

# (MORE)

**Danny Kaye and Friends  
Junket Through France**

**The Big Apple: Restoring  
Mr. Agnew at the Times**

**Alternative Television  
And Its Video Freaks**

## **Death Rampant! Readers Rejoice**

BY ALEXANDER COCKBURN

It is, I think, becoming more and more evident that the American press is ceasing to carry out one of its prime functions: namely, the proper reporting of disasters. Part of this dereliction can be ascribed to the termination of *Life* and part to Watergate, which has led to a collapse of all standards. Journalists now feel they have to go out and uncover facts, find unnamed sources and confuse people about mortgages in Key Biscayne. This may be fine for those who like to boast about the press being the watchdog of our freedoms, etc., but is very vexing for the general reader who wants what he has always wanted in a free press: dramatic descriptions of other people being killed.

A word of warning: newspaper readers do not want to hear about *all* the people who are killed or die in the world every day. Apart from the evident impracticality of the idea, a large number of deaths are simply uninteresting to the casual reader. For example, about 55,000 people are killed on American roads every year. Indeed, about a million American citizens have perished on the highways since 1950. Such news may be of interest to insurance companies, auto companies, Ralph Nader or morticians, but the newspaper reader is more discriminating. Each case must be judged on its merits. Was it a multiple crash? Was there fog? Was granddad on a Christmas visit after 50 years? Was there a priest on hand to give extreme unction to the dying?

In the old days, news editors had their priorities straight. They knew what disasters were, and the rules to be followed. There was, if you like, a simple Richter scale of human (and, indeed, animal) calamity. When forest fires raged, it was essential that the undergrowth be alive with creatures fleeing to safety; a couple of fire fighters had to be cut off and incinerated in the blaze; one of

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# [MORE]

# COLUMN TWO

# LETTERS

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Cover drawing by Salim Patel

[MORE] Volume 3, Number 12 is published monthly by Rosebud Associates, Inc. Subscription rates: 1 year, \$10.00; 2 years, \$18.00; 3 years, \$25.00. All subscriptions and other mail should be addressed to:

[MORE]  
P.O. Box 2971  
Grand Central Station  
New York, N.Y. 10017

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SECOND CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT N.Y., N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

## Merry Christmas!

BY BARBARA GRIZZUTI HARRISON

What do Walter Cronkite, Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, Mrs. Aristotle B. Onassis, Dinah Shore, Bob Hope, Mrs. Harry Truman, Governor Ronald Reagan, Bing Crosby, Mrs. W. Averell Harriman and Cary Grant have in common? They're all members of Harry and David's Fruit-of-the-Month Club, that's what. Harry and David's *Christmas Book of Gifts* is one of at least 15 Christmas catalogues I've received, unsolicited, since Halloween. According to Harry and David (of Bear Creek Orchards, Medford, Ore.) "Bank Presidents, movie stars, Congressmen and hundreds of Folks" rely on them "for gifts that are in perfect taste." (I don't think the pun is intentional: Harry and David take their pears and apples—"crisp as Jack Frost, snappier than his wife and redder than Russian raspberries"—far too seriously for that.)

Hammacher Schlemmer's 1973 catalogue is less democratic than Harry and David's. They don't carry a whole lot of gifts for just folks. At least I think that's what this sentence, celebrating their "125 Years of Vigilant Venture," implies: "One felt certain pride, satisfaction, when our gnome-decorated van pulled up to the curb and delivered our wares to one's brownstone." I love Hammacher Schlemmer's prose—it's full of gnomes and confused pronouns—although some of their claims (they invented the closet?) do strain one's credulity. And I'd never have guessed, unless they told me, that a "pushbutton Lazy Susan, one that revolves when you want shoes, certain hosiery, clothes, accessories," fell into the category of things that were once "fads" but are now "fundamentals."

Well, as the Salvation Armyman on 59th and Lex is good enough to remind us, "Christ dwelleth not in Bloomingdale's" (I know two children, however—mine—who would confidently await His Second Coming at F.A.O. Schwarz). I can't honestly say that I find the "commercialization of Christmas" offensive—giving people things is a human instinct that's lovely to indulge (and getting things is even prettier). I know people who feel otherwise, though: a friend of mine cancelled her subscription to *The New Yorker* because her sense of the appropriateness of things was offended by an I. Magnin ad—His and Her robes made from the throat hairs of the ibex, \$1,000 each—that faced a "Talk of the Town" piece, dripping with *New Yorker* humanism, deploring the war in Vietnam. I see the point; but my reaction to the commercialization of Christmas is to wallow in it. The best way to wallow (and to avoid the crowds) is to order everything from catalogues. (*Everything* is what you can order—from a Rosebud Radish Maker (59c) to Dr. Bove's Naso-Vent snore-stopper (\$2.98) to a genuine \$2 bill (\$9.98) to an exact replica of the 1901 Olds horseless carriage (\$1,895); you can *phone-order* a \$100,000 necklace from Van Cleef and Arpels.) If you become a catalogue addict, run the risk of having your judgment corrupted and your finances depleted; you will certainly suffer from visual indigestion and a surfeit of Things; you may

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Our letters column now runs in this space because we feel that a magazine that scrutinizes the media has a particular responsibility to give prominent play to the give-and-take such criticism often elicits. We are eager to hear from our readers, and urge them to write us when they feel they have something substantive to add to what they read in [MORE] or, of course, when they disagree with what we print. Address all letters to Editor - [MORE] - P.O. Box 2971 - Grand Central Station - New York, N.Y. 10017.

## That Cosmo Style

I feel Helen Epstein's piece on her experience with Mrs. Ashley, our articles editor, and *COSMO's* editing rules is, for the most part, unfair ("How to Write for Helen Gurley Brown"—November, 1973).

Over the years here I have worked with, and continue to work with, such professional writers as Ken Woodward, Harvey Aronson, Roger Rapoport, Anne Chamberlin, Richard Grenier, Jimmy Breslin, Pete Hamill, Marshall Smith, Tom Meehan, Larry King, John Cory [sic], Martin Mayer, Dick Boeth, Peter Evans, Gael Greene, Robert Daley, Stephen Birmingham, Laura Cunningham, Joe Flaherty, Gail Sheehy, Tom Fleming, Edna O'Brien, George Plimpton, etc.—all of whom have been good enough to contribute their talents to this magazine. I assure you I have never submitted any copy of *COSMO's* editing rules to any of the above writers.

Mrs. Ashley, who is far more indefatigable than I in her search for new contributors, often does make use of basic editing rules when explaining how a good article should be written. Some of the people she deals with listen and profit from her advice; others, following their hearts rather than their heads, blame her for their deficiencies.

—George Walsh  
Managing Editor  
*Cosmopolitan*  
New York, N.Y.

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Act of August 12, 1970: Section 3685, Title 39, United States Code).

1. Title of Publication: [MORE] A Journalism Review
2. Date of Filing: October 15, 1973
3. Frequency of Issue: Monthly
4. Location of Known Office of Publication: 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017
5. Location of Business Office: 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017
6. Names and address of Publisher and Editor: William Woodward 3rd and Richard Pollak, 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017
7. The Owner is: Rosebud Associates, Inc., 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017
- Stockholders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of stock: William Woodward 3rd, J. Anthony Lukas, Richard Pollak, Mrs. William Woodward Sr., Carol U. Bernstein Ferry and Leon Levy, 750 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10017
11. Extent and nature of circulation.

	Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 months	Actual Number of Copies Of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
A. Total no. copies printed (net press run)	13,489	15,330
B. Paid Circulation		
1. Sales through dealer and carriers, street vendors and counter sales	3,691	4,067
2. Mail subscriptions	7,228	7,138
C. Total Paid Circulation	10,917	11,205
D. Free Distribution by mail, carrier or other means		
1. Samples, complimentary, and other free copies	363	647
2. Copies distributed to news agents, but not sold	1,947	3,154
E. Total Distribution (Sum of C and D)	13,227	15,006
F. Office use, left-over, spoiled after printing	262	324
G. Total (Sum of E & F - should equal net press run shown in A)	13,489	15,330

# [HELLBOX]

## Editors and Nixon At Disney World

Some editors were a bit edgy all along about meeting at Disney World, so the unexpected guest only heightened the uneasiness at last month's annual meeting of the Associated Press Managing Editors Association. "Donald Duck was bad enough," one editor remarked, "but Richard the Waterbug was going too far."

On both scores, their fears proved at least partially justified. The AP—recognizing the solemnity of its own undertaking—datelined its stories from the neighboring city of Orlando, Fla. But R.W. Apple of *The New York Times*—among others—could not resist datelining his piece in the Sunday paper "Disney World, Fla." And the next day Anthony Lewis hammered home the implicit parallel in a column on the news conference headlined "Alice in Wonderland."

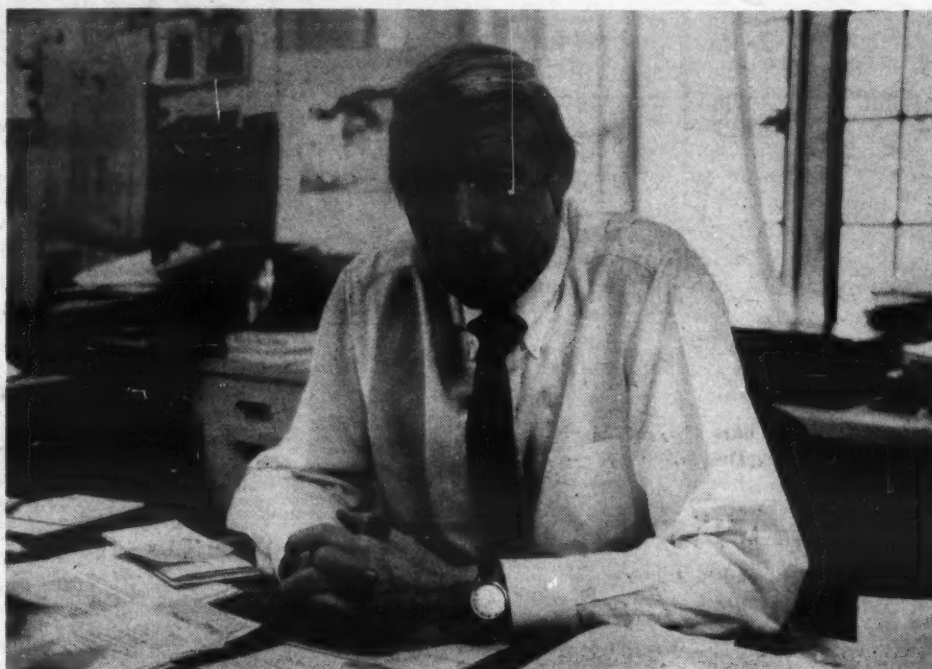
But the symbolic pitfalls of Disney's animal kingdom were as nothing compared to the real dangers posed by the President's current Watergate counterattack. When the White House announced Nov. 15 that Mr. Nixon was scheduling a visit to APME as part of his five-day Southern *blitzkrieg*, some commentators felt the editors were allowing themselves to be used for an end run around their own Washington correspondents. Apple said in his front page story that day that "the White House anticipates easier questions than the Washington press corps might ask."

On Nov. 16, John Quinn of Gannett, the APME's president, summoned the executive committee and the chairmen of the association's study committees to his room in Disney World's Contemporary Hotel. According to some of the roughly 25 men present, Quinn and the other executives appeared stung by suggestions that they were being used. "We've got to show that we're not patsies," one said.

But it was equally evident that the leadership did not trust the rank-and-file to ask the right questions. "A lot of our guys are small town editors who don't know diddly-poo about Washington or Watergate," one executive said. "We were afraid we'd get a lot of questions on the level of the one somebody asked Clare Booth Luce last year, something like 'how can you be so pretty and so smart at the same time?'"

