missoulian apart from other Montana newspapers.

K. Ross Toole realized that. Writing in the early 1970s about the changes in the Lee papers, he said:

The Missoulian, in particular, has come more and more to engage in "in-depth" investigations of Montana's racial problems (Indians), its lagging economy, and, above all, environmental matters. Often, its editorial policy is openly opposed to "the interests": the Company, the saw mills, pulp plants, and a timid U.S. Forest Service.125

Toole is a man who loves Montana, knows its history and loathes what "the interests" have done to it. He once told a history class I attended that the daily sight of the Anaconda-owned newspaper had nauseated him.

The Missoulian in 1973 still had room for improvement. Toole's praise does not apologize for or overlook the newspaper's faults. It is simply a tribute to a much-improved newspaper, from one qualified to offer it.

125 Toole, Twentieth-Century Montana, op. cit., p. 280.

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On Spelling

By Melvin Mencher

A few words about the bane of the copy editor, the misspelled word. A word incorrectly spelled is a gross inaccuracy. It is like a flaw in a crystal bowl. No matter how handsome the bowl, the eye and mind drift from the sweeping curves to the mistake. A spelling error screams for attention, almost as loudly as an obscenity in print. Intelligent reporters — good spellers or bad spellers — use the dictionary. Many editors associate intelligence with spelling ability because they consider the persistent poor speller to be stupid for not consulting the dictionary — whatever his or her native intelligence.

—Reprinted by permission from News Reporting and Writing by Melvin Mencher (Wm. C. Brown Company, Publishers, Dubuque, Iowa).
Mr. Hauge submitted this report for the course History and Principles of Journalism. His cartoons have appeared on the editorial pages of the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian and the University's student daily, the Montana Kaimin. This report also was printed in the Missoula Borrowed Times.

[|] can't speak for all the cartoon buffs in Butte, but the comic strip "Rick O'Shay" just hasn't been the same since Stan Lynde stopped drawing it.

—Jeff Gibson

My own opinion was that the strip had taken on a Disneyland appearance.

—Bert Gaskill

See you in the funny papers.

—Anon.

Right or wrong, we Montanans always have had a way of protecting our own. Bert could tell you about that.

Start with the Speculator Mine fire in Butte in 1917: Even with 162 men killed, mine officials knew better than to stop operations. It was a turbulent year—perhaps the most turbulent ever—in U.S. labor history. The Industrial Workers of the World were making trouble, and for the Anaconda Company to give in to the wants of organized labor—just then, anyway—might have been a sign of weakness. The Company had to protect its image, not to mention the economy.

So when Frank Little, an I.W.W. member, began to criticize the Company and stir up labor trouble, there never was much doubt about what had to be done. Within six weeks of the Speculator fire, Frank was dragged from his bed in the Steele Block and hanged from a railroad trestle near town. Just like that.

And after all, William Wilson, U.S. secretary of labor, would say in a public speech two years later that strike activities in Butte had been "instituted by the Bolsheviks and the I.W.W. for the sole purpose of bringing about a nationwide revolution in the United States."

So it wasn't as if the Company had acted selfishly or out of line. No, the Company viewed its undertaking as a favor to us all; the Company saw it as a way of helping us protect our own.

And why not? The chapters of Montana's patriotic history seem tame compared to others of the time. In Montana, at least we've had the decency to perform our patriotism secretly and with the common courtesy of waiting for night.

Sure, we've made mistakes.

We let the coal companies rip up the eastern part of our state, probably leaving it irreparably scarred and useless.

But we've protected ourselves in other ways: You won't hear eastern Montanans complaining in bars about the money the miners have brought with them and generously spent. And no one complains about the electric heat the coal eventually will provide. We can use that heat when the January winds cut across the plain toward Glasgow and the chill factor drops the temperature to 60 below.
And face it, the parts of Montana being mined are, to put it kindly, unencumbered by scenery.

Still, Montanans somehow will protect their land, their air, their water. Their culture. Every once in a while around Missoula you'll read about some local who gets sick of sucking in the yellow crud the lumber companies keep pumping his way, who drinks up a head full of courage and drives like hell toward Frenchtown to take a few wild shots over the mill. But those stories are rare.

More likely you'll see some college kid cursing at the rancid mill smoke from the middle of the Higgins Street Bridge until the police show up.

In a way, I guess Bert is no different from that kid on the bridge. What he wants to protect is as intangible—as clean—as Montana air before the yellow smoke rolls in. He wants to protect one tiny remaining bit of Montana's frontier spirit.

a montana boy

Bert Gaskill is what the outsiders like to call a Montana Boy. Fifty-five years ago, when Bert was born, his father was working in Helena as a sports reporter for the Helena Independent, and he later became the paper's managing editor. His father before him was a Montana printer.

So Bert grew up here, in Helena, in Dillon. He was graduated from high school here. He went into the Navy during World War II, but when it was over he came back. And when it came time to go to college, he stayed here, attending the University of Montana in Missoula.

But Bert didn't fit in. He was older than the rest of the students—24 when he started—and he didn't think he had much in common with them. So he began to spend his summers away from Missoula, filling in as a reporter for the Montana Standard in Butte. After two summers, the Standard offered him a full-time reporting job, and he took it. That was 1949.

By 1966, Bert had become executive editor. The title was changed to editor in 1970.

Somehow, Bert's years at the University left a sour taste. When he talks about the University now, he refers to the system as "those intellectuals" and pronounces the word as though he were an older woman, just robbed, complaining bitterly to the police about "those vandals."

What Bert really enjoys talking about now, given the chance, are the little things he has grown to love—like dry-fly fishing and his trips to the Beaverhead to try for fat trout. He talks about the early years on the Standard and his 12 years with the Anaconda Company.

"The reporters we had working then," he'll tell you, "were far better than most of the reporters working in Montana today." Bert knows that few agree with his opinion, but then he doesn't care. He knows all about the people who disagree: The intellectuals.

When the Company sold its newspapers to Lee Enterprises in June, 1959, the comic strip "Rick O'Shay" had just celebrated its first birthday anniversary.

A 27-year-old Lodge Grass native, Stan Lynde, had sold the strip to the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate, and it already was well received by Montana and Texas papers. The strip had been rejected 13 times. The Standard was an early subscriber.

Even then something about the strip was different. For the first six years, it was set in modern times. But the characters, still, were right out of the frontier. In 1964 Lynde shifted the action to the 1890s.

In the early strip, there was Deuces Wilde, the gambler and self-appointed mayor of Connipion, which was at first a ghost town in which Wilde had chosen to live out the past. When Rick happened along, his friend Wilde appointed him marshal. Soon came Hipshot Percussion, the gunfighter; Gaye Abandon, the honky-tonk singer (later Rick's wife) and more.

Listen: Basil Metabolism, the doctor; Manual Labor, the south-of-the-border cowpoke; General DeBillity, commander of Fort Chaos; Horse's Neck, chief of the Kyute Indians. Lynde's attention to detail, his concern for ingenuity and humor—they're in those names. (There had been in Belgium a strip created three years before Lynde's called "Ric Hochet," an adventure about a young private detective. Call it a coincidence.)

Lynde's comic strip caught on. Before long, five Montana dailies and four of the state's near-dailies carried the strip. So did five of the country's largest papers.

In Red Lodge, Lynde had begun to work his new 160-acre ranch. He bought black Angus cattle, and, as he did with the cartoon animals in his strip, he branded them "RIK."

The people of Red Lodge later created "Rick O'Shay Days," an autumn evening of celebration. In 1975, Lynde and his wife, Sidne, collaborated on a book of poetry, Calamity Jane: queen of the plains, with Sidne contributing the poetry and Stan the illustrations. Things were going well.

Maybe that's why the notice came as such a shock. Things had been going too well. The strip gradually had become a constant in many Montanans' lives; like a few other cartoons at their best, "Rick O'Shay" had the ability to draw people together from their common experience. It had become the kind of strip you saw posted on dormitory doors, in offices, in gas stations. The kind of strip people followed and talked about.

The notice appeared in the Missoulian like this: A small box on the Sunday, June 19, 1977, front page announced that Lynde would retire from the strip July 3, leave his ranch home in Red Lodge and settle in the Flathead valley, in Lakeside. There he would work on
Montana Journalism Review

But beyond all that, there were elements of frontier toughness and determination, always tempered with a sense of self-deprecation and an earthy decency—the kind of elements that, when fused, become greater than the elements themselves, become intangible and somehow necessary. You need those qualities, like air, or else some part of you has to die.

Bert Gaskill was mad that a bit of his life had been taken away. Bert Gaskill was yelling at the smoke.