Some suggestions were made at the meeting for limiting all questioning to a panel of well-informed editors or for screening of questions in advance. But most editors feared either procedure would make the session seemed "rigged." Unfortunately, a somewhat less-structured plan was adopted. Twenty study committee chairmen were instructed to prepare questions in advance. They broke up into four groups—one for each microphone in the hall—and a "microphone captain" ranked them in order. Later, when the rank-and-file was informed of the plan, they were told that if they wanted to ask questions they should give their names to a microphone captain who would determine if and when they could speak.

As things worked out, 18 of the 20 questions were asked by designated questioners. Only two "outsiders" managed to get to the microphones: Harry Rosenfeld of *The*  
(continued on page 4)



Retiring Timesman Harrison Salisbury.

Jill Krementz

**R**osebuds to Harrison Salisbury, who retires this month after 43 years in journalism, the last 24 with *The New York Times*. We could easily dwell on the obvious benchmarks of his career: his distinguished reporting from the Soviet Union from 1949 to 1955 (when he won a Pulitzer Prize), his groundbreaking dispatches from North Vietnam in 1966; his stream of books on Asia, China and the Soviet Union (most notably, *The 900 Days: The Siege of Leningrad*). But for all Salisbury's sharp-eyed reporting, his most enduring contribution to his profession clearly will be the Op-Ed page he launched at the *Times* three years ago.

The idea for a page of outside opinion had been discussed as far back as 1964. But from the beginning, the page was stymied by a power struggle between the news and editorial departments. A succession of managing editors, including Turner Catledge, Clifton Daniel and A.M. Rosenthal, felt the page should be closely tied to events. Editorial-page editor John Oakes steadfastly insisted that any Op-Ed page should be part of his fief. The stalemate was finally broken in 1970, in the wake of a costly settlement with the typographical union that pushed up advertising rates and added a nickel to the newsstand price. Publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger decided the *Times* had to give its readers something more, and ordered the Op-Ed page established under Oakes, but with a large measure of autonomy for the editor. His first choice for that post was Anthony Lewis, who declined in favor of staying in London at the time and writing his column. So the task of setting up the new page fell to Salisbury.

Together with his editorial staff of Herbert Mitgang, John Van Doorn and David Schneiderman, and art director Jean-

Claude Soares, Salisbury has put out an increasingly lively and quite often fascinating page. It sags occasionally with the weight of political affairs and heavy commentary thereon; and, perhaps inevitably, Salisbury has indulged his interest in Russia by too often printing lengthy statements by, and on the plight of, Soviet intellectuals. But this *Times*-like soberness is more than balanced by the remarkable number of illuminating pieces on the human condition that the page has offered.

These essays, usually by "unknown" writers, touch on marriage, sex, death, migrant workers and dozens of other subjects long ignored or trivialized by a journalism preoccupied with yesterday's events. Albert Martin (a *nom de plume*) tells of the agony he feels because his wife decided to opt out of their "happy" suburban marriage. Joseph Farkas describes his reaction when two truck drivers kill a woodchuck before his eyes. Barbara Lawrence discusses the sexist nature and history of the word "fuck" (though not until she has removed the word and four or five others from the piece at Mitgang's request; change comes slowly at the *Times*).

In general, such pieces draw by far the greatest response, leading once again to the inescapable conclusion that the ponderous ruminations on political matters that mush up most newspapers do not go anywhere near the heart of what readers care most deeply about. In particular, the political columnist seems almost an anachronism these days. Even the few good ones develop a numbing predictability very quickly, and one wishes that their talents, which are occasionally considerable, could be better used.

Historically, the quality of opinion in American journalism has been exceedingly shallow. By giving the *Times*' Op-Ed page such a strong start, Salisbury has set an important precedent. Other media please copy.

# [HELLBOX]

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Washington Post and John Chandley of the Kansas City Times. And the way things worked out seemed to suit the President just fine. At one point, he complimented the editors for asking "very good questions and very appropriate ones." Another time he appeared to be chiding them for not asking tougher ones: "...since you haven't raised some of the subjects, I'll raise them myself. I.T.T., how do we raise the price of milk—I wish somebody'd ask me that."

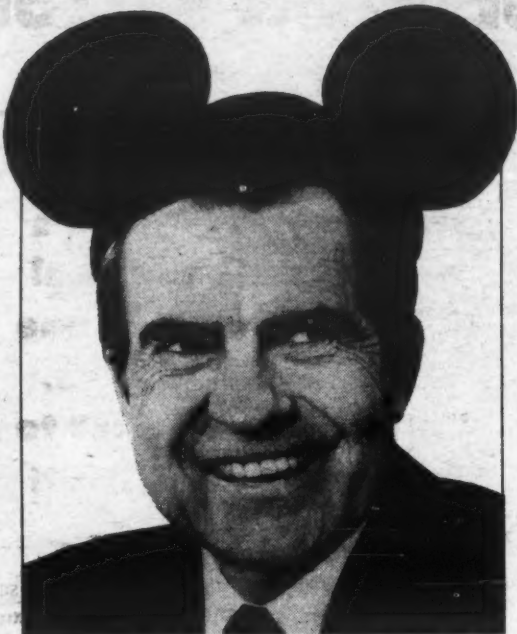
Pinning the President down on Watergate is no easy matter—particularly when he filibusters as he did that evening (17 minutes on the first two questions, by one editor's count). But few of the editors' questions would have nailed a drugged caterpillar. To be sure, the worst softie of the evening—what did the President plan to do when he retired—came from one of the two rank-and-filers, Chandley. It elicited groans from some editors ("a real meatball," one called it) and may have been a good example of the questions that would have come from a completely unstructured session.

But ironically, the two chief executives of the association—Quinn and Vice President Richard Smyser of Oak Ridge, Tenn.—served up queries that can only be likened to lobs at the net for Rod Laver (Quinn: "Can we keep the Republic, sir?" Smyser: To what extent do the President's heavy responsibilities "explain possibly how something like Watergate can occur?"). And even though many of the editors consulted their own Washington correspondents and culled lists of questions prepared by Walter Mears of the AP and Clark Hoyt of the Knight papers, most of the other Watergate-related questions asked that evening weren't much better. Two of the best—by Joseph Ungaro of the Providence Evening Bulletin and Rosenfeld of the Post—were somewhat self-serving efforts to confirm stories their papers had dug up (the President's nominal taxes in 1970 and 1971, and the tapping of Donald Nixon's telephone).

To the editors' credit, they recognized the failure of the White House press corps to follow up each others' questions. Four editors were designated to look for follow-up opportunities and two—Edward Miller of Allentown, Pa. and Larry Allison of Long Beach, California—asked pointed follow-ups on aspects of Watergate.

But apparently there was an effort by the microphone captains to ensure that Watergate did not dominate the proceedings. George Packard, executive editor of The Philadelphia Bulletin, says he repeatedly tried to ask a Watergate question and was told by his mike captain "we have too many on that." Ultimately, when the President invited a question on the milk issue, Packard stuck up his hand. The President, who wanted to finish another question, said he would get back to him. But when he did, Quinn interrupted to cut off all questions. The President who wanted his milk run asked the question himself, and it was a much softer formulation than Packard's prepared question which spoke openly of "payoff" and "deal."

Post mortems, not surprisingly, were mixed. The leadership felt relieved that acute embarrassment had been avoided. But there were critics aplenty. Larry Allison was "somewhat



disappointed that we didn't pin him down more on the big issues." Ed Doherty of The Boston Globe was annoyed—as were many others—by the applause and laughter which came from some editors and many wives. "The whole thing seemed to be too chatty," he said. "It was exactly the kind of thing editors would lecture Washington correspondents for doing." Harry Rosenfeld called it "a middling performance by guys who seemed more concerned about philosophy than tough specifics, but if philosophy's on their mind, then that's what they should ask." And George Packard said "too many editors seemed overly concerned about decorum and propriety. That's a mistake. Decorum should come second to a search for the truth. The President should have been walking into a den of lions but what he found instead was a Disney World where the animals have no teeth."

—THE EDITORS

## The Spy Who Came In To Hearst

Last August, Hearst staffers were taken completely by surprise when columnist Jack Anderson reported that their new London bureau chief, Seymour Freidin, had netted \$17,000 spying on the Democrats for the Committee for the Re-election of the President. Late in September, when they learned Freidin would not be fired, they were more than surprised; they were angry. William Randolph Hearst Jr., reliable sources said recently, had over-ruled his most senior advisors and decided to keep Freidin, a personal friend, in his prestigious post.

Freidin was not employed by Hearst at the time of his work for Nixon aide Murray Chotiner, but was freelancing—writing "a Joe McGinnis" book on the 1972 campaign, he said. Few newsmen accepted the excuse, especially after a September Anderson column noted that Freidin, while reporting in the '50s and '60s for the New York Herald Tribune, had been a paid informant for the CIA. "Every professional newsman working for the Hearst organization, from Robert Thompson [the national editor] on down to the lowest Hearst

correspondent, felt Freidin should have been fired," said one source. "And any other guy would have gone. But Freidin was a friend of Hearst's and so he stayed."

Hearst himself could not be reached for comment, but national editor Thompson, while admitting unhappiness over the Freidin affair, denied that he and other Hearst editors had wanted Freidin fired. "Freidin did file reports for Chotiner, but it wasn't spying," Thompson said. "It was just material everyone else had. And it wasn't a matter of conflict of interest because he wasn't working for us until September 1, 1972. We were unhappy we hadn't known about it before we hired him, but Freidin's been an outstanding correspondent and we wanted to be fair."

Initially, Freidin was hardly fair with Robert Thompson. When Jack Anderson called Thompson at home to get his reaction to the first Freidin column, Thompson was startled. He immediately called Freidin, who was in Athens on assignment. "Sy," Thompson said. "There are two things I want you to do. Call Jack Anderson and talk to him, and send me a full report."

Freidin did call Anderson but his "full report" curiously did not mention the CIA work, and so when Anderson reported that, too, in late September, and when his follow-up columns indicated that Freidin's filings to Chotiner might have been made up, Thompson was once again left in the dark. At the end of September, Thompson ordered Freidin to return to New York to spend a week writing detailed reports and discussing his activities with top editors and Hearst. Those meetings and "voluminous" reports, according to Thompson, did confirm the accuracy of the Anderson columns. Yet Freidin was kept on. "These were long, reasoned, not acrimonious discussions," Thompson said. "No one called him home with a judgment in mind, but rather to explore what we should do. Since his activities ended prior to his employment with us and since he did give us a full explanation, we decided we wanted him to stay."

—LANIE JONES

## Corrections

On page 20 of last month's issue, we ran a picture of baseball star Henry Aaron talking to a group of sports writers in the Atlanta Braves' club house. The caption read: "What have you done for baseball?" asked the man from UPI." None of the reporters in the photograph were identified; but it turns out that the man at whom Aaron is looking and who seems to be asking the silly question is none other than Milton Richman, UPI's national sports editor. Richman has doubtless lobbed a soft question or two in his career (as who hasn't?), but in this case he is innocent. The question was put by Tim Minors, a stringer for UPI-TN, a television film service. We regret the confusion, particularly since it was made possible by a UPI photo... In David Alpern's Big Apple piece on the closing of Manhattan's police shack, a line of type was inadvertently dropped. The passage in question should have read: "The Baron' De Hirsh Margules was a noted Greenwich Village artist as well as a veteran police reporter..."

# Television Turns on Nixon

BY BOB KUTTNER

It isn't pleasant, for example, speaking of my friend Mr. Rebozo, that despite the fact that those who printed it and those who said it knew it was untrue, said that he had a million dollar trust fund for me, it was nevertheless put on the network, knowing it was untrue.

—Richard Nixon, October 26, 1973

How did ABC News "know" that correspondent Bill Gill's exclusive report on the alleged secret trust fund was "untrue"? Funny you should ask. Well, the White House denied it, that's how. After the President finished his press conference charging the networks with "frantic, hysterical" reporting, Ron Ziegler called Gill to the White House for what John Ehrlichman used to describe as a stroking session. He assured Gill that Nixon's outburst was not directed at ABC. The object of the President's wrath, said Ziegler, was CBS. Ziegler assured him there was nothing to the Rebozo story. But then he pumped Gill for the better part of an hour about where the correspondent got his information. Days later, Ziegler called in another man from the Administration's favorite network, Howard K. Smith, to explain his commentary advocating Nixon's resignation or impeachment. Smith gallantly said afterwards that he didn't consider the summons "pressure."

Obviously, TV is making the Administration uncomfortable, but the White House gets downright evasive when asked to specify just who or what is driving the President goofy. *The Washington Post's* Bob Maynard pressed presidential aide Ken Clawson for chapter and verse, and got only trivia. At the October 26 press conference, Nixon himself, after observing, "I have never seen such outrageous, vicious, distorted reporting in 27 years of public life," added mysteriously, "I'm not blaming anyone." CBS's Robert Pierpoint tried to probe the presidential wound, and only elicited a prissy putdown: "Don't get the impression you arouse my anger. You see, one can only be angry with those he respects." Moments later, Nixon returned to the subject and assured his "good friend from CBS" that he does respect reporters. It's the commentators who aren't playing fair.

Was the problem ABC? Or CBS? Reporters or commentators? The message or the messenger? Any remaining doubt that the Nixon White House has always viewed the networks as the prime enemy was erased by the latest batch of memoranda outlining an anti-network campaign to "tear down the institution." But why the networks? After all, as every schoolboy will be taught, it was *The Washington Post* that broke Watergate. And Ziegler doesn't call Ben Bradlee in to justify Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein.

The reasons for the Presidential fear and loathing are not hard to come by. They have something to do with the medium's power to disseminate otherwise obscure revelations and to upstage the Leader. The networks have only just begun to earn the President's enmity with original reporting, and with all due deference to the power of Brinkley's sarcasm or Seavareid's tardy alarms, commentators have even less to do with it.

Television, as the Twentieth Century Fund's timely report, *Presidential Television*, nicely explicates, could be the ideal medium of Caesarism. The increasing use of the tube as a tool of the Chief Executive "threatens to tilt the delicately balanced

Bob Kuttner is a contributing editor of [MORE] based in Washington.

**The networks have only just begun to earn the President's enmity with original reporting. And as one CBS producer says, "We still have a lot to learn. We're still not leading."**

system in the direction of the President." And, say the authors, the alarming difference between Nixon and previous presidents is not that Nixon uses television more, but that his use of it is so thoroughly orchestrated. Nixon has held one-third the number of news conferences, but three times the number of prime-time live addresses, as his television-era predecessors. Presidential television by-passes all the fine institutions of pluralism. The President can ignore Congress and take a veto message directly to the people; or ignore his party and step lightly over Agnew's corpse with a televised celebration of Gerald Ford; or scoop the press with a live announcement of his trip to China. Thus used, presidential television is not so much Orwellian as Gaullist: the Leader speaks directly to the Nation, untrammelled by pesty newsmen and Congressmen. As Colson wrote in one of those memos about the networks, "We are not going to permit them to get away with anything that interferes with the President's ability to communicate."

The fly in the ointment, of course, is network news. Unlike deGaulle, Nixon does not control the medium totally. The President can limit the power of the press to confront him directly, but he can't dictate what television reports. Thus, when CBS picked up the *Post's* disclosures and broadcast them—in the word's literal, pre-electronic meaning—the rest of the country had to take the issue seriously. The Twentieth Century Fund report misses the delightful irony. If presidential television is the natural ally of 1984, why was Nixon railing at the networks? Fred Friendly writes in his introduction: "Were there not this comprehensive report on presidential television, the burglary of June 18, 1972, and the virulent infection it identified in our political system would have necessitated such a study."

Well, the report is certainly a good read, but in a way the denouement of Watergate makes the study redundant: the box that presents a President larger than life can do the same for a Sam Ervin or an Archibald Cox—and certainly for a Walter Cronkite, whose trust rating in the Gallup Poll on the eve of Watergate was 73%, topping every politician. Richard Nixon's was 57%. As it happened, the very day *Presidential Television* was published, Nixon's indignant press conference made it clear that far from being a pliant engine of despotism, television was becoming the rod by which public opinion was striking the Administration down.

Even at its least enterprising, television wins the Administration's enmity, because it disseminates the troubles as well as the triumphs.

Cronkite invariably upstages the President's Gaullist act. In treating Watergate, television's main functions were passive. Unfortunately for the Administration, the network correspondents constrained as they were by the idiot technology, all found time to read *The Washington Post*. Eventually, they even managed to rewrite it and find pictures to match. When the story became more visual, it took just one mildly courageous decision—to carry the Watergate hearings live—for the public to understand the real character of Erlichman, Haldeman, and the Nixon presidency; later, the networks had only to respond passively to events for Archibald Cox to be transformed from an unknown professor to a Becket-like symbol of stubborn integrity.

For all of this, network news deserves little credit. It was not until late in the Watergate story that television began to take an active role in uncovering the scandal. Throughout 1972, network reporting did just about nothing to advance the story. There were two exceptions, both on CBS. In September, 1972, the Cronkite show tackled a story that by every conventional index epitomized something too abstract for television: the wheat deal. Producer Stanhope Gould, with Linda Mason, and correspondent Joel Blocker, not only explained the machinations in a three-part series which was clearer and more intelligible than any previous print report; they also added new information: the series explained precisely how the six big grain companies manipulated the export subsidy for windfall gains; it analyzed the effect on consumer prices; it probed how a high Agriculture official, Clarence Palmby, was already slated for a job with the Continental Grain Company while the wheat negotiations were still in progress. "The wheat series was a watershed for us," Blocker says. "We felt that if television could do that, it could do anything." Next came a two-part series on Watergate itself, the first part of which occupied fully half the Cronkite show. It was mostly rehash, but it marked the first effort by a network to synthesize the *Post's* revelations and explain them in detail to millions of viewers outside Washington ([MORE]—December, 1972). After Part I, pressure from Charles Colson on CBS Chairman William Paley caused Part II to be cut from 14 to 7 minutes. A year later, Walter Cronkite assured his viewers that despite the campaign against the networks outlined in the latest batch of White House papers, "none of that pressure ever reached this desk." In fact, as CBS people admit privately, Colson's arm-twisting caused the only network pre-election Watergate special to be cut nearly in half.

**B**ut Watergate was a catalyst, or *may* be a catalyst, for network news. For the first six months, the networks had done little but rewrite the *Post*. By the big break in the case—McCord's letter to Judge Sirica in late March of this year—the networks were beginning to use their highly paid correspondents as reporters: to gather information as well as pose for pictures. The lesson was finally sinking in that a correspondent could spend his energy going after a story. If the story he got lent itself to pictures, so much the better. If not, creative graphics could take over, as was brilliantly done in the CBS wheat series.

Technology has helped. CBS has a new device called Videfont that accomplishes by computer what used to be done with slides. With

Videfont, the producer can reinforce long quotes and excerpts of documents by having them superimposed on the screen. The desired text is simply typed on a keyboard. Several thousand i.d.'s and quotes can be stored electronically. "We were fortunate," says CBS producer Sylvia Westerman. "Just when we reached out for new uses of graphics, the technology was there." Westerman adds that since Watergate, it has been a bit easier for correspondents to get time away from the daily routine to pursue a story, and a bit easier to take enough time to explain it on the air. Robert Pierpoint's first report on favorable treatment for the Rebozo banking group required several days digging and seven minutes of air time, and it scooped the print press, which disdained the story until Congressman Wright Patman began an investigation—giving the papers a fresh lead.

"With Watergate," says CBS's Daniel Schorr, who probably functions more like a print reporter than any other network correspondent, "a lot of things were happening that couldn't be told in a minute. So we began to say, 'Hold on a moment. This will take some time. Let me take you by the lapels and explain it.'" There is generally less original reporting on CBS's competitors, with notable individual exceptions, like ABC's Bill Gill and NBC's Carl Stern and Ron Nessen. "The

networks did a lousy job on Watergate," says Nessen. "Nobody was attuned to that kind of reporting. If the *Post* broke a story in the bulldog edition, our idea of a follow-up was to stake out the guy's house. Watergate prompted a lot of soul-searching about what we could do. When the Ervin hearings finally opened, TV began doing its thing. By the time Agnew came along, it was a chance to redeem ourselves."

NBC set up an investigative team, as did the other networks, to develop original information on the Agnew story. "Somewhere between Watergate and Agnew," Stern says, "the idea died that you have to have an official tell you something on camera before it's a story." Nessen was able to break several Agnew stories using his own sources, including the gist of the case U.S. Attorney George Beall intended to present to the grand jury. When Agnew's lawyers identified nine reporters they intended to subpoena to determine their sources, two broadcast journalists made the list: Nessen of NBC, and Fred Graham of CBS.

Television news, of course, has a long way to go. Several correspondents don't think Watergate has made that much of a difference. "Investigative reporting is still zilch," said one well-known network correspondent. "When they talk about investigative reporting, it means a friend calls you

up from some Congressman's office and tells you that they're going to release a report in a few days, so you go on the air and say, 'WXYZ has learned that blah blah blah.' We still don't have nearly enough reporters. If someone is out of town a couple of days chasing a story, we're dead."

At NBC, though two or three reporters have been freed from beats to do more leisurely probing, the fee system discourages staying away from the air for days at a time even when the desk okays the absence. At ABC, Watergate was a factor in the network's decision to slot a new series of twelve investigative documentaries. In a major speech last May to network affiliates, ABC President Elton H. Rule cited Watergate as proof that television had to do more reporting. People at ABC point to the documentaries as proof Rule was serious. Av Westin, formerly the executive producer generally credited with making ABC News competitive with the other networks, has moved over to take charge of the documentary series. But there is also alarm that this draws resources away from the daily news programs. Stanhope Gould, the CBS producer whose separate investigative unit attached to the Cronkite show is partly a child of Watergate, argues that daily digging is much more important than the traditional staple of the great broadcast journalism tradition, the documentary. "A documentary like 'The Selling of The Pentagon' is fine," Gould says. "Everybody does a little tribal dance for a couple of weeks once a year, and that's the end of it. What really got the government on us was our reporting of Watergate, night after night. We still have a lot to learn. We're still not leading. Many of our guys are still not equipped to go after a story if it doesn't involve interviewing somebody on camera.

"Right now, we're wearing white hats just because we seem to be making Nixon so crazy. But we have a long way to go. We still have to learn to be more deliberate, to take longer than a minute or two per story. Time on the air is what it takes to explain a story, to get away from the insane condensation. And that goes against everything the networks have institutionalized."

**T**here are many in the business who don't think Watergate has made that much difference. Gordon Manning, vice president of CBS News, told me: "The problem for us is that investigative reporting requires a terrific amount of manpower." That attitude, which pervades the networks, will be slow to change. In fact, the salaries of the two *Post* legmen who made it all happen add up to less than that of one network correspondent.

Though television has been responsible for only a handful of major Watergate beats, it has become a matter of professional pride for correspondents to advance the story, daily, in small ways. CBS correspondents Daniel Schorr and Lesley Stahl were part of the elite group covering the Ervin hearings that developed its own sources early and grew accustomed to leaked advance copies of staff summaries. A year earlier, network news would have been content to pick it up from the *Post*.