When Al Capp invited readers to submit drawings of “Lena the Hyena,” a character he was about to introduce to his “Li’l Abner” comic strip in 1946, he received approximately 1 million responses. The creator of “Blondie,” Chic Young, asked his readers to help name the Bumsteads’ second child. Young got about half a million replies.

The San Francisco Chronicle refused to run a touchy episode of Garry Trudeau’s “Doonesbury” and was besieged with 2,000 angry phone calls. “Heathcliff,” George Gately’s syndicated cartoon, was dropped from the Los Angeles Times in May, 1974. By June—a thousand letters, hundreds of phone calls and a number of petitions—the cartoon reappeared.

Walk the streets of Butte—streets with names like Little Mina, Placer and Porphyry, High Ore and Clear Grit Terraces, Earth Lane, Clark and Daly Streets, which run perpendicular to one another but never meet—and what you see is a cultural anachronism. You don’t see it so much as feel it. You do see it, in the shanties, the Victorian mansions, the haunting 19th Century houses in near collapse like props lining the back lot of a bad Charles Addams-inspired movie. You see it in the people who still say “Ma’am” and “howdy” to strangers, then hobble on, bowlegged, in boots and wide-brimmed hats, to the nearest tavern.

But you feel it in the stories.

Stories like this one in the Nov. 9, 1977, Montana Standard: A young man walks into the Bookely Pit, one of Butte’s two pornography shops, and pulls a gun. Confused, he wants the manager to call a cop, apparently so that he can shoot him. The gunman is a former Montana Tech student on a crusade against pornography, against filth, and when the manager refuses to make the call, there is a scuffle. The manager is wounded, and the gunman flees.

But the feeling you get about Butte comes later in the story: On the street, the gunman confronts a sheriff’s deputy and fires. A shootout follows, during which the gunman is shot through the heart and killed. And as the shootout is taking place, an elderly Butte resident steps from his parked car and directly into the line of fire.

As he hears the bullets zinging past his head, the man calmly pumps a handful of change into a parking meter and strolls on, taking everything in stride.

But you feel it in the stories.

Stories like this one in Missoula, too, but stories there are incidental. Walk into almost any classroom at the University and you can see “Butte Rats” and “Butte America,” with crude drawings of bloody daggers, carved deep into classroom desks. In Missoula, the Butte Rats are not remembered for academics.

There is no key to the city of Butte; important visitors are given a set of burglar’s tools.

—Anon.
I don't mean to pick on Butte—don't get me wrong. The kind of crude frontierism you've probably associated with the town by now is plentiful elsewhere in the state, too.

In a Public Notice entitled “THE TIME HAS COME” and dated April 24, 1974, Captain Loren J.B. Nedley of Stevensville called for the organization of a local Posse Comitatus Committee to join with others throughout the state and the nation to combat, among other things, a “democracy deteriorated into hypocrisy [sic] ... dope ... little or no respect for law and order” and “little or no justice in our judiciary courts.”

Anyone 25 or older, married, law-abiding and owning property was offered the chance to join Nedley, who promised there would be “no shootings or hangings except for murder, kidnapping, rape and cattle rustling.”

1974.

But maybe you have to think of Butte because of the words “frontier justice.” The judge who sentenced Evel Knievel, Butte’s favorite son, to a six-month prison term used those words to admonish Knievel for his attack September 21 on Sheldon Saltman, his former press secretary.

Knievel was mad about the book *Evel Knievel on Tour*, which Saltman had written about Knievel’s Kohoutek attempt to jump Idaho’s Snake River Canyon. In court, he freely admitted to attacking Saltman outside the 20th Century-Fox Building for printing lies about his moral character—lies that a daredevil/child hero might find damaging.

Knievel took it upon himself to right the wrong against him and to prove once and for all that his moral character was pristine. He broke Saltman’s wrists with a baseball bat.

In handing down Knievel’s sentence, the judge praised him for his honesty—his violence with honor—but found his vigilante action insufferable.

Bert Gaskill’s *Standard* runs every Knievel story that comes over the wire, often on the front page with pictures. The *Standard* is situated on Granite Street.

Bute and Convittion have much in common. So do the *Montana Standard* and the *Missoulian*, the *Missoulian* published in Missoula, the difference between a Spanish rig and a double rig is printed right on the menu. Where was the extensive knowledge of the West now? Where was the great eye for detail?

Now, don’t get the idea from what follows here that Bert was on some kind of crusade. There was nothing personal in this. It’s just that the kind of negligence Bert saw in that Sunday strip made him mad. Something about the declining quality disturbed him.

And Bert was not alone. Montana papers—the *Missoulian*, the *Montana Standard* and the Billings Gazette, especially—were being flooded with questions about Lynd and pleas for his return. Hundreds of them. Thousands. One letter to the *Missoulian* took advantage of the bandwagon to complain about smut in general in the comics. The writer was most notably concerned about “Beetle Bailey” (the harlot Miss Buxley) and “Steve Canyon” (all).

The syndicate also received complaints about the change. And Lynde got so many letters he had to print a form letter to help him with replies.

**a letter to the syndicate**

Again, there wasn’t much doubt about what had to be done. Bert was on the verge of killing the strip. So two days after the saddle mistake was pointed out to him, he dashed off this letter and sent it with Gibson’s editorial to Don Michel, editor of the syndicate:

> When John Matthews [a syndicate salesman] visited here 7-13-77 we expressed some apprehension about the new Rick O’Shay; my own opinion was that the strip had taken on a Disneyland appearance.

> Our editorial writer tackled the question 7-31-77, by coincidence.

> On 8-1-77, a 6-year-old girl who loves horses called the 7-31 strip to our attention. She doesn’t think much of English saddles for Montana cowboys. Our staff artist came up with a drawing

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and an ad-cutout [of an English and a Western saddle], which we are enclosing with the editorial.

We intend to give Rick every chance to make the grade, but our customers are not too happy. Other editors are telling me the same thing.

I wouldn't know Stan Lynde from a bale of hay, so this has nothing to do with the ex-artist and your problems with him.

In a fashion that would make Hipshot proud, a half dozen typographical errors are scratched out and corrected in pencil.

Michel replied in a letter dated August 8, 1977, saying Gibson was “dead right in his analysis.” But he offered this explanation:

The problem is that we were left in such poor shape by the previous author that the change had to be made quickly, leaving too little time to doublecheck details. Because of our advance schedules, it will take several weeks for us to get to a normal working basis here, and I can only hope that no more English saddles are to be seen.

A copy of that letter was sent to Chuck Jones, who had recommended the new artist and writer and was supervising their scripts.

On August 11 Jones sent Bert a fiery three-page letter on behalf of Dern and Alcala. He included a page of saddle drawings and a cartoon depicting Bugs Bunny, the character Jones helped to develop, riding a jackass into Butte.

“The Tribune Syndicate did not fire Stan Lynde,” Jones wrote. “He quit the strip, and with practically no notice. We are not omniscient . . . to learn another cartoonist’s style of writing and drawing takes time—what surprises me is how close Alcala and Dern have come fresh out of the starting gate. They are a damn sight closer to contemporary Lynde than the Lynde original strip.”

There’s no arguing with Jones on that. Old-timers might remember when Hipshot was introduced May 30, 1958, as a classless, crudely drawn greaser. That was just 12 days into the strip. Rick, whose age a good reader might have put at somewhere between 9 and 14, was burdened with dialogue such as, “Mighty purty star you give me, Deuces” and “Who be you, stranger?”

Jones wrote:

A lot of the detail in cowboy dress that came naturally to Stan Lynde’s fine eye after years of experience must be learned by Ms. Dern and Mr. Alcala, who took over on very short notice . . . . I do hope you will bear with Dern and Alcala— it is a catch-up game but I do think they are catching up.

And with that, as far as Bert was concerned, the matter was closed. He did not reply.

About three months later, Bert was working as usual in the Standard office, editing, writing, making the routine assignments. The new stacks of Sunday comic sections had arrived and were being unloaded. But a printer noticed something puzzling about this batch. He pulled a copy from the stacks and showed it to Bert. The “Rick O’Shay” strip was a six-panel slapstick: Rick was saddling his horse, Tanglefoot. He tightened the cinch and mounted, and the horse began to buck. The cinch loosened, but Rick stayed in the saddle, which slid to the horse’s stomach. From his upside-down position, Rick said to the horse who was peering at him from between its front legs: “Y’ made your point, Tanglefoot . . . That’s the last time I buy a saddle from Gaskill and Gibson!”