What network news can do best is a combination of synthesis, original reporting, and—what should be television's forte—inventive, cogent presentation. This is beginning to happen, though the tired formulas are slow to die. CBS has a separate investigative unit; ABC a new documentary series; NBC an investigative reporter or two. With all the power and resources at television's disposal, it's about time that the presidential rage we saw displayed October 26 should be caused by more than commentators and cameras passively pointed at Senator Sam.

## Getting Down To Specifics

At President Nixon's Oct. 26 press conference, CBS's Dan Rather asked what went through his head when he heard talk of impeachment. The President replied:

As a matter of fact, Mr. Rather, you may remember that when I made the rather difficult, I thought the most difficult decision of my first term, on Dec. 18, the bombing of, by B-52s, North Vietnam that exactly the same words were used on the networks. I don't mean by you, but they were quoted on the networks... Tyrant, dictator, he's lost his senses, he should resign, he should be impeached.

In reviewing nearly 100 live and film reports by network reporters and other material added by anchormen during the period of Dec. 18-31, 1972, I found that the networks neither presented nor quoted anyone saying the President was a tyrant, dictator or that he should resign or be impeached.

The bombing began on Dec. 18. On Dec. 21, Walter Cronkite reported that "Radio Hanoi said the bombings indicated President Nixon has taken leave of his senses." But that was surely not the first attack by Hanoi on the President. During the second week of the bombing, Sen. William Saxbe (R., Ohio) said in an interview that he thought the President "appears to have left his senses." The senator was not quoted on any of the networks the day he made the statement, but all three mentioned the remark in introducing interviews with him on Dec. 29. In the interviews, Senator Saxbe said he did not think the bombings would be productive and were embarrassing us internationally. Six days after President Nixon attacked the networks at his October press conference, he nominated Senator Saxbe for Attorney General.

During the renewed bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong, the criticism of the Nixon Administration was generally mild from almost all

quarters—Congress, anti-war groups, even China and the Soviet Union. Moreover, a careful study of the 100 live and film reports turns up only eight instances when a reporter or anchorman provided any "interpretation" and those proved evenly divided "pro" and "anti" the bombing. There were five commentaries on the subject. Two by ABC's Howard K. Smith generally supported the President. ABC's Harry Reasoner and CBS's Eric Sevareid opposed the decision. And NBC's David Brinkley reiterated his theme that we should get out of Vietnam as soon as possible.

On Dec. 28, CBS presented a news special entitled, "The Elusive Peace," in which Congressional reaction was nearly equally balanced for and against the President's decision to bomb. After the bombing was halted Dec. 30, Congressional criticism of the action continued and there were threats to cut off funds. Joan Baez and Telford Taylor were shown returning from a trip to Hanoi and saying that civilians had been hit. The Pentagon admitted that "limited, accidental damage" might have been done to Bach Mai Hospital.

The White House has promised to issue a report documenting the charges the President made in response to Rather's question. The report, in the unlikely event that it is ever produced, should be interesting. For though the network coverage during the bombing was not overwhelmingly favorable to the President, as he may have wished, it seems on the whole to have been balanced.

—LAWRENCE LICHTY

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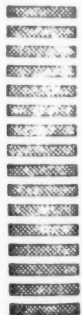
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Photographs by Dan Wynn  
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**T**his is how we ate every day. The French will eat anything. Especially pigeon. After having to deal with these little feathered "delicacies" at every other meal, I finally solved the problem by slipping one into my jacket pocket—beak, feet and all. I soon had a recurring nightmare that I would die in France and instead of burying me the practical French would roast me and convert every part of my body into something edible. I dreamed, too, of Baskin-Robbins ice cream.



## You Are What You Eat

BY DAVID RUBIN

On behalf of the Moët-Hennessy-Dior group and "l'Association de la Grande Cuisine Française" we are delighted that you will be able to join us on this first Three-Star-Gastronomic Tour of France. Twelve U.S. journalists have been invited to sample France's leading gastronomic sites. The group will be divided in two, with six people on Moët's Hawker Siddeley and six on Hennessy's Mystere 20. One evening will be spent at Moët & Chandon's guesthouse, the Chateau de Saran, in Epernay, Champagne; another at Hennessy's guesthouse, Le Bagnolet, in Cognac, and the remaining evenings will be divided between France's leading Three-Star Restaurants. While this is the first Gastronomic Extravaganza ever held, most restaurant oriented press junkets to date have been comprised exclusively of wine and food writers. It is Three-Star and Moët-Hennessy's feeling that one of the few things we all have in common no matter who is on and who is off the Enemy List, is the breaking of bread. And for this reason, they would like to be the first in extending this invitation to feature and general interest writers who are excited by the prospect of exploring different life-styles and cuisines, more as a hobby than as a profession...

The letterhead read "Schieffelin & Co., Wine and Spirit Importers Since 1974," and the confirmation was signed by Margaret Dorsen, public relations manager. Succeeding paragraphs promised first-class trans-Atlantic flights on Pan Am, an opening night dinner at Reginskaia in Paris, with accommodations at Georges V, and a

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**At play in France with ten journalists, one photographer and, gosh, Danny Kaye, too, on a \$35,000 junket complete with three-star gluttony, private jets, Mercedes limousines and plugs for the sponsors.**

closing 36 hours of R & R at the Hotel de Paris in Monte Carlo. Not your average hotel opening in Orlando, and the initial list of invited superstars was enough to make any journalism groupie stow aboard the plane.

Among freelancers, the first invitations (or solicitations through agents) went to Truman Capote, Calvin Trillin, George Plimpton, Tom Wolfe, J. Anthony Lukas, and Nora Ephron. Staff writers on the list included Horace Sutton, travel editor of *Saturday Review/World*, and his assistant Dena Kaye; *The New York Times'* Israel Shenker and food critic John Hess; the *San Francisco Chronicle's* Herb Caen; Linda Downs, wine editor of *House Beautiful*; Art Buchwald; *Newsweek's*

Shana Alexander; Al Goldstein, executive editor of *Screw*; *New York's* Gael Greene; and Kathleen Bourke, editor of the British magazine *Wine*. An executive of the AP and one from a leading features syndicate were approached, and invitations were also extended to *Penthouse* and *Ms*. No broadcast journalists were included, although the organizers had considered making overtures to CBS's Sally Quinn and NBC's Barbara Walters. Danny Kaye (Dena's father), a gourmet cook and Chinese cuisine expert, was the only non-journalist on the list.

Most of the "A" list sent regrets. Trillin declined through his agent. Buchwald (who would have "given his right arm to come," according to Dorsen), was booked solid on the lecture circuit. Capote's agent said "no" for him. The *Times'* strict anti-junket policy stopped Shenker and Hess. Downs was already going to Yugoslavia on another junket. Alexander had to cover the Riggs-King tennis match in Houston and, after committing herself to the Tour, pulled out.

So the ten junketeers who reported to Pan Am's JFK terminal on Friday, September 21, were not as eye-popping as one might have liked, but a celebrated group nevertheless: Greene, Goldstein and Ephron from the first team; Jackie Lewis representing *Penthouse* (where she is director of PR and sister of founder Bob Guccione), and Jane O'Reilly in the *Ms* slot; and new additions Susan Schraub from *House Beautiful*, freelance Tim Ferris, wine and champagne expert Alexis Besspaloff, and food and wine photographer Dan



**F**rom left, Alexis Bespaloff, Kathleen Bourke, Nora Ephron, Dan Wynn and Jane O'Reilly frolicking in front of Hennessy's private jet, "Chateau Saran." We flew everywhere in these plush corporate accoutrements, downing Moët all the way. En route we played "Obituary," a macabre game in which we all speculated on how the headlines would read if we crashed. My choice: DANNY KAYE KILLED IN PLANE CRASH WITH SIX OTHERS.

Wynn. Danny Kaye was also on hand. Sutton and Bourke joined up abroad to complete the lucky dozen.

Three-Star and Moët-Hennessy-Dior, seventh largest company in Europe, do not lavish \$35,000, their private jets and chateaux, Mercedes limousines, pampering attentions, and untold sums in service on all those journalists just to improve French-American relations. As a director of Moët said to O'Reilly with a wave of his aristocratic hand, "It's just a gamble. Something may come of it. Something may not. . . I don't care, so long as it is done well." It was, of course, done to a turn, and the French "gamble" for publicity paid off as surely as a show bet on Secretariat.

Not that there was anything so gauche as PR men twisting the arms of the journalists. By all accounts, the pressure on the touring American sybarites to turn their French adventures into magazine pieces was almost embarrassing by its absence, thanks to the charm and sophistication of Schieffelin's Dorsen, who accompanied the group to France. O'Reilly volunteers that at several stops, where guided tour-type information would have been useful, none was forthcoming. Photographer Wynn recalls that the only time even the least bit of pressure was exerted on the journalists—in Monte Carlo by enthusiastic town officials—Dorsen ran skillful interference. One employee from Hennessy would not even speak with Bespaloff for a time so as not to be thought pushy or indiscreet. But the tour was a first-class pseudoevent ("Twelve days in a silver-lined cloud," says Dorsen; "One of the great experiences of my life," sighs O'Reilly), and the publicity harvest will be as rich as the three-star food.

For example, Gael Greene, *New York's* food

critic, wrote a piece for the Nov. 12 issue describing the many dining pleasures in France's great restaurants and speaking lovingly of her corporate hosts. Names, brands, addresses and phone numbers are scattered liberally throughout the article. In accordance with magazine policy and Greene's own wishes, her portion of the tab was picked up by *New York*, and she refused the perfume, champagne, scarves and other baubles pressed on her receptive companions.

Susan Schraub, whose previous junkets had been to Richmond and Baltimore, was only granted a leave by *House Beautiful* because she would produce a piece. It will appear as a "humorous" center spread on French cuisine in the January issue. Horace Sutton used some of the French experience in his syndicated newspaper column (which has no New York City outlet); other material, plus pictures by Dan Wynn, appeared in the November 20 *Saturday Review/World*, which features a section on fine wines and foods. The spread itself, according to Sutton, was planned well before the tour. A similar food and wine blitz, this one in the Oct. 29 issue of *New York*, also was planned before the junket. It featured articles by Greene and Bespaloff, the latter's sprinkled with mentions of Schieffelin imports—some favorable, others not so.

Lewis, who was on her first bona fide junket, is planning her maiden contribution to either *Penthouse* or *Viva*. Goldstein, who was asked specifically by Dorsen not to write about the trip in *Screw*, may produce pieces for *Oui* and *Cavalier*, in which he has a column.

In contrast, Nora Ephron of *New York*, and Danny Kaye did not take notes; and O'Reilly lost all of hers in France, returning only with fond

**G**aël Greene, *New York's* food critic, and Alexis Bespaloff, a wine aficionado, sample some white cognac at the Hennessy factory in Cognac. Greene and Bespaloff were really the only people who belonged on the trip. Everyone else was a gastronomic imposter. Jackie Lewis, flacking for her brother's magazines, *Penthouse* and *Viva*, was desperate for a Coke at every stop. Tim Ferris yearned for beer. And I searched in vain for an Orange Julius.



memories and four additional pounds. Ferris and Bespaloff also may not write anything soon, or ever, based on the junket.

While most participants, including Dorsen, profess acute sensitivity to the ethics of junketing, they and those who didn't go approach the problem with a wide variety of moral stances. Most professional was Greene, whose way was paid by *New York*. John Hess of the *Times* says he would not have accepted even if his paper did not forbid junkets because he "sees no sense in organized gourmet tours. . . That is not the way people eat." William B. Honan of the *Times* Sunday travel section refused a query from Goldstein because the paper will not even accept freelance articles "subsidized in any way by commercial enterprises." Had columnist Shana Alexander accepted her invitation, *Newsweek* would have picked up the tab. Sutton, on the other hand, sees no great harm in junkets and states emphatically that "everyone in the business knows I never guarantee anything to anybody—I can't be bought for a bottle of champagne."