Putting out the daily “Rick O’Shay” strip, Stan Lynde told the Missoulian in an interview printed Nov. 20, 1977, took “five long days, and it frequently went to six and sometimes seven. . . . If there had been any way I could have [continued drawing the strip] without incurring more debt. . . .”

Just how much does a syndicated cartoonist earn? In most cases, it’s difficult to say. No one likes to talk about money, including syndicate executive Michel. In fact, it is difficult to find out just how much a single paper pays to run a daily strip. There is no flat rate—only whatever a salesman pays to run a strip.

Gaskill says a smaller paper, such as the Standard, pays from $5 to $15 a week to run a strip, but a larger paper can pay “literally thousands” a week. Michel confirmed the $5 to $1,000 range as “conceivable.”

Figure it conservatively. Say the average paper pays $10 a week, or $520 a year; Michel uses those figures often himself, in figuring prospective sales. Lynde’s arrangement with the syndicate, Lynde says, was that he got half the gross. With 125 “Rick O’Shay” subscribers, that makes the gross $65,000 a year.

Add to the $32,500 another potential $29,000 (Lynde sold his daily strips to fans for $60, his Sunday strips for $200) and the figure becomes sizable.

From his new home at Lakeside, Lynde told the Missoulian, “. . . it really got to the point where we had to sell our place in Red Lodge. We got so deeply in debt and there was no improvement . . . the money just wasn’t there.”

Perhaps the salesgirl at the art store had been overcharging him for ink.

Lynde is sad that he left the strip, but he did so, he told the Missoulian, because of irreconcilable differences with his syndicate. He said the syndicate never had marketed the strip to its potential audience: “My argument with them was that if it could appear in all the Montana papers and 20-some in Texas, it should really be almost that well sold throughout the western states at least.” Lynde said the strip did not appear in Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah or Idaho. Bert says a syndicate salesman visited him in June, 1975, and didn’t return until July, 1977—25 months later.

Michel agrees that syndicate marketing could be much better, particularly in the Pacific Northwest. But
the cost of initial sales, which is picked up by the syndicate’s 50 percent of the eventual gross, is, according to Michel, “enormous.”

But if the cost of selling must be picked up by the syndicate, the cost of assistants, postage and materials is paid by the cartoonist. Lynde paid one person to ink the daily strip, and he wanted the syndicate to subsidize him for that payment. Michel said his office pays some cartoonists for assistants, but that payment for assistance was not in Lynde’s agreement. Michel thought the syndicate had nothing to gain by paying Lynde the extra money.

So Lynde quit the strip and explained his quitting like this to the Missoulian:

Lynde had tried negotiating for an inker and for the ownership of the strip, which legally belongs to the syndicate. When negotiations looked promising, in the winter of 1976-1977, Lynde’s efforts failed: “They delivered an ultimatum and said either I go back to the way things were and be a good boy” or else lose the strip. “He had these marvelous new people lined up and they would take over. So, I explained that the syndicate’s 50 percent of the eventual gross, is, according to Michel, “enormous.”

And in fact, Michel’s story about how Lynde quit the strip and Lynde’s version are different. In the first place, Michel says, Lynde was paid more than the 50 percent he claims.

Michel says Lynde sent the syndicate a letter indicating he “wanted out” of the strip. An arrangement was made for Lynde to rework a series of 1973 cartoons for the syndicate during negotiations last June. But Michel says the syndicate began to receive instead the original 1973 strips, simply redated. Three weeks into publication of the old strip, he says, a syndicate employee recognized the cartoon and brought it to an executive’s attention. The Houston Post called, furious about receiving the strip. The Missoulian also complained.

Most syndicates work about 10 weeks in advance—that is, the cartoonist draws the cartoon and it appears 10 weeks later. In an absolute rush, a cartoonist could work from four to five weeks in advance, and the printers still could barely make their deadline.

Michel says Lynde continually was testing the four-week deadline. Bert said the strip often arrived late at the Standard.

resignation accepted

Lynde hired an agent to negotiate for him, but the syndicate, faced with deadlines, three weeks into the old strip and in no humor for negotiations, accepted Lynde’s resignation.

Michel says Lynde’s backlog gave him “about one week” to find replacement artists. Jones suggested Dern and Alcala, and they were hired.

Michel says Lynde’s returning to the strip is not in sight, though his relationship with the syndicate is still “good.” Lynde and Michel can agree, at least, on one thing: Lynde never again will draw the strip for the syndicate.

On everything else, Michel says, “I think there’s been some kind of a communication problem.”

I am having a communication problem of my own.

The woman I want to speak with, Pat Ayers, is not available. She is in court.

Pat Ayers is the woman in charge of the Rick O’Shay Days celebration, the one evening each fall since 1974 in which the locals at Red Lodge have dressed in 1890s costume—preferably as characters from the strip—to dance, eat dinner, gamble (legally, of course), and enjoy the local entertainment. Costume prizes are awarded. Stan and Sidne always have attended.

But the woman I talk to—Sheila Knox, who works with Ayers—is helpful. Red Lodge, at the foot of the mountains just 60 miles from the entrance to Yellowstone Park, has a population of 1,200. Everybody, it seems, knows everybody. Sheila can tell me everything I need to know.

What she tells me is that the Rick O’Shay Days celebration no longer exists. Now that Stan has moved, now that the strip has been taken over by outsiders, it just wouldn’t be the same. The townspeople still celebrate each fall, but the Rick O’Shay theme has been dropped. The residents of Red Lodge recently celebrated the Beartooth Country Ball in its place.

This was a good town for Stan Lynde.

Original copies of his strips are for sale in Red Lodge shops, which display them proudly. Sheila’s husband is typical of the devoted “Rick O’Shay” fan in Red Lodge: “Allen has collected copies of the Sunday strip, oh, I guess for about 14 years now. But the feeling for the strip here has been lost. About 90 percent of the people I know who followed the strip have abandoned it. We all miss the strip. And, of course, we all miss Stan.”

Still, the national readership of “Rick O’Shay” has not changed drastically.

“This is the last real-life western strip with any following,” Michel says. Apparently, people are not anxious to give up that bit of frontier flavor, despite the change in nuance.

“A paper in Michigan, I think, has dropped the strip,” Michel says, adding quickly: “The paper in Fort Worth tried to drop it and got 6,000 protests.” The paper resubscribed.
In Montana, the Kalispell Daily Inter Lake dropped the new strip quickly.

Bert Gaskill, who considered killing the strip, says now, "It's getting better." He asked Dern and Alcala for the original "Gaskill and Gibson" strip, which now hangs on a wall in the Montana Standard newsroom.

On Dec. 7, 1977, the Great Falls Tribune quietly killed the strip. Tribune readers looking for a bit of the past in the comics must settle for "Mary Worth" and "Rex Morgan, M.D."*

*On Jan. 9, 1978, the face of "Rick O'Shay" changed again. Mel Keefer, veteran artist of the comic strip "McDivet," began drawing the "Rick O'Shay" strip in mid-December, with just three weeks' lead time until publication. Alcala returned to Marvel Comics to work on an extensive comic book project.

Reached by telephone on Jan. 31, 1978, Michel said Dern, who works out of California, and Alcala, who works out of New York, apparently could not work together, separated by 3,000 miles—another "communication problem."

"You can or can't follow instructions," Michel said, referring to Alcala, "so we [the syndicate] made a decision."

"You fired Alcala?"

"At that time," Michel said, "we made a decision."

Dern now works personally with Keefer, who lives in the San Fernando Valley.

Our best writers have rarely read a book without adding to it in the margin. Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, Mark Twain, Howells, James and almost any modern writer or scholar you want to name used margins for questioning the author's ideas and for exploring their own. Reading then becomes a creative as well as a passive activity.

Mark Twain was one of the most active and skeptical readers I know. His margins are filled with such comments as "Hogwash," "Who cares to know this?" "This is good anyway." Opposite a comment about Jane Austen he once wrote, "It's too bad they allowed her to die a natural death."

—John C. Gerber in the University of Iowa Spectator.
Most readers know Miss Johnson as the author of 15 books and more than 100 short stories. Three of her stories became motion pictures—"The Hanging Tree," "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance" and "A Man Called Horse." Readers of the Missoula (Mont.) Missoulian also know her as a prolific writer of letters to the editor. Here is an incomplete file of her letters dating to 1966.

not so sweet

So how many little visitors did you have on Halloween? I handed out treats to 157 and then, after running out of supplies, didn’t keep track.

It was fun for the first few dozen, the neighborhood youngsters. Then the motorized hordes rolled in, chauffeured by their mothers, and they must have come from miles away. (I live a mile north of the NP tracks!) Really, isn’t this a bit too much?

can’t afford

Yes, we need an improved airport as recommended by the chamber of commerce. But we can’t afford the bond issue or any other bond issue.