Wine critic Bespaloff has turned down junkets to Germany, Argentina and France because he does "not like to feel obligated." He also makes it a point of paying for every bottle of wine and champagne he reviews. This trip was, apparently, an exception for him. Others said they can become uneasy amid the subtle pressures of a junket. *Penthouse* and *Viva* have a policy against *quid pro quo* arrangements for staffers, but Lewis would have felt "dishonest" accepting the invitation if she did not know there was at least a possibility that she would write an article. Schraub was relieved of an ethical decision because *House Beautiful* ordered a piece. O'Reilly, who writes for *Travel and*

**D**anny Kaye, in addition to being a "star," is also a Chinese cuisine enthusiast, and he was on the tour for nine days. He constantly was on. He mugged for the cameras, prepared dishes in the kitchens and, on some occasions, played the waiter. At first amusing, Kaye's antics quickly became tedious. He told me he'd never been to an orgy, so I invited him to one which was scheduled to take place at a brownstone in New York City three days after our return. But Danny begged off saying that he would be at a black-tie reception for Henry Kissinger at that time. I'm sure in retrospect he would have preferred the orgy.



**T**im Ferris, former New York editor of Rolling Stone who is convinced the universe is finite and is writing a book on the subject, was easily the best-dressed traveler. He had a change for every meal, which he produced—like all those clowns that emerge from the small car at the circus—from one Lark suitcase. Here is Ferris on a morning after in Monaco. Bathrobe by Montgomery Ward.



*Leisure, Ms.* and *New York*, comes on coldly: "Nobody in his right mind would ask me along on a trip for good publicity."

Then there are Goldstein and Wynn. The editor of *Screw* "does not deny" that he "can be bought," but the price will have to be above his usual Annie Oakley—free cover charge at a massage parlor. (Goldstein always pays the girl, regardless.) In writing an article, the skin king said, he would not hesitate to name the champagne on the table 'Moet.' Wynn admits to shooting publicity photos of automobiles he has been loaned for weekends.

Sheldon Zalaznick, associate editor and publisher of *New York* (which had four of its contributors on the trip, a fact that seems to say more about the lifestyle of its reporters than anything else), believes the ethical problem of junkets is still "well worth exploring." *New York* policy forbids *quid pro quo* arrangements, but is more flexible than that of the *Times*. "There are certain kinds of expenses," he says, "that are simply beyond the ability of the magazine to pay, and the stories would not be covered without someone else paying to expose the writer to it. We try to judge each junket on its potential merit to the magazine. All we can do in fairness to the organization sponsoring the trip is to make it perfectly clear up front that we make no promise of any kind of coverage... It is not wise to follow a [strict anti-junket] principle right out the window."

And what does the organizer of the three-star happening think of this ethical problem? Dorsen says she is one of those who is made uncomfortable by the junket's subtle pressure to write and would prefer to avoid such obligations. But, of course, then she would have missed one helluva trip.

**C**lockwise from left, Jane O'Reilly, Nora Ephron, Tim Ferris, Alexis Bespaloff and Jean Paul Medard, a Hennessy executive, "recuperate" around a pool in Monaco, where an optional two days was scheduled at the trip's end. I declined, and flew back to New York to attend a press conference and screening for Marilyn Chamber's newest porn film, "The Resurrection of Eve."



# Death . . .

(continued from page 1)

these firefighters had to have been recalled from his wedding leave. In particularly fortunate cases the bride would be tearfully on hand. Weary fighters of the blaze which menaced thousands would pause to sip steaming mugs of coffee, their faces blackened with wood ash. Spokesmen would say that the blaze was under control, and would announce they feared arson. But it took a blaze which consumed half the trees in the west of the United States, earlier this year, even to get the event on the front pages.

American editors seem to feel that people don't want to read about catastrophe and death, in the way that the bulk of the population doesn't want to watch *King Lear* or *Oedipus Rex*. In my opinion such editors are making a grave mistake, stemming from liberal illusions about what the duties of a free press really are. A newspaper is not a telephone directory of facts, but a series of dramas; which it is hoped will excite readers and cause them to come back for more, thus satisfying advertisers. Who wants a tedious plod through Kissinger's latest pronouncement or some DA's bid for headlines when stories like this are thrown away in *The New York Times*:

CASA GRANDE, Ariz. Oct 22 (AP) Linda Wright, who was married last month after a parachute jump with her husband-to-be, plunged to her death yesterday while attempting a solo sky dive. The eighteen-year-old Phoenix woman's main parachute and back-up parachute did not open as she fell 35,000 feet. Her husband, Rod, was watching from the ground.

Where's the interview with the husband; with the shocked bystanders; with the pilot of the light aircraft who exchanged the last words with her? Where's the photograph?

But that's not a disaster, you say. That story only involved the death of Linda Wright. And of course if you start talking in absolute terms you will be right. What of Linda, when thousands are dying in famine-plagued Ethiopia, or cholera-stricken Benares. Perhaps if five people had jumped out of the plane in Arizona and all had been killed, then that would have constituted an accredited disaster. Such absolutes may be all very well for statisticians, but they have nothing to do with journalism. The only working definition of disaster, so far as the media are concerned, is that a dramatic intimation of death or of catastrophe is presented to the reader. Numbers are irrelevant.

Indeed, death itself need not occur. Mark this story in the *London Daily Express*, which still takes disasters seriously. First of all, a double banner headline: "RACE THROUGH THE HELL FIRE. Train passengers run oil blaze gauntlet." There is then a splendid eight-column photograph of an oil blaze. Then the story:

A crowded express raced past a wall of flame last night as fire swept through an oil tanker train only feet away. Paint of the front of the diesel engine was scorched. And a passenger said, "It was hell. We were lucky to get through." The express—the 2:45 pm from Plymouth to Paddington—went past minutes after the tanker train exploded into flames at the Total oil depot. . . Mrs. Clare Hicks, a passenger on the express, the last train to get through, said: "The train was moving quite slowly as we approached the fire. Then the driver put his foot down and we raced past. The flames were very close. We could feel the heat inside the train" . . . Houses in Meadowfield Road and Mead Road came within feet of total destruction. For just 30 ft from the blazing train were six giant storage tanks filled with fuel. Said a senior fire officer, "If that lot had gone up the explosion would have destroyed the whole village. . . Three firemen were rushed to hospital suffering from smoke and heat

exhaustion. Said a colleague, "Amazingly no one else was hurt, even though an area a hundred yards long was engulfed in flames in seconds. . . ."

The story runs over from the front page to page 5, where more details follow along with a ten-inch-square picture of a goat in a back yard. The goat seems calm, amid the blaze of the night sky. The caption: "The village of Langley is engulfed by giant flames after last night's explosion. But for a goat tethered in a nearby field the illuminated night seems to pass unnoticed." This was the *Express*' main story on October 6. As is evident, nothing actually happened—in the strict sense that no one was killed, not even the goat. But the *Express*' two and a half million readers were given an agreeable intimation of what might have been, if. In a suitably chastened spirit, they could then turn their eyes to a smaller story, also on the front page, headed, DEATH CRASH: "MARL, Friday.—At least five people were killed and another 49 injured when two trains collided near the railway station in Marl, West Germany, tonight."

The European press still likes disasters and is not ashamed of them. Teams of journalists stand ready, alert to speed to the scene of catastrophe, and poke a notebook or a microphone in the faces of the bereaved. A curious sense of modesty seems now to prevail in the U.S. Even accessible stories lack adequate record. Look at this one, from a recent *New York Times*. Headline, in a mean-spirited 14-point type at the bottom of the page: 54 HORSES DIE IN FIRE IN NEW JERSEY:

Fifty-four horses perished when a fire raced through the Hilltop Stables in the New Jersey

community of Harding Township. . . The animals, including show horses, jumpers and hunters were valued at \$2,000 to \$15,000 each by the owner of the stable, Clarence Nagro. . . .

Only ten lines for the whole episode. What of the panic-stricken neighing of the stampeding beasts? The groans of the owner who has lost all? The negligent stable lad, who doesn't even appear in the story, but who must have been there? We read, sure enough, that Clarence "dashed into the barn and freed 15 horses before flames enveloped the barn," but what's a reader to make of that? Was he half suffocated? Did his wife scream for him to desist? Did he save his champion horse? Or faithful old Dobbin, the companion of his youth? Where's the picture of Clarence amid the ashes of his dreams? *Times* reporters these days just don't seem to care.

Admittedly, the *New York Daily News* can rise to the occasion, and the newsweeklies make a good showing from time to time. But it seems to me that the American media are losing their grip a little. The old zest just is not there. Air crashes get fudged; fires are often so cursorily treated that it takes a strike by the firemen of New York and thus the virtual certainty of some tragic incineration to get the hounds out. So before the great disaster tradition passes into the pages of journalistic history, let me try and record the old rules and priorities. First, disasters that are more or less God's fault:

## Floods

Pictures crucial. Always have people perched on roof tops, cows with noses above water. Also pictures and stories of people who have lost all



The Bettman Archive

**FLOODS:** Good chance for stylists to brood on "Swollen, sullen flood" which is usually "silt brown" and invariably has some dead cows and horses in it.

and survey the wreckage of their homes. Floods are *always* rising and therefore stress frantic urgency of hold-off operations. Families sandbagging their homes, engineers manfully building dikes. Quote people berating the weathermen, who gave no warning of catastrophe. Stress indifference of Federal authorities and the sparsity of relief funding. Photograph local politicians aiding the rescuers. Promising scandal here that can stretch over months. Good chance for stylists to brood on "swollen, sullen flood" which is usually "silt brown" and invariably has some dead cows and horses in it.

#### **Avalanches**

Emphasize "frantic rescuers clawing at the snow." Also get accounts of survivors and remember to have one of them say, "There was a crack like a pistol shot and then a terrifying roar. Then it was on us." Stress risk of further avalanches in the area which can be set off by the slightest sound. Once again imply negligence of local authorities in not heeding warnings of sage old mountain folk. Stick around till the bodies are dug out, because it is a virtual certainty that one of the doomed skiers took a photograph of the avalanche seconds before it engulfed him. Thus: last snaps of a doomed man. NB. Stay on the scene for at least 48 hours, in case someone is dug out alive.

#### **Tidal Waves**

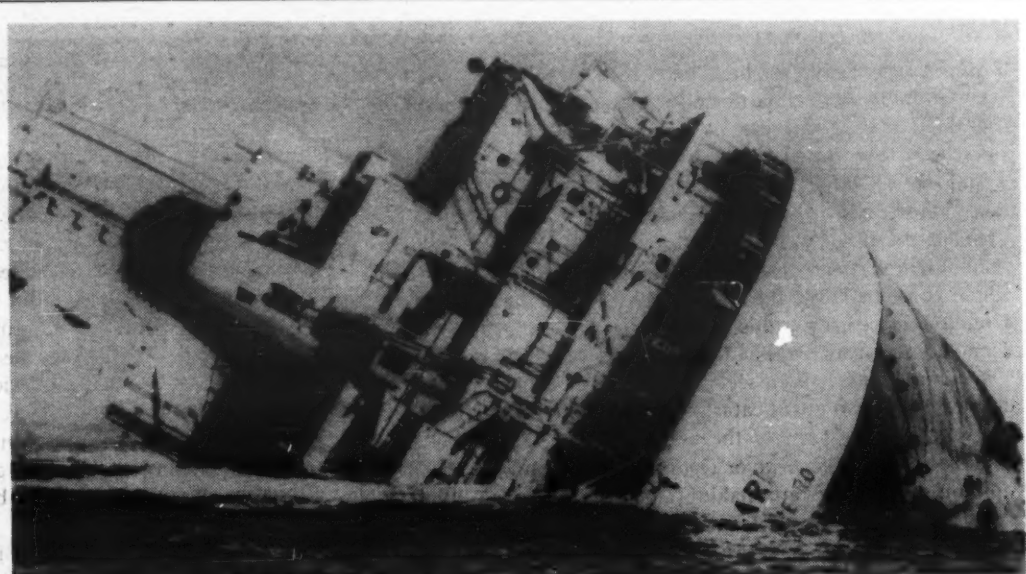
Generally these occur in out-of-the-way places, like Micronesia, or the Philippines. Therefore, merely have TIDAL WAVE RACES ACROSS PACIFIC, KILLS HUNDREDS, MAKES THOUSANDS HOMELESS. "Two-hundred thousand people are believed to be homeless following the onslaught of the tidal wave which..." If you have a newsman in the area, get him to do a follow-up on "The Empty World of Koturana." A fisherman stands amid the wreckage of his home. Stress possibility of plague. Also strong action of local military authorities against looters.

#### **Tornadoes**

Get a good photograph if you can. Stress malign fury and awesome strength of the twister, "hurling cars hundreds of yards, tearing up houses." There are usually about three deaths per town per tornado. Emphasize miraculous escape of child in pram. Ask where it will strike next. Advise



**TORNADOES:** Stress malign fury and awesome strength of twister... emphasize miraculous escape of child in pram. UPI



**SHIPWRECKS:** These can be superb. Stress... terrible seas hindering rescue; incapacity of captain/heroism of captain. UPI

people what to do.

#### **Hurricanes**

Remember that a hurricane is always *nearing* a major population center. Get a pilot to fly through it if possible. With any luck you will have a terrific devastation story to follow through with. Remember to have "winds of up to 150 miles an hour" and also don't forget the quiet center of the hurricane's eye. Remember that this may be the chance for a record. Is it the biggest hurricane in living memory?

#### **Earthquakes**

This is a big one. First of all, what force was it on the Richter scale? Quick comparisons with other earthquakes. Secondly, where is it? Usually in "remote Eastern Turkey" or in "the arid center of Iran." But with luck it will have occurred in marginally more accessible Latin or Central America. Good chance for *post facto* description. Most of the buildings destroyed; others leaning at crazy angles. Constant flood of refugees. People clawing at rubble. Survivors crawling, blinking into the light of day. Babies miraculously unhurt amid piles of bricks. Preliminary tremors, then "for six

seconds the earth shook." Make sure to get picture of one building still standing (usually a church in Roman Catholic countries or a mosque in Muslim ones). Get interviews from American survivors. Animadvert on general danger of earthquakes, particularly in San Francisco area. Most important of all: get casualty figures and escalate them each day. Remind people that 200,000 people died in the Lisbon earthquake.

#### **Volcanoes**

Usually inaccessible, except by plane. Best for network news, with aerial shots. Emphasize inexorable onrush of lava. Have an expert talk about "dormant" and "active" volcanoes. Quote primitive local tribesmen on the wrath of the fire-god. Remind people about Krakatoa, and the tidal wave which that eruption sent round the world.

#### **Famine**

Properly speaking this phenomenon should be in the man-induced list of disasters which follows, but recently it has made the transition to the God-induced category of inevitable horrors beyond human intervention. The blunt fact is that famine is not a good disaster story to cover. There's usually too much of it. Reporters have to make costly journeys across whole continents to assess it. It turns out that millions are dying. Readers no longer feel comfortable with pictures of children with distended bellies, or peasants backed by the whited bones of their oxen. Furthermore, it turns out that people are going to go on dying—that famine threatens MILLIONS, and that millions may already be dead. Then the details about relief shipments of grain tend to blur on people, who grow impatient with these Indians and Africans and their interminable famines. So best on the whole to keep clear of actual famines in progress and dwell on famines to come. Talk of famines that will sweep across Asia, decimate Africa. Quote experts who feel only despair. Speak on the encroachment of the Sahara over hitherto fertile land. Attribute the catastrophe to the sacred cow of India which eats food which otherwise...or blame the African goat which munches vital vegetation. Above all, speak of the World Food Problem, and then start quoting United Nations surveys. In this way you will hurry the reader on to pleasanter subjects.

There are two further additions to the list of disasters for which humans cannot be called responsible by a vigilant press—namely comets and planetary collisions. But, let us go on to disasters for which humans can be made directly responsible.

(continued on page 15)



**Preserving Dignity  
On 43rd Street**

It has long been the practice of *The New York Times* to summarily tear the epaulets off convicted criminals by denying them the honorific "Mr." on second reference. Specifically, the newspaper's style book decrees: "In general... Mr. is not used with the names of persons who have been convicted of crime or have unsavory reputations known without question to be deserved." Fortunately for Spiro Agnew, whose \$10,000 fine and three-year suspended sentence for income tax evasion was scrupulously recorded in the *Times*, an escape clause in the style book notes that "there may be exceptions, which must be carefully decided."

Thus does the former vice president and envelope receiver retain a certain stature in the pages of the *Times* these days. "Part of my reasoning," explains managing editor A.M. Rosenthal, who made the careful decision, "is that in some sense continuation of the use of 'Mister' is a matter of respect for the office he once held and for the people who elected him to it. But my principal reason relates more to the tone and character of the *Times* than to the former vice president. I simply feel that it would be out of keeping with our own general style and tone to refer to a former President or Vice President without the honorific." Rosenthal says he reached this conclusion after speaking with a "whole bunch of editors" and "some reporters." Despite this laudable democratic process, however, some questions push up:

- Didn't the decision, as some of Rosenthal's colleagues argued, create one standard for Agnew, another for less celebrated criminals? "This is an interesting argument," says Rosenthal, "but a majority of those I talked to felt we would be downgrading ourselves [to omit the 'Mr.']."

- Doesn't the gesture imply that Agnew is less of a threat to the Republic than your average purse-snatcher? "It wasn't a judgment on Agnew. It was simply a matter of our own style."

- Wasn't it ironic that Agnew should escape not only incarceration but stylistic



Marty Jorman

disgrace? "Yes, it is ironic, there's no doubt about it. I could have avoided the whole argument and people would have said, 'Isn't it nice the *Times* applies its rules without fear or favor.' But neither fear nor favor was involved. It was a feeling—and it sounds terribly pompous, but there it is—for our own dignity, we still call him 'Mr. Agnew'."

- Wasn't the *Times* being deferential to the media's arch-enemy? "We're not being deferential to him. If anything we're being deferential to ourselves and our readers and the office. We didn't get anything out of it but criticism," says Rosenthal, pointing out that while some television stations liked the move, "the so-called underground press" and at least one of his sons didn't.

The *Times*' awe for men in high places prevailed, too, on Oct. 29, the day investigative reporter Nicholas Gage filed a long piece reporting that former Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst had told Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox "that President Nixon personally ordered him not to press a series of antitrust actions against International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation...." According to Gage's sources, John Ehrlichman called Kleindienst in 1971 and asked that the investigation be dropped. Kleindienst refused.

"Mr. Ehrlichman hung up," reads Gage's story, "and a short time later President Nixon called and, after calling him a vulgar name, said: 'Don't you understand the English language?' He then ordered that the [antitrust] appeal be halted, according to Mr. Kleindienst's account of the prosecution." What Gage's sources told him, and what he originally wrote, was that Nixon had said: "You son of a bitch. Don't you understand the English language?"

In this case, Rosenthal was not in on the decision and subsequently made it known that he regretted the excision. The [laundry apparently took place on the copy desk, though no one involved was willing to explain why.

—JIM KAPLAN

**Behind The Strike  
At The Daily News**

A seemingly pointless two-day strike last month by Newspaper Guild employees at the *Daily News*, overshadowed by simultaneous and more alarming walkouts by New York City firemen and hospital workers, has left many Guild members embittered not only towards management but also towards their union brethren at *The New York Times* as well as the paid leadership of the union local. *News* members say their effort was thoroughly undermined by the fact that less than six hours after their walkout began on Nov. 5, the *Times* unit reached a tentative and not very impressive settlement with management. Word of the agreement caught the pickets totally off guard, leaving them—as several put it—"shocked" and "stunned."

The Guild represents some 1,400 news, advertising, commercial and other employees at the *News*, and about 2,300 at the *Times*: During the talks that had been held periodically since the two-year contract expired March 30, the Guild's major concern had been job security to protect longtime employees against layoffs. The decision to strike the *News*, which was more resistant to this and other demands than the *Times* (discussions are continuing at the *New York Post*) was made by representatives of the *News* and *Times* units at a meeting Nov. 1. But even by Nov. 4, the eve of the strike, management appeared to be refusing to take the strike threat seriously. What it called a "final offer" was presented to Guild negotiators at 6:10 a.m., less than one hour before the walkout was scheduled to begin. The *News* unit blames John Deegan, the aging executive vice president of the Guild local, for failing to convince management of its determination to strike.

Members also hold Deegan mainly responsible for creating a situation whereby the paper that took the strike was not able to make the settlement. For once the *Times* contract was settled, *News* management announced that it "could live with" similar terms. It became obvious that the Guild unit would not be able to hold the craft unions which had backed it and enabled it to shut down the paper. On Nov. 7, more than 1,000 *News* Guild members gathered for a rancorous meeting during which they grudgingly approved the contract and seized the opportunity to vent their feelings against Deegan, whom they called an "assassin" and a "traitor." Deegan has insisted that he was unaware that the *Times* unit had resumed talks that Monday morning until almost the moment in which a settlement was reached. Spokesmen for the *News* unit, understandably, do not believe him. "We have a staff of professionals," says Dick Corkery of the Guild negotiating committee at the *News*. "They have let us down."

Why did the *Times* unit continue negotiations once the *News* was struck? Bernard Stein, *Times* unit chairman, refused to discuss

the talks except to say obliquely that "the unit is supposed to take direction from the local." But another member of the unit's negotiating team, who did not wish to be identified, said that after the strike began, representatives of management revealed that the paper had a commitment to shut down if the *News* was hit. According to this source, the *Times* Guild leadership was told that they would have to settle if they wanted the *Times* to remain open. During the next six hours they won what they considered significant gains: jobs would now be secure after 20 years instead of 25, as originally offered; a fifth week of vacation was added for veteran employees; the maternity clause was improved so that mothers on leave would not lose a year's seniority; and union security was strengthened. "We felt that now it was a pretty good contract," says the source on the committee, who maintains that while Deegan did not tell the group to suspend the discussions, he did not put pressure on them to settle, either.

This scenario—that the *Times* unit settled in order to avoid a shutdown—gains plausibility in light of two factors. On the second day of the strike, *Times* publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger announced that his paper would print the *News* in the event that it was not able to put out its Nov. 8 editions. Sulzberger's pledge, which would inevitably have resulted in a strike at the *Times*, indicates that, as they have in the past, the publishers had made a pre-strike pact to stick together.

In addition, the contracts with six other newspaper unions are still pending, the most worrisome of which is the printers'. At the moment, Bertram Powers, president of Typographical Union No. 6, has his hands tied by a temporary truce agreement between his International and the papers. Should the printers strike now, they might not be able to get benefits from the International. But if the *Times* had shut down, effecting a lockout, benefits would have accrued automatically. Once locked out, Powers and his men might well have stayed out until a contract agreement was reached—something that could have produced a lengthy shutdown. The *Times* unit, says the source on the negotiating committee, was not willing to take that risk. "Was it moral?" he asked, rhetorically. "It might have been immoral, but we were also aware of the consequences of the strike. Faced with that reality, the *Times* unit settled."