Property owners are hurting badly. Owners of rental property have got to raise rents because of the shocking tax increase we already have, so everybody is going to hurt even without any bond issue. Any more increases will make Missoula too expensive to live in, whether you own your home or rent it.

Maybe the members of the chamber of commerce can afford higher taxes, but I know a lot of people who can’t. And let’s not hear about how Uncle Sugar will pay for part of it. He gets his money out of the same pockets that the state, county and city do.

high-handed

All of a sudden a lot of people, including me, are living on West Greenough Drive. We haven’t moved, but new signs appeared on what was Duncan Drive.

If I should have the misfortune to meet personally somebody who writes like this, I will gift him a poke in the eye.

gift him a poke

Advertising copy writers seem not to be aware that the word “gift” is a noun, not a verb.

"Gift your man with a bathrobe," indeed!

"Perfect for Christmas gifting," bah!

stay mad

Quite a lot of people seem to be mad because it’s too much trouble for the Missoula county treasurer’s office to issue license plates by mail.

You know what? If enough of them stay mad until the next election of county officials, I’ll bet we could remedy that situation.

Montana Journalism Review
Nobody asked us, nobody told us—the county commissioners just did it. Pretty high-handed, eh? I’ve just had new stationery printed with 2309 Duncan Drive on it and haven’t paid The Missoulian for the printing job. If I send the bill to the county commissioners, do you suppose they’ll pay it? Will our mail man continue to be amiable while mail for families along here comes addressed to a non-existent street for the next several years? Will bills for property taxes still reach us?—Dorothy M. Johnson, address unknown.

A Missoulian editorial subsequently said:

The county commissioners are going to let Duncan Drive remain Duncan Drive and not let it be renamed West Greenough Drive.

Their response to criticism about the name, which appeared in a letter by Dorothy Johnson on this page last Wednesday, is gratifying. Good work, Miss Johnson. Good work, commissioners.

dentists care

Your Sunday, Feb. 4 editorial, blaming Missoula dentists because our water isn’t fluoridated, is unjust—as whoever wrote it must have realized. Dentists alone can’t get the voters to approve fluoridation. There has to be organized support from a lot of other people.

The opposition is well organized. It has defeated the proposition in many communities. Some years ago I wrote a magazine article about the value of fluoridation in preventing tooth decay in children. I got a lot of mail from anonymous crackpots who sent me printed attacks on fluoridation and tried to illuminate my ignorance by warning that fluoridation is a dirty communist plot!

Some opponents are selfish. They claim a constitutional right to drink water without any chemicals added (that kind is hard to get even without fluoridation unless you have your own well), ignoring the right of kids to grow up with sound teeth.

Dentists and the American Dental Association do care. A lot of other people don’t.

won’t do

The Missoulian’s new look is fine, especially the color photograph.

But the tiny type in the classified ads and the legals just won’t do at all. People pay for these ads because they want other people to read them.

traffic danger

There is a dangerous situation where traffic from the East Rattlesnake merges into Madison St. right at the Northern Pacific tracks. There was a collision there the other day, I was told by someone who saw it.

North-bound cars, aiming up Waterworks Hill, have the right of way over cars coming up from Greenough Park past a “yield” sign. That is, north-bound cars theoretically have it, but they don’t get it. Drivers coming up from the park boom right past the yield sign, and if north-bound drivers don’t chicken out and stop on the railroad tracks, they’ll get hit.

Of course it’s illegal to stop dead on the tracks, but I do it at least once a week. It’s better than getting smashed into by a car. Presumably no train is coming at the same time.

I won’t say that all the drivers coming up from the East Rattlesnake are ignorant of the significance of a yield sign; surely some of them know what it means but enjoy this dangerous business. And about one in 12 actually does yield.

That yield sign is not enough. Once a driver is past it, he feels free as a bird. I don’t know whether a stop sign would be enough, either. Some arrests, duly publicized, should be useful. Traffic past the park is much heavier now that the Van Buren underpass is blocked by highway construction.

voting no

The way I heard it the airport wouldn’t need a lot of money for enlargement if it hadn’t been mismanaged for years, with the planes that use it paying far too little.

Anyhow, property owners simply can’t afford that tax increase—which, incidentally, will also burden people who rent. They’ll have to pay higher rent.

Although I use plane transportation more than most of the people who would have to pay for the proposed bond issue, I’ll vote against it. As for the argument that fresh produce won’t reach us unless we enlarge the airport, I’ll bet the people who sell the stuff will get it to us.

help! help!

So many cross people have been writing grouchy letters to The Missoulian lately that I’m getting cross too and want to take issue with somebody. Ecologists will do. (The rest of you wait in line, and no whispering or scuffling, you hear?)

With all this talk about ecology, isn’t anybody interested in preserving a couple of endangered
species known as the side-hill gouger and the gillygalloo bird? You think they’re not endangered? How long since you’ve seen one? They may be lost already!

Side-hill gougers can go around mountains but not up or down because their legs are shorter on one side. When I was a student at the University we used to watch them romp along Mount Sentinel. And the gillygalloo birds—which look backward because they don’t care where they’re going but want to know where they’ve been—often knocked themselves out by slamming against the tower on Main Hall.

Where are they now? Not even in the museums! (In fact, there is no museum, either.) And nobody seems to care but me.

True, neither creature was good for anything. The birds didn’t sing, and the gougers’ fur was too scruffy to trim coats with. They weren’t edible. They were just cute, which is more than some people can claim. Membership in the Embattled Society for the Rehabilitation of Extinct Species costs a mere $100—certified check required. For an extra five bucks you can be president.

sam the seventh

Correction: “The House the Babcocks Rebuilt,” in the Nov. 5 paper, says Sam Hauser was Montana’s first territorial governor.

He wasn’t; the first one was Sidney Edgerton, appointed in 1864 by President Abraham Lincoln. Hauser was the seventh governor.

right to know

“Officials Sorry Press Told of Dispute” said a headline in the March 10 Missoulian about Police Judge Volinkaty’s disagreement with police officers. One of them was quoted as saying he didn’t think these matters are part of the public’s information. The police judge seemed to agree on that if on nothing else.

Of course it’s embarrassing, but all these people are working at the public’s business, and when they disagree about how to do it, the public certainly has a right to know, perhaps even an obligation to do something about it.

It is the duty of the press to defend the public’s right to know, and I trust the Missoulian will continue to keep the public informed about the peculiar things that are going on.

an obligation

Let’s get something straight before we permit any more shopping centers to be built: They owe the public the decency of convenient public restrooms. It is outrageous for a shopper, when Billy or Susie has to go, to have to ask permission and directions from a checkout girl for getting to the employees’ john, which is reached by clambering around piles of cased merchandise in the back room of a grocery.

It is unreasonable to have to ask for a key at the cafeteria at Holiday Village, be told “I haven’t got it—someone’s in there,” and then discover that the last user of the key left it locked inside. And it’s worse to be told, “We haven’t any restroom.”

Shopping centers are set up to attract great numbers of customers. It’s high time the investors who profit by building and operating them faced their responsibility to these customers.

The argument, of course, is that restrooms get vandalized by kids. The answer to THAT is that the shopping centers will have to stop being chintzy and hire matrons to see this doesn’t happen. (And none of this dime-in-the-slot business, either, to gain access.) If they’re going to make money from those shoppers—and you bet they are—they must be forced to face up to their obligations to shoppers.

look it up

I do believe that writers whose grasp of the verb “tread” is precarious should either look it up or stop using it. The other day The Missoulian used “tred,” which may have been a typo but I doubt it. Now an AP story says “Indians feared to trod” in what is now Yellowstone Park.

Montana Journalism Review
You tread in the present tense or you trod in the past, except in swimming. In that case, you tread or treded water, my dictionary says. In case of doubt, I suggest “walk” and “walked”—except in swimming, when the alternative to “treaded water” might be “drowned.”

an obligation

Are our new shopping centers going to have toilet facilities for customers, paid for by the shopping centers themselves? This should not be left up to the stores that pay rent. It should be a legal obligation of the shopping center owners, and this obligation should be established before they are permitted to start building.

At Holiday Village, the 4B’s provides such facilities and merits the gratitude of the public. A tenant at Holiday Village told me there was once a public restroom, but a bunch of girls wrecked it and set fire to it, so it was closed permanently. Very well, the management of all shopping centers should not only provide restrooms but must police them with persons who have the power to arrest offenders.

It’s high time the owners—some of them out-of-town corporations that couldn’t care less—should be made to shoulder their responsibilities instead of passing the buck as they’re doing now.

unjust

To Sen. Mike Mansfield:

Please note the enclosed clipping from the July 22 Missoulian about Doug Allard of St. Ignatius. He was trapped by government agents who lied to him, claiming they represented a private business—Dover Feather and Down Co.

He didn’t want to sell them two ancient warbonnets that belonged in his museum. They talked him into it. Judge Russell Smith said earlier that it’s all right for government agents to entrap people.

But dammit, Mike, the law they got Doug Allard on was set up to protect golden eagles NOW. The birds those warbonnet feathers came from would have died of old age several eagle generations ago.

I suppose it’s all perfectly legal, but it’s utterly unjust, and what I think of the government agents who pulled this vicious trick wouldn’t do to print. Can you do anything for Doug Allard?

organize

It looks as if we who like people better than rattlesnakes had better organize. Better yet, the people who prefer rattlesnakes should organize, round up all our rattlesnakes and take them home—as long as their homes are far from West Rattlesnake Gulch. We won’t miss the rattlesnakes at all.

In fact, it would be pleasant to hear again next summer the voices of small children playing in their yards. This past summer they’ve been cooped up in the house because of danger from rattlesnakes, which are NOT cooped up.

The woman who wrote the letter to The Missoulian defending rattlesnakes should remember that rattlers have a very potent built-in defense system, which children don’t: It is my firm opinion that Homo sapiens, even in the infantile stage, is just as much a part of Nature as Crotalus viridis viridis, which recognizes no closed season on Homo sapiens.

marshal faces rattler

More about rattlesnakes: When my neighbor Lynda Smith phoned to say, “You aren’t going to believe this,” I shrieked, “Not another rattler at your place?”

But it was—number six at their place, and there had been another a block north. She came over to borrow a flashlight, and I went back with her (rather, well behind her) lugging a .38 Smith and Wesson and a full box of ammunition.

I did not know that Jeff Herman, who was poking into dark corners of the Smith cellar with more enthusiasm than good sense, was a Missoulian reporter. I thought he was just your average lunatic sportsman with a peculiar passion for catching live rattlesnakes. He already had the latest one in a metal box. I don’t see how it could keep buzzing so steadily without needing to be rewound or recharged or something.

Pretty soon the small root cellar housed Jeff Herman, still poking in dark corners; Lynda Smith, our hostess; Royal Brunson, a herpetologist from the university; Bob Simpson, who confided that he doesn’t like snakes; me and my six-gun; and the boxed-up rattler, which sounded like the buzzer on my kitchen stove when it’s time to turn off the oven. When Dr. Brunson picked the snake out of the box with his bare hands to have a better look, I went up the cellar steps faster than I had gone down.

It’s nice of Mr. Herman to appoint me Marshal of West Rattlesnake Gulch, but if the local authorities confirm me in this office, I’ll fight hard to get them defeated at the next election.

Next day I fared forth to buy a .22 revolver as more suitable for fighting off rattlers than the .38 hawg laig—I’ll save that for boa constrictors—but the man at the gun store recommended instead .38 shells loaded with scattershot. I have laid in a good supply and learned how to load the gun.

Friends have suggested that I surround the house with tobacco, assuring me that rattlers don’t like it any
better than the surgeon general does. Others recommend that those of us who feel menaced should raise pigs, which kill rattlesnakes. Neither idea seems awfully practical. Highland Heights is probably zoned against pigs, if not against rattlers.

Gun control has very few supporters in West Rattlesnake Gulch.

wrong, wrong

Concerning your learned editorial about the metric system: If you're so smart, why ain't you rich?

Referring to all that fancy Latin you quoted from Fra Mononucleus, your attribution is wrong. I often pass an evening reading his works when there's nothing good on television and I'm tired of writing my book on “Some Aspects of the Relationship of Glottochrology, Fritillaria Pudica and the Common Cold.”

What you quoted, you rascal, is from Caesar’s Gallic Wars, probably the part about how he built a bridge somewhere. My Latin teacher in Whitefish High School skipped that section because she knew we’d never make it.

Toward the metric system, especially in clothing sizes and temperatures, I feel as I do toward politicians: “Illegitimi non carborundum,” or “Don’t let the bastards wear you down.”

(Miss Johnson is right in sniffing out a different source than the learned Fra Mononucleus. Alas, Prof. Hogan-Psymyte has found that the manuscript he once attributed to Fra Mononucleus was plagiarized from Ekkehardi IV of Casus Sancti Galli. For information on Ekkehardi, see the copiously annotated edition of his work published by G. Meyer Von Knonau in the “Mittheilungen zur Vaterlandischen Geschichte” in 1877. It explains all. Mononucleus was clearly: “Mendosam quam cantilenam ago, Puellulis commentatam dabo; Quo modulos per mendaces risum, Auditoribus ingentem ferant”—as a Cambridge student song says. And isn’t it: “Nil illigitimi carborundum”? Somebody, please help.—The Editor.)

Wrong picture

Was the First National Bank’s ad on St. Patrick’s Day meant for April Fools’ Day, or was it a mistake? Banks are not supposed to make mistakes: That’s the privilege of their customers.

The story in the ad was about “Baron” O’Keefe, but the picture was of Thomas Francis Meagher, secretary of Montana Territory and acting governor for a time that many of his contemporaries considered much too long.

John and Ross Toole are descended from O’Keefe. Ross told me Baron was not a title but a nickname that his ancestor liked better than his given name, Cornelius.

Both O’Keefe and Meagher (pronounced Mar—there’s a county named for him) were Irish and colorful. Meagher, in his youth, was sentenced to death by Queen Victoria’s government for revolutionary activities. The sentence was commuted to deportation to Tasmania.

He escaped from there, came to the United States, was a general in the Civil War, and was relieved of his command for getting too drunk too often. In 1867, while territorial secretary of Montana, he fell or was pushed off the steamboat G. A. Thompson at Fort Benton, and the Missouri River never gave him back.

A statue of him on a horse stands in front of our state capitol, but he’s not my idea of a hero. He changed his mind too often about what was right and what was wrong. Before he fought on the side of the North, for instance, he violently favored slavery in speeches. But I did not push him off that steamboat.

They’re both

Newspaper cartoons need not be either surly in content or repulsive in appearance. The cartoons by Hauge are both. I think their effect is to turn readers away from the editorial page.

Paint it out

The new City-County Public Library is so attractive and useful that it gets a lot more business than the old library did. So it has a parking problem. Sometimes there are no parking spaces there at all.

But two spaces are marked plainly ATTY, and they’re occupied. Why should any attorney have special parking privileges there? The library does not rent office space to any attorneys. It does have lots of customers who can’t find a parking place within three blocks when they want to do research or spend some time selecting books or are accompanied by two or three small children.

I object to this favoritism, and I hope to see ATTY nicely blanked out with fresh paint very soon. I’ll be watching. Let the ATTYs pay for parking somewhere, as other people do who work downtown, so more customers will have a fighting chance to use the library. Most of us don’t need to park very long.

A blankety blank

As Cleopatra said (according to W. Shakespeare),
“Though age from folly could not give me freedom, it has from childishness.”

The Missoulian, although it’s older than I am, cannot make this claim. It recommends editorially, with apparent seriousness, that if we don’t like either of two candidates, we vote for neither.

This is a foolish, dangerous and childish way to protest the sorriest slate I’ve ever seen. SOMEBODY is going to be elected. If you don’t vote, you don’t count. In each case one candidate really is worse than the other. My protest is not going to be silent and therefore childish. I’m going to vote.

My vote, while it appears to be for somebody, will really, in most cases, be against the one I mistrust and detest more. Otherwise, what right will I have to complain when the worse candidate wins?

I am as cynical and suspicious this time as the next fellow, but I don’t trust the next fellow’s choice of candidates. I have a right to choose, a right to vote, and I intend to do it. I am not going to torpedo the Ship of State, although right now my opinion of government at all levels is pretty low.

**collegiate! collegiate!**

I’m suspicious of the Electoral College. It has no campus, professors or football team; it is never heard of except once in four years, when we go through the patriotic hassle of electing a president and a vice-president.

Article II of the Constitution provides that these executives shall be chosen by electors, and they still are. But the electors are not us, and the “electoral college” is not mentioned.

The founding fathers had very little confidence in the wisdom of the common man. (Down, girls. I refuse to say “person.”) The Constitution does, meaning men only. But it doesn’t specify “male citizens” until the Fourteenth Amendment, 1868. By that time somebody had noticed women and wanted to make sure they didn’t go messing around in politics. The country had enough troubles; it was trying to recover from the War of the Rebellion.