At both papers, the wage increase will be \$13.85 over the two years, a "spread" figure meaning that employees in lower job classifications will get less than those with top jobs. The \$13.85 figure matches the wage increase offered to and accepted by the mailers union, the first to settle its contract, and subsequently by the deliverers and machinists. Guild members are quick to point out that in exchange for the settlement, the mailers were able to get the *Times* to drop a \$230,000 lawsuit against them over a wildcat strike. At the *News* in particular, where money was a more important issue, many feel the \$13.85 was forced

upon them because of another union's lawsuit. Not accidentally, no doubt, the \$13.85 figure just happens to represent a 5.5 per cent increase over what a journeyman printer receives—exactly the wage hike specified by federal guidelines.

While the two units wound up with similar contracts, *Times* people managed to win more in the area of union security. A larger proportion of *Times* personnel currently exempted from Guild membership will now be required to pay the union an "agency fee," an amount equivalent to dues, if they refrain from joining. This means, of course, that they will be more likely to sign up. At the same time, neither unit made any inroads into the issue of stringers, the use of which especially rankles a number of *Times* reporters.

Although he concedes that few tangible gains were achieved by the strike, Peter McLaughlin, the leader of the *News* unit, doesn't think it was entirely wasted. As he sees it, the strike and the preceding talks solidified a previously moribund outfit. "I think we gained something," says McLaughlin. "Now management has to be aware that the Guild is alive and well at the *Daily News*."

TERRY PRISTIN

## The Suite Smell Of Excess

New York financial writers and the people they cover, the latter far outnumbering the former, sat and supped together Nov. 17 in the quasi-regal confines of the Hotel Americana's Imperial Ballroom. The occasion: the 1973 Financial Follies, an annual ritual of suites, steaks and skits put on by the New York Financial Writers Association.

The evening starts out and ends in hospitality suites, settings in which the executives and PR men of such organizations as Hill and Knowlton, ITT, Litton, RCA, Merrill Lynch and General Motors furnish ample amounts of canapes, liquor and *bonhomie*. These suites, especially for the PR firms, are a deadly serious business. Doremus, the largest Wall Street PR and advertising agency, had

between 400 and 500 persons—about half of the 900-odd attendees—pass by its bar in the Monte Carlo Suite.

But corporate largesse extends beyond a few drinks before and after the ball. Typically an editor or a reporter does not pay his own way (on a reporter's salary, attendance, it seems fair to speculate, would be limited at \$65 per ticket) but is the guest, directly or indirectly, of some firm or organization he or she covers—a practice, incidentally, which is not officially frowned upon by *Business Week*, *Forbes*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times* or *Dun's Review*.

Every year there is some grumbling—never for quotation, of course—that the whole affair is a bit of a hold-up. This year, Wall Street firms, which lost an aggregate \$165 million for the first nine months, had an excuse to beg off hosting, and the association had to put the arm on a number of corporations not on The Street in order to come close to the estimated break-even figure of 1,000 attendees.

The show itself, which came on top of *filet mignon Henri IV*, baked alaska and a fair amount of liquid refreshment *à table*, was much more of a critical success this year than last. Working with what was a year's worth of first-rate material for satire—the overall performance of Wall Street, Equity Funding, corporate political donations, ITT's sundry machinations, to name a few—many of the skits were fairly well done, one or two even brilliant. But one still walked away with the feeling that too many writers and not enough editors worked on the script.

So what comes out of an evening like this? Nothing obvious, nothing dramatic. A lot of financial writers, including some of the big names, stay away—some so they don't feel co-opted, others so they don't feel bored. It's all just too damned cozy, just a little too friendly, especially in the suites. No one is naive enough to put any real pressure on. It's the time for the gentle hustle. The "host" wants his guest to go away with the feeling—as they too often do—that "we know each other better now, and, under it all, we're all pretty good guys."

—NEWTON LAMSON

## The 1973 FINANCIAL FOLLIES

AMERICANA OF NEW YORK

NOVEMBER 16, 1973

**Scribes and Pharisees**

11

1010 WINS

New York Post

9

New York Amsterdam News

## How To Cover a Disaster in Ten Easy Stages

Let's cheer ourselves by contemplating a good disaster story, expertly handled, by London's *Daily Express*. It involved the mini-submarine that sank in the Atlantic last August.

First, a general word on the theory and practice of submarine disasters: along with mine disasters they can call out the best in the practiced news editor. The main virtue of both types of calamity is that they involve *duration*. Depending on the physical powers and financial resources of the rescuers, the story can last for up to a week. Submarine stories are in the end conditioned by the presumed amount of oxygen available to the trapped men, so if after a week no rescue has been effected the story tends to drift off the front page, since no one likes to read about the certainty that only decomposing corpses await discovery.

In the case of mine disasters this does not hold. First of all, there may be an *unknown source of air*. Secondly, the rescuers usually admit that they don't know whether anyone is alive anyway, owing to the presence in most mine disasters of methane gas. But excitement can be maintained, in between the moments when weary rescuers rise to the surface and fresh equipment is rushed in, by interviewing the wives and taking pictures of them, and by attacking the owners of the mine, responsible for its deplorable condition. (Mines are always in a deplorable condition. Owners always attribute the accident to negligence by the miners.)

In the case of submarines, almost all of which are owned by the navy, it is ordinarily difficult to know whether one has sunk at all. Thank heaven for the fact that *Pisces III* was a civil submarine, and consequently we were able to get the story.

**Stage One:** Statement of proposition by the *Express*, under the head, LIFE LINE.

Rescue teams were being gathered by sea and air early today to save two men trapped in a mini-submarine 1,375 ft down on the Atlantic bed. In the submarine Roger Mallinson, aged 35, and Roger Chapman, 28, were in touch with the surface by telephone over a frail line linked through a buoy to a watching ship.

Note the use of "frail." Already the reader is alerted that catastrophe might loom.

**Stage Two:** Initial statement of confidence by rescuers. This is essential on the first day. No one likes to feel there is no hope, otherwise why go on reading. Thus,

"They are in good spirits and send their regards to their wives," said their boss, Mr. Peter Messervy, at Cork, Eire, last night. He added, "We know we can bring them out alive."

**Stage Three:** So far so good, but there is one question every reader is asking. The *Express* is there with the answer.

Main problem is their oxygen: Estimates varied, but it was thought that they could hold out till some time on Saturday. The main rescue force should be on the spot tonight—allowing less than 48 hours to carry out a dangerous operation in bad weather.

Excellent: it is now Thursday, so we have guaranteed reader interest for three days and also the worry: will rough seas (which are always rough in such situations) permit a daring rescue? "All they can do," says Messervy ominously, "is to breathe very gently."

**Stage Four:** The wives must have their turn. Pamela Mallinson said, "He is not the sort of chap to panic. He's exceptionally experienced. Very sensible." Mrs. Mallinson said their two boys and a

# DAILY EXPRESS

Saturday September 1 1973

Weather: Cloudy, mainly dry

Price 3p



4 am

## DESPERATE LAST HOPE

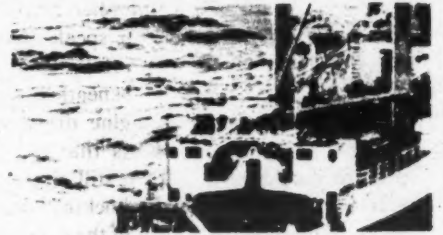


Roger Mallinson



Roger Chapman

As time runs out  
Vickers chief tells  
of plan to  
dredge up the  
mini-sub crew



girl had been told. Similar confidence is expressed by June Chapman: "I'm not too worried because I know everything possible is being done." Schooled disaster readers know what this is: *hubris*. And *hubris* is compounded by the wretched Messervy: "The rescue should be a straightforward operation." This is all we get from Thursday's report, barring detail about the rescue subs being flown in.

**Stage Five:** The second day. The headline tells the reader at once that things are still going well. CONTACT! AND SUB RESCUE STARTS. It is not even the main head in the paper, so confident are the rescuers. Nevertheless there is no skimping on the story. Needless to say,

Today is Mallinson's thirty-fifth birthday—and as he received greetings from his wife and children by radio he confidently expected to be having a celebration breakfast with us on top by the time the sun comes up—Champagne was ready on the mother ship *Vickers Voyager* as she arrived over the rescue area and began immediate recovery operations.

Overweening confidence still prevails. Messervy is still saying, "It is a fairly straightforward job." "Lots of food, lots of water, lots of air," reported 28-year-old Chapman. Several hundred miles away their wives too had to sit and wait.

**Stage Six:** Day Three. A very different situation now, and one the readers have all been waiting for. It's the main headline again: "4 AM. LAST DESPERATE HOPE. RESCUE DRAMA NEARS THE END. Switch-on vigil by mother who prays. As time runs out, chief tells of plan to dredge up the mini-sub crew." It turns out that Messervy and his men have goofed: two rescue subs have failed to make contact. Various essential rituals now take place. First of all the wives: "Pamela said, 'It's an ordeal we can't stand much longer. I just pray Roger and his mate don't give up hope!'" Secondly, the boss of the whole outfit must now display grim determination and symbolize the collective efforts of all the rescuers. It turns out that Sir Leonard Redshaw is at home on the mainland, but "he has been in constant radio touch with the team;" furthermore "Sir Leonard is looking strained and weary from keeping watch." The scene is set for the crucial announcement.

**Stage Seven:** "Sir Leonard disclosed that

Chapman had two-thirds of a bottle of oxygen left, which meant that noon today was the zero hour for 'termination of life support.'" This looks very bad, and Sir Leonard rapidly makes it worse:

He added: Mr. Mallinson has had a very personal message passed to him from his wife. And everyone's thoughts went out to the two men, watching their clock tick away and their oxygen counter inexorably falling.

**Stage Eight:** The last desperate bid.

A final and desperate plan to 'dredge' the trapped mini-submarine was being prepared early today. It was, said Sir Leonard, a pretty grim decision. It would have to be quite ruthless. All or nothing.

Readers of the *Express* spend a restless day. Will it be the slow decline of the story to page 3, then 4 and then as the days pass, to page 10, as "hope dwindles for trapped men" and "still hope, says wife" and finally "A mother's agony as all hope vanishes. Wives lash out at Vickers chief." But no! God is good and so we have a final dramatic

**Stage Nine:** Day Four. Headline: TWO COOL GUYS COME UP FOR AIR. They have made it.

By all calculations on the surface the two men should have run out of oxygen before the rescue was completed. But when they popped up from the seabed they were looking fit enough to play football. Thirty-five year old Mallinson revealed that while on the bottom they had received a message from the Queen. "She wished us all the best," he said.

It is over now and all we want is a quote from the wife.

**Stage Ten:** "If anything, this has given me more confidence about my husband going under water again." The natural order of things is reasserted. But not for long. Five weeks later the *Express* readers are once again plunged into drama. This time: "Upside down rescue drama for seven men in dredger. POSEIDON TRAP. 'This could be dangerous for everyone,' said a grim-faced rescuer. 'We cannot tell what condition the trapped men are in, or how much air they have left.' . . . As rescue work went on, amid rough seas naturally, 'the question remained. Could the trapped men hold out through the long cold night?' But that's another story.

—A.C.



### Housing Collapses

Very good story. Rescuers clawing again at the rubble. Note the seconds of warning. Emphasize incredible good fortune of those who went shopping moments before the tragedy. Rapidly produce evidence that the building had been declared unsafe. Animadvert on culpability and venality of landlords, laxity of urban officials. Stress grave condition of the poor. Report kindness of local religious missions in taking in homeless. The miracle of Towser, the dog that survived. If possible, have grim-faced mayor on the scene. If need be, have him "personally take charge." Always a bad sign. See accounts of the collapse of Broadway Central Hotel earlier this year. A fine performance by all New York media, right down to the dog that was adopted by the local firehouse.