Back to the electors. At first, voters weren’t even allowed to choose them. (“Chuse” is how the original document spells it.) State legislatures did that. State legislatures also chose U.S. senators until 1913 when the Seventeenth Amendment gave that right to ordinary voters. Maybe the voters demanded it; maybe the legislatures were tired of being blamed not only for what they did but for what the U.S. senators did. (The facts I’m stating I winnowed from reading the Constitution. The snide comments and sarcastic conclusions are my own.)

There is no “electoral college” except in the sense that a college is a body of persons having a common purpose. These persons were and are the electors, now chosen by voters because of the Fourteenth Amendment, which was otherwise mostly a bitter measure aimed at punishing the defeated South. It’s a nasty one.

The founding fathers must have turned over in their graves at the idea that citizens could now vote directly for electors. And by this time, although the Constitution doesn’t say so, political parties decided on candidates for president and vice-president; electors had a moral obligation to vote for them.

The framers of the Constitution had given the chosen electors complete freedom. Those in each state got together, wrote down names, and mailed them to the seat of the government of the United States, addressed to the president of the Senate, who counted the votes. Some college! It’s a correspondence school.

What I’m complaining about is the awkward way the electors still work. All the votes in one state for president and vice-president go to one pair of candidates, so all the people who voted for the opposing candidates might as well have stayed home. This makes me boil, even when my side wins.

Things are a little better than they used to be. In some states where I have voted, the names of the proposed president and vice-president didn’t even appear on the ballot—only the electors’ names did, and nobody had ever heard of any of them.

Little as the founding fathers trusted the common man (let alone the common woman, whom they totally ignored), they were generous enough to arrange the Constitution so that we could change it.

I asked Tom Payne how come we still have this antiquated system of electing electors. No, no, not the Tom Paine who said “These are the times that try men’s souls” during the American Revolution. That was before my time.

I talked to the pleasant Dr. Thomas Payne who teaches political science at the University of Montana. He said that a constitutional amendment that would have given us election of president and vice-president by popular vote was passed by the U.S. House in 1970 but failed in the Senate because of a filibuster.

I suggest that whoever killed it must have had his own unadmirable reasons for depriving us of a right we ought to have. Maybe the filibusterer agreed with that sturdy founding father and signer of the Constitution, Alexander Hamilton, who once described the people as “a great beast.”

Reading the Constitution is illuminating. Where else are such great matters stated so simply? We’re so accustomed to the language of bureaucracy that we tend to forget how much a few words in plain English can mean if the writers put their minds to it.

Like the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the vote. There’s not a word in it about women. It just says, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the
United States or by any State on account of sex” and then gives Congress the power to enforce it.

No wonder the U.S. Supreme Court is overloaded with work. The justices are lawyers, dealing with lawyers, and they have to interpret a Constitution that’s so simply and clearly stated they all get confused.

I’m not mad at the Supreme Court or the lawyers or even the electors who go through the motions of deciding who’s going to be president or vice-president.

But I’d like to get my hands on the senator or senators who, in 1970, talked to death the amendment that could have given us election by popular vote.

gobbledegook

I have before me a post card from Robert E. Arras, director of finance-clerk and recorder, notifying me that a public hearing will be held on petition for detraction from the Missoula Rural Fire District of “A tract of land located in and being a portion of the SE\(\frac{1}{4}\) of Section 18, T 13N, R19W.”

This is the second such piece of gobbledegook I’ve received lately. Presumably Missoula County wants to tell me something. Presumably Mr. Arras did it just as he was supposed to do it.

But the effort was a total failure. Communication broke down in double talk. Am I supposed to go humbly to the hearing on this, Nov. 30, just to find out what Missoula County is talking about? I know of several people who did go to the last one for that purpose.

Let’s have some plain English, with a hint about where that land is located. Without it, I have a strong suspicion that somebody is trying to pull a fast one. In case I haven’t made my position clear: I’m damn mad.

arise, ye slaves!

While Missoula city and county officials are fussing about a definition of a shopping center, is anybody with the public’s interest in mind laying down any requirement about providing public toilets?

We can’t trust the promoters who build shopping centers to provide them voluntarily. We can’t trust individual stores to provide them voluntarily. A checker in a big chain drugstore told me haughtily, “We have our own, but it’s not for the general public.” But we of the general public make that store profitable, and we are scum except at the cash registers.

In the course of some private investigating of facilities, I found and boldly entered one bearing a sign KEEP OUT—EMPLOYES ONLY. To get there, I passed three employes, taking their break with their feet up, who gave me a dirty look but didn’t say anything. (I was wearing my “I dare you” expression, which scares anybody under 50.) I haven’t found the employes-only facilities in all the supermarket stores; the management hides them cleverly. Of course, I’m only a part-time crusader.

Lots of shoppers are lured to these stores by advertised specials. I think those ads should be required to carry, in big type, the warning, “BUT YOU CAN’T USE OUR TOILETS.”

Arise, ye slaves of the shopping centers! Demand access to the facilities and, if you don’t get it, raise hell with the management. There are more of us than there are of them.

unfriendly

It’s mighty unfriendly of you to threaten to put some of the editorials into cryptograms. They’re beyond me, like that ghastly Latin you lapse into in your more erudite moments. If you write editorials in code, how will we non-cryptogrammatists know whether to be mad at you?

Because I so often disagree with the editorials, I’ve decided to solve the problem with a blanket non-endorsement of all of them. Too bad, because we were getting along so nicely. Twice in 1976 the signature Reynolds appeared below an opinion with which I was in complete accord.

true love

On Sunday, Jan. 30, a photograph of Robert Campbell appeared among those of the brides-to-be on the Engagements page of The Missoulian. With a straight face he announced his engagement.

Congratulations to Mr. Campbell on striking a blow for Equal Rights for Men. That’s courage! Congratulations to Ms. Frankie J. McCormick, his intended, for putting up with it. That must be true love.

ricochet

Please stop publishing that awful imitation of Stan Lynde’s Rick O’Shay as soon as possible. The people who are doing the strip now don’t know a cowboy from a cauliflower, and the whole thing has turned so cutesy that it makes me gag.
Recently Rick was using stirrups that looked more like cinch rings, and his saddle had no horn on it, so is he supposed to carry his throw rope in his teeth? He'll need the rope to tie up some bad guy if not to pull a cow out of a bog.

English grammar, he done wrong.

who trained them?

John Stromnes’ interview with Prof. Robert Hausmann raised my blood pressure about 40 points.

I have never taught English; I have long practiced it as a professional writer, editor and reviewer. I did teach some writing courses in the School of Journalism, which—probably because it trains professionals—has higher standards than apparently prevail in the English Department at the university.

Low standards did not prevail when I majored in English at UM, however. Later I competed successfully in the magazine-editing job market in New York with women whose degrees were from Smith and Vassar.

Prof. Hausmann remarks, “Nominative cases, interrogative pronouns—who knows what they mean?”

Any kid who didn’t know that by at least the seventh grade in the Whitefish Public Schools when I was a kid wasn’t likely to pass into the eighth. He hadn’t been paying attention at all. Grammar was taught.

In Whitefish High School, we had four full years of required English and wrote a theme every week, which the teacher corrected and graded. Our reading texts were sometimes dull, but we didn’t expect education to be one big thrill. Many school readers now are so up to date that there’s little literature in them.

Not that I’m complaining; a couple of dozen of them include various stories of mine, for which I was well paid. I hope this generation doesn’t get as tired of Johnson’s “Lost Sister” as mine did of De Maupassant’s “The Necklace.”

Prof. Hausmann is quoted as saying, “When a teacher says to a student that the language he, his friends and his parents and the people he looks up to in his culture (use) is stupid, wrong, bad, non-standard English, the teacher implies there is something wrong with him, his friends and his people.” Any teacher who says that should be fired. He’s an insensitive snob.

If the teacher lets the kids go along without correction, without a hint that there are different ways of saying things and some of them are better, he ought to be fired, because he is blocking the kids’ upward mobility.

I observed as an undergraduate that my professors spoke somewhat differently from the railroad men and lumberjacks in Whitefish, so I tried the professors’ way. At first it seemed awkward. But nobody in Whitefish minded, or even noticed.

If Prof. Hausmann had to work hard to get kids just to trust him enough to put down more than a simple sentence on a piece of paper, as he complains, let him blame all their English teachers before him. Those teachers didn’t require enough writing.
The kids have the idea that writing is dreadfully difficult, maybe because nobody warned them that it's advisable to think first. It must be like being ordered to swim the length of the pool when they've never before been in water above their knees.

And who trained those high school English teachers? In most cases, the University of Montana did.

vigilantes meet

3-7-77. Montana Vigilantes Local 429 will meet Wednesday, usual time and place. Agenda will include (1) decision on action to be taken re. Missoulian officials who persist in publishing Rick O'Shay "comic strip" no longer produced by Stan Lynde and (2) where to tie the rope when you can't find a tree.

Bring your own rope for noose-building drill. Annual accreditation exam coming soon.

Entertainment will feature group singing of "Hold your rope, hangs-a-man" and "They're hanging Danny Deever in the morning." Also a bass solo, "So it's up the rope I go, up I go," by No. 46.

Ladies Auxiliary will serve cookies and cocoa.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE Per No. 13, Captain.

(Editor's note: Notice forwarded by Dorothy M. Johnson, 2309 Duncan Drive, Missoula.)

never on Sunday!

I am a loyal promoter of libraries—with my money, newspaper and magazine writing and public addresses in a lot of towns. Now I must attack the idea of having the Missoula City-County Library open on Sundays.

Sunday opening is not necessary. This is not primarily a reference library where scholars have to toil hour after hour. The library is already open six days a week and most evenings.

Much more useful would be Saturday opening of at least some county offices that working people now curse because of the real hardship they experience in taking time off to do business there.

Sunday opening of the library costs money—tax money, which is spread thin already. The library can't operate with just somebody to check out books. When it's open, it has to be staffed with six or seven people, including at least one well-paid professionally trained librarian. All these people have to be paid time-and-a-half for Sunday work.

Sunday opening is both unnecessary and costly, so I protest. The more I think of it, the madder I get. The City Council and the county commissioners no doubt approved this idea. They do the budgeting of tax money. They have said No to better ideas than this one.

let's hope

Oh, dear. As long as poor old Montana Power Co. has friends like Rep. Paul Pistoria, D-Great Falls, it doesn't need any enemies. I'll bet the company's very good public relations men lost their breakfasts when they read his statement about why he thinks certain university faculty members should be fired.

If Cascade County voters really want a red neck to represent them in the Legislature, they have a right to vote for him, but it's too bad the rest of Montana has to be saddled with him too. Let's hope he never gets on the board of regents, or even a local schoolboard.

Noted in Passing

"... because Congress was on a rampage trying to learn what was going on in the government."

Profile of a Shopper

By LORRETTA LYNDE BRESLIN

This article is a condensed version of an independent-study report submitted for graduate credit. The writer, a 1967 graduate of the Montana School of Journalism, has been advertising manager of T&W Chevrolet in Missoula, a reporter for the White Plains (N.Y.) Reporter-Dispatch and acting editor of the weekly Missoula Times. From 1972 to 1975 she was a member of the Missoulian advertising staff.

Although little has been written about shopping newspapers or shoppers, advertising textbooks for several years have described them briefly. In general, they have a newspaper format but they contain little news or editorial matter. The publisher determines the recipients—copies usually are delivered free to every home or apartment in a specific shopping district. The shopper really is a form of direct advertising.

The shopper in Missoula, Mont.—the Messenger—was moved to that city from Dillon in 1972, having been established a year earlier. At first it was not particularly successful. The staff was not stable or experienced, and the printing press was antiquated. Pages often were blurred and sometimes unreadable. The paper was delivered by youngsters, who at times were not dependable.

Ed Nowman, who purchased the Messenger in June, 1975, had worked for many years in daily-newspaper pressrooms. He had begun his shopper career with the purchase of the Advertiser in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis., and expanded it from eight pages a week to 64. He subsequently started the Advertiser in Polson, Mont., and it had a circulation of 6,000 and averaged 32 pages a week when he sold it.

At the Messenger, Nowman immediately began what he describes as a “house-cleaning.” He closed the business for two weeks, overhauled the press and replaced the commission-sales staff with salaried personnel.

He says the financial status of the paper was shaky and he could not find competent sales people willing to work for a commission: “I would have been better off to have started a whole new paper.”

The circulation—mostly rural—was 6,000, and the paper averaged eight pages a week. Distribution was inefficient, for carriers were not held accountable. Weekly losses were difficult to determine, much less control.

Nowman began distributing the Messenger by mail—17,214 copies in the city of Missoula, 3,142 to Missoula Post Office boxes, 4,918 to rural routes in Missoula County, 5,776 to box holders in Arlee, Ravalli, Frenchtown, Huson, Alberton, Lolo, Florence, Stevensville, Milltown, Bonner, Potomac, Greenough, Clinton, Ovando, Drummond, Victor, Seeley Lake, Superior and St. Regis. The total circulation was 31,050.

By 1977 the Messenger printed 33,000 copies and delivered about 32,000 to potential readers (1,000 are used for tear sheets for advertisers, file copies and other clerical needs). The 17,214 delivered in the Missoula metropolitan area are distributed in a plastic bag by adults who work for Advertising Distribution

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4Messenger rate card, 1976.
Systems, Inc. In metropolitan Missoula, only 268 are mailed, mostly by request. The new distribution system saved almost 50 percent on local delivery costs (mailing originally cost 52 percent of the gross) and virtually eliminated local-delivery problems.

ADS is owned by a corporation managed by Gordon Lowry, who also sells advertising for the Messenger. ADS, established July 29, 1976, employs 37 carriers paid according to the size of their territory and number of papers. The average is 500 papers for $25 a week plus $2 for each preprinted supplement.

The carriers, who must insert the papers into the plastic bags, receive their copies by 7 p.m. Tuesday evenings. They can start deliveries at 1 a.m., and they must finish by 2 p.m. Wednesday.

ADS was started at Nowman’s suggestion. Like the Messenger, ADS has been expanding since its inception. It now owns the Hamilton (Mont.) Shopping News, which resembles the Messenger.

ADS sells many of the tabloid sections printed by the Messenger. This, in turn, has contributed to the growth of the Messenger. One reason ADS sells so many tabs is the rates:

**TOTAL 17,000 DISTRIBUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 or 2 page insert</th>
<th>1.75¢ ea.</th>
<th>297.50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 page insert</td>
<td>2.00¢ ea.</td>
<td>300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 page tab</td>
<td>2.25¢ ea.</td>
<td>382.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 page tab</td>
<td>2.50¢ ea.</td>
<td>425.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 page tab</td>
<td>2.75¢ ea.</td>
<td>467.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 page tab</td>
<td>4.50¢ ea.</td>
<td>765.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**DELIVERY OF 10,000 MORE**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>1 or 2 page insert</th>
<th>2.00¢ ea.</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4 page tab</td>
<td>2.50¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 page tab</td>
<td>2.75¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 page tab</td>
<td>3.25¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 page tab</td>
<td>3.75¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 page tab</td>
<td>5.00¢ ea.</td>
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</table>

**DELIVERY OF FEWER THAN 10,000**

<table>
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<th>2.50¢ ea.</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td>4 page tab</td>
<td>3.00¢ ea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 page tab</td>
<td>3.50¢ ea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 page tab</td>
<td>4.00¢ ea.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 page tab</td>
<td>4.50¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 page tab</td>
<td>5.00¢ ea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nowman and Lowry also established a three-state (Montana, Idaho, Washington) organization for shopper publishers, the Northwest Advertising Publishers Group, to exchange and communicate information. Other Montana shoppers in this group are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOWN</th>
<th>NAME OF SHOPPER</th>
<th>CIRCULATION, IF KNOWN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kalispell</td>
<td>Mountain Trader</td>
<td>18,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>Ad</td>
<td>27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Falls</td>
<td>Consumers Press</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deer Lodge</td>
<td>Western Shopper</td>
<td>30,000</td>
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</table>

In 1977 Nowman was president of the group, Lowry secretary. Members meet quarterly.

The steady growth of the Messenger can be seen clearly in the number of pages printed weekly from mid-1975 to the end of 1977 (the figures do not include ADS insert pages).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>PAGES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 24, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 7, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Aug. 14, 1975</td>
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<td>Aug. 21, 1975</td>
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<td>Aug. 28, 1975</td>
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<td>Sept. 4, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 21, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 28, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 5, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>Oct. 12, 1975</td>
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<td>Nov. 16, 1975</td>
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<td>Nov. 23, 1975</td>
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<td>Nov. 30, 1975</td>
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<td>Dec. 7, 1975</td>
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<td>Dec. 14, 1975</td>
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<td>Dec. 21, 1975</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 28, 1975</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 4, 1976</td>
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<td>Jan. 11, 1976</td>
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<td>Jan. 18, 1976</td>
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<td>Jan. 25, 1976</td>
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<td>June 28, 1976</td>
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Montana Journalism Review
To market the Messenger, Nowman and his staff interviewed local business persons to determine how a shopper could serve the community and what weaknesses might exist in the competition, the daily Missoulian. They determined that advertisers especially wanted service, a feeling that they got more than “just an ad” for their money.5

advertiser complaints

In the survey, advertiser complaints focused on the Missoulian advertising rates, which some local business people considered complex and high. Others criticized the Missoulian for what they called rigid rules and poor service, because it has not had local print competition since the weekly Missoula Times was discontinued in 1969.

The Messenger has done little advertising of its own product. It does use radio ads through a trade arrangement with local stations, and it prints house ads in its own pages (most of these describe services offered, but some take jabs at the competition).

The Messenger is a tabloid, six columns by 16 inches. The want ads are set in 10-point Century. The nameplate identifies the paper as The Missoula County Messenger (“The Good News” paper), gives the date and a line that reads, “A Newspaper of Commerce and Industry.”

The display ads are similar in appearance to those in the Missoulian. In fact, some are photographed directly from the pages of the Missoulian (with permission of the advertiser). The front page carries ads and has included one local “good news” feature article since July 27, 1977. The Messenger also prints a schedule for local and cable television. (A television schedule appears in the Saturday Missoulian’s Entertainer section, which costs 10 cents by itself.)

The Messenger employs 25 full- and part-time persons, including three in advertising street sales, one composition manager and six composition staff members. Three staff members handle secretarial and reception work and telephone want-ad sales, three run the presses, two carry proofs and tear sheets to advertisers and six work in the mail room.

From the beginning, the Messenger has offered advertising rates lower than those of the Missoulian. The open rate per column inch (highest rate, run of paper) is $4.06 for the Missoulian and $2.65 for the Messenger. The lowest column-inch rate is $2.90 for the Missoulian (5,000 column inches plus per month) and $2.05 for the Messenger (551 to 650 column inches per month).

To counter the Messenger’s claim of 100 percent circulation, the Missoulian started its own shopper, the Ad Vantage, which offers a rate of 80 cents a column inch. It is delivered free to the 5,000 metropolitan-area homes that do not subscribe to the Missoulian and mailed to 7,115 homes in Ravalli County.

The Messenger advertisers I questioned invariably mentioned cost as the primary reason for advertising in the shopper. In many cases, they said the Messenger rates were cheaper than radio advertisements on a per-unit basis. Others referred to excellent service by Messenger salesmen.

The record of the Messenger suggests that it will continue to succeed in the Missoula-area market. Nowman, who said the previous owner’s highest annual gross was $125,000, commented: “We made $500,000 in our first full year. We will gross $700,000 this year, and we hope to gross $1 million next year if we continue to grow the way we have been.”6

5Nowman interview.

6Nowman interview.

There is a Sort of Littleness in the Minds of Men of wrong Sense, which makes them much more insufferable than meer Fools, and has the further Inconvenience of being attended by an endless Loquacity.

—from The Tatler, the 18th Century essay paper edited by Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq. (Richard Steele), Number 197.
The Journalism Faculty

NATHANIEL BLUMBERG
Professor Emeritus
B.A., M.A., University of Colorado; Ph.D., Oxford University, England. A Rhodes Scholar, Professor Blumberg is the author of the book *One-Party Press* and coeditor of the anthology *A Century of Montana Journalism*. He has worked for the Associated Press, the *Denver Post*, as assistant city editor of the *Washington* (D.C.) *Post*, and associate editor of the *Lincoln* (Neb.) *Star* and the *Ashland* (Neb.) *Gazette*. He taught at the University of Nebraska and Michigan State University before coming to the University of Montana in 1956 as dean, a position he held until 1968. Professor Blumberg retired in 1978 under a policy that permits him to teach one quarter each academic year.

WARREN J. BRIER
Dean and Professor
B.A., University of Washington; M.S., Columbia University; Ph.D., University of Iowa. Dean Brier's experience includes work as a newsmen for the Associated Press in Los Angeles, Seattle, New York and Helena, a reporter for the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, and a copyreader for the Seattle *Times*. He has taught at California State University at San Diego and at the University of Southern California. Dean Brier is the author of the book *The Frightful Punishment*, coauthor with Howard C. Heyn of the text *Writing for Newspapers and News Services* and coeditor of the anthology *A Century of Montana Journalism*.

IVAN GOLDMAN
Assistant Professor
B.A., Southern Illinois University; M.A., University of Kansas. Professor Goldman has worked as a reporter for the *Denver Post* and the *Washington Post* and as a reporter and Sunday magazine writer for the *Kansas City Star*. He has sold articles to the *New York Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *Toronto Star*, *The Nation*, *New Times* and other publications. He directed the journalism program for the Aspen Leaves Literary Foundation and taught at the University of Missouri-Kansas City and Western Washington University before coming to the University of Montana in 1978.

PHILIP J. HESS
Professor
B.A., M.A., University of Iowa. Professor Hess, chairman of the Radio-Television Department, has taught at the University of South Dakota, where he also served as production director of the University's educational television station. He has worked as a producer-director at commercial television stations in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Portland, Ore., a broadcaster for educational radio stations in Chicago and Iowa City, Iowa, and as a reporter and copy editor for the *Missoulian* (Mont.) *Missoulian*.

JERRY HOLLORON
Assistant Professor
B.A., M.A., University of Montana. Professor Holloron has worked as a reporter for the *Hamilton* (Mont.) *Daily Ravalli Republican*, the *Great Falls* (Mont.) *Tribune*, the *Wisconsin State Journal* at Madison and as a reporter, copy editor and city editor for the *Missoula* (Mont.) *Missoulian*. He resigned as chief of the Lee Newspapers State Bureau in Helena in April, 1971, to become assistant director and local-government research analyst for the Montana Constitutional Convention Commission. He was research director of the Montana Legislative Council from January, 1974, to August, 1974.

CHARLES E. HOOD JR.
Associate Professor
B.A., M.A., University of Montana. Professor Hood, who joined the faculty in 1967, has worked as a reporter for the *Great Falls Tribune*, the *Missoula Missoulian*, the Lewistown *Daily News* and the Helena bureau of United Press International. He has returned to the *Missoulian* during the summers as a desk editor and reporter. His reporting for that newspaper has won the National Headliners' Club Award and a citation from the American Medical Association. He is a candidate for the Ph.D. in American Studies at Washington State University.

GREGORY MacDonald
Assistant Professor
A.B., M.A., University of Michigan. Professor MacDonald was the Pierre Andre intern at WGN Continental Broadcasting in Chicago in 1972. He subsequently served as a teaching fellow in the University of Michigan speech department, media director of the John Mogk campaign in Detroit, producer-director of the University of Michigan Television Center and as an instructor at the University of Northern Iowa.

ROBERT C. McGIFFERT
Professor
A.B., Princeton University; M.A., Ohio State University. Professor McGiffert taught journalism at Ohio State for four years before joining the University of Montana faculty in 1966. He worked for the *Easton* (Pa.) *Daily Express* for 16 years as reporter and city editor. He has spent his summers in recent years as an editor at the *Washington* (D.C.) *Post*. Professor McGiffert has been active in programs to improve medical and dental writing, serving as a consultant to the American Dental Association and as an instructor at writing seminars sponsored by the ADA and the American Medical Association. He is the author of the text *The Art of Editing the News*, published in 1972. Professor McGiffert was on sabbatical leave during the 1978-79 academic year.

VISITING LECTURERS
1978-79

LES CAPAY, free-lance writer, Bigfork, Mont.
DAVID LEE, photographer, Missoula, Mont.
SAM REYNOLDS, editorial-page editor, the *Missoulian*.
DON SCHWENNESEN, reporter, the *Missoulian*.
WAYNE SEITZ, journalism instructor, Missoula Hellgate High School.
CAROL VAN VALKENBURG, associate editorial-page editor, the *Missoulian*.
It is time to go from this place. These 22 years at the University have been interesting, to put it mildly; when I came to Montana my hair was black. I dare not thank all of you—faculty, students, graduates, friends of the press—for fear of overlooking even one to whom I am indebted. The list is a long one, and you know who you are and I hope you know how grateful I am. I have learned far more from all of you than I have taught. The special blessing of being a professor at the University of Montana is in its students—those tough, resilient kids from Butte, those splendid young men who came from Roundup and Ronan and Forsyth and Shelby and go on to become among the best journalists of the nation; and the intelligent, beautiful women, who seem to come from everywhere and leave, alas, always too soon. . . .

Nathaniel Blumberg