### Train Crashes

Always good, particularly if the crash occurs in a tunnel. Speak of the quiet heroism of ordinary people and lack of panic. Or speak of panic and hysteria. Have people cheerfully chatting with rescuers as they lie trapped beneath the wreckage. In almost all cases the engine driver has been killed; if so, produce reports that the train was speeding dangerously. If he is still alive, hold back such comment. Speak of shocking state of the tracks, and unsafe condition of the cars. Have a few priests on hand. Normally one or two deaths and many injured.

### Airplane Crashes

Waning in favor. There now has to be some extra ingredient, apart from the mere fact of mass death. Is it the first jumbo jet to go down? Was there a famous person on board? Did some famous person almost go on board? Did the crash take place near a mountain top, in which case snow and rain always impedes the rescuers. Did it appear to try and land? Did the pilot try to broadcast a last message, or was radio contact abruptly lost? Has the black box been recovered? Is sabotage feared? Is wreckage scattered over a large area? Did it almost crash on top of a city? How likely is it that a plane will crash on Manhattan? Speak of inevitability of crashes as traffic increases. But not to excess, since too many people now fly by plane and the airlines are good advertisers.

### Fires

Essential to cover them, but are people trapped? Is arson suspected? Particularly good when people have to jump from high windows. Have background on menace of fire in high-rise buildings. The *Daily News* is strong on fires. TEN FEARED DEAD IN HOBOKEN BLAZE read one headline last fall. Beneath it:

The fire flared at 1:10 a.m. and within minutes engulfed all four buildings... Jose Lopez, 18, said people on the first floor ran into the hallway to help those trapped above, but the stairs were already burning. Jose says he saw Juana Requeno jump. 'She had to jump, she was burning up,' he said...."

The *News* added that the fire was "of suspicious origin." Suggestions of arson always pep up such stories.

### Shipwrecks

These can be superb. Stress insufficiency of lifeboats. Terrible seas, hindering rescue; incapacity of captain/heroism of captain. Ugly riots in the steerage. The flames and smoke from the engine room that gradually consume the ship. Stress insurance value and possible claims. Have at least ten ships steaming to the scene. Ferryboats are particularly dramatic if they sink. For example, this account of a Greek ferryboat disaster in the *Sunday Times* of London:



**EARTHQUAKES:** Make sure to get a picture of one building still standing (usually a church in Roman Catholic countries or a mosque in Muslim ones).\*

Several of the dazed survivors whose voyage back from a Greek holiday turned into a nightmare bitterly attacked some of the officers and crew. They alleged lack of directions and failure of the lifeboat system... Giuseppe Gentile, a 59-year-old fisherman from Monopoli, picked up five bodies and twenty survivors. He said, "There were so many people in the sea that it was impossible to get near them because they were all trying to scramble aboard. I saw at least one lifeboat that had been smashed."

Two familiar themes here: charges against the officers (which they will later deny) and panic among the passengers over the lifeboats. Judging by such reports, it seems best to avoid lifeboats altogether and "cling to a piece of drift wood."

### Assassination

Counts as a disaster. Follow established procedures, such as eyewitnesses, actual murder on television. Do not forget the security guard or close friend hammering the ground or wall with his fist shouting, "No, No, No!" Have vigil in hospital if health permits. Explain that Critical is worse than Dangerously Ill. Make sure that doctors have stethoscopes. Picture wife in waiting room. Speak of effects on nation. Run articles on gun control (if assassination takes place in U.S.), otherwise speak of tradition of violence in whatever country you

happen to be in. Always have someone saying, "My God, what is happening to our country."

### Plague

Generally only happens in the East. Usually "hushed up." Fact of life in India due to sanitary habits of the population and dead bodies in the Ganges. Stress acts of selfless heroism by Catholic missionaries. Occasionally warn that plague may sweep the earth.

### Genocide

Perpetrated these days by African tribes. Have reports "trickling through" of senseless slaughter, by the Hutu or the Tutsis. Watch for Ruanda or the Congo. Always a good chance for a reporter to come back with an exclusive genocide story. Discount appeals for UN intervention, pointing out that it is an internal matter for the country concerned.

\*Actual UPI caption to this picture—filed Dec. 26, 1972—reads "MANAGUA, NICARAGUA: Cathedral stands intact amidst rubble in center of the city of Managua. The city was hit by a devastating earthquake, Dec. 23rd, which killed untold thousands and left 90 per cent of the population without shelter." It's gratifying to have my disaster rules confirmed. [MORE] turned up this picture after I'd delivered my story. The UPI caption head read: CHURCH WITHSTANDS QUAKE.—A.C.



**THE ULTIMATE:** *Drama is all, and distance is the great anesthetist. Late in the 1930s, the London Times reported in a terse paragraph that, "More than five million people are believed to have lost their lives in the Yellow River floods." How could the fate of those indiscriminate millions rank against those who perished in the crash of the Hindenburg, one of the century's famous disasters where 36 people died and 62 survived?*

#### **Nuclear Holocaust**

Discounted these days, but just to keep readers on their toes, quote an expert every six months or so as saying that the dangers of nuclear holocaust have never been greater. Then turn off tap by talking about SALT.

No doubt many readers will have their own favorite disasters, to which they may feel I have not done justice. What about the stock market, or of the eco-catastrophe that threatens mankind? Just add them to the list, but in the meantime a cautionary word about numbers.

News editors should remember that there are large parts of the world in which people simply do not exist in groups of less than 50,000. Before getting to these hordes, let us start at the top. The death of one famous American can always be recorded, however tedious the circumstances of his or her demise. If the American is not famous or noted in some way, at least two or three have to die (or one in very odd circumstances) to be worth attention. In the case of blacks the numbers escalate at once.

In the next category come northern Europeans. Count about ten of them for every one American. Then we have southern Europeans (Italians, Spaniards, Portuguese, Greeks). Count about thirty of these for every one American. Then

Turks, Persians, and Latin Americans. Count about 100 of these for every one American. Some perfectionists would include north Africans in this category.

Next, southeast Asians. Two to three hundred for every one American. Some would include Indonesians here. I fancy, since 800,000 were slaughtered in the coup without undue fuss, that the count here is about 1,000 to 1. Indeed, we have reached the limits of number, because in the next category we have hordes without number.

Indians, Africans and Chinese. No sense of number is involved at all. People only start to focus if we speak of 50,000 to 100,000. Indeed experts have calculated that roughly 50,000 Indians are equal in terms of news value (relative to their terminal experiences) to ten Americans. And certain groups are excluded altogether: Canadians, Australians and Scandinavians, since they are never visited by disasters; also Soviet bloc countries, because their disasters are covered up. Obviously the sense of number that people have about the Soviet Union is that millions were killed in the purges, and millions were killed in the war. Little else counts. The Japanese now occupy equivocal status. At the moment they are both numberless and also singular, representing the rapid rise of their country's financial fortunes.

The fact is—within the basic rules outlined above—that number counts for nothing in the theory and practice of disasters, so far as the media is concerned. Drama is all, and distance the great anesthetist. Late in the 1930s, the *London Times* reported in a terse paragraph that, "More than five million people are believed to have lost their lives in the Yellow River floods." How could the fate of those indiscriminate millions rank against those who perished in the crash of the Hindenburg, one of the century's famous disasters where 36 people died and 62 survived?

**A**t first sight there seems to be a kind of haphazard and immoral frivolity in the media's approach to disaster. Why should an earthquake in Managua receive more attention than the Christmas bombing of Hanoi? Why has the present famine in northeast Africa scarcely been mentioned? Evidently part of the reason is that the media, conservative in outlook and performance, always tend to confuse the inevitable with the intolerable: avoidable famine—or devastation by high explosive—comes to appear as ineluctable as an earthquake; tragedy supersedes evil. In political idiom, disasters, so far as the media are concerned,

*(continued on page 21)*

# Giving TV Back to the Indians

BY SHEILA CHARAS

It's November of 1972, two years since the big "Alternatives in Communications Media" conference at Syracuse University, and after a long summer's labor to pull wires through the campus, Synapse is born, a one-inch videotape studio linked to a do-it-yourself cable system, built without the resources of any commercial cable company, and designed to provide open community access to its equipment, which includes a many-dialed color effects board and nine Port-a-pak videotape recorders—one more node in the neural network that is alternate television.

In December, Creative Artists Public Service Program (CAPS) grant applicants who come together at Synapse for a ten-day "Video-stream" workshop are among the roomful of "media freaks" who hear South Dakota medicine men Wallace Black Elk and Leonard Crow Dog of the Rosebud Reservation bless the new cable system and urge that "the people... responsible for all this radio and television and communication send messages, good messages, to our American people." The following spring, American Indian Movement leaders capture Media America itself at Wounded Knee, and millions watch Leonard Crow Dog on the Dick Cavett Show, strong medicine indeed.

The broadcast TV audience has long since switched off on the Oglala Sioux, but the effort to

*Sheila Charas is a computer programmer and freelance writer.*

**Somehow, alternative television's radical manipulation of others' self-perception seems as brutal when justified by "art" or "process" as it does when the motivation is purely commercial.**

give Media America back to the Indians goes on, proclaiming alternate technologies as the only permanent access solution for the alternate culture and special interest group people whom underground video makers feel are locked out or exploited by the networks: freaks, street kids, Lesbian mothers, criminals, old people, mental patients, the deaf, transsexuals—a Diane Arbus sensibility prevails on the often deliberately artless and redundant tapes ("slickness" is anathema) made by and about these people. Without it, too many of the tapes would be utterly tedious.

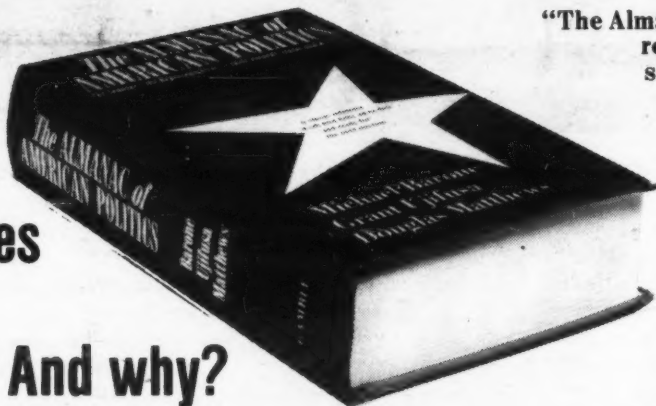
But the underground media establishment itself—in the New York area it's the Videofreex with their Media Bus (they now live communally in

Lanesville, N.Y.), Global Village, the Raindance Corporation, and the Kitchen—and the public access groups like Sterling Cable's Video Access Center, Open Channel, and the Alternate Media Center at New York University, keep on with the work of producing and improving alternate television content, and encouraging wider participation in their premises. For the most part they reject the contradiction between the ideals of high access and excellence, partly by refusing to define a "good" tape in broadcast terms. After all, isn't even lumpy homemade bread better than that plastic stuff in the supermarkets?

FCC standards for broadcast signal quality are seen as "a form of censorship" along with the "objective stance" and "professionalism" of network newscasters, and the "bullshit rigidity" of commercial television's scripted formats. A case in point: WNET's TV Lab, one network group which does work closely with the alternate television people, has to pay off its union crews in order to show half-inch video. (Broadcast standards require the signal quality of two-inch "quad" tapes.) Another: the non-union video crews can't get press passes. Without them, they are at a distinct disadvantage; even the McGovern organization was known, with CBS and NBC on the scene, to leave them standing out in the rain.

Snipe, snipe, snipe. The establishment, a sitting duck, keeps flapping its wings as the paradox remains: what good is access if you are talking to yourself once you have it? Alternate

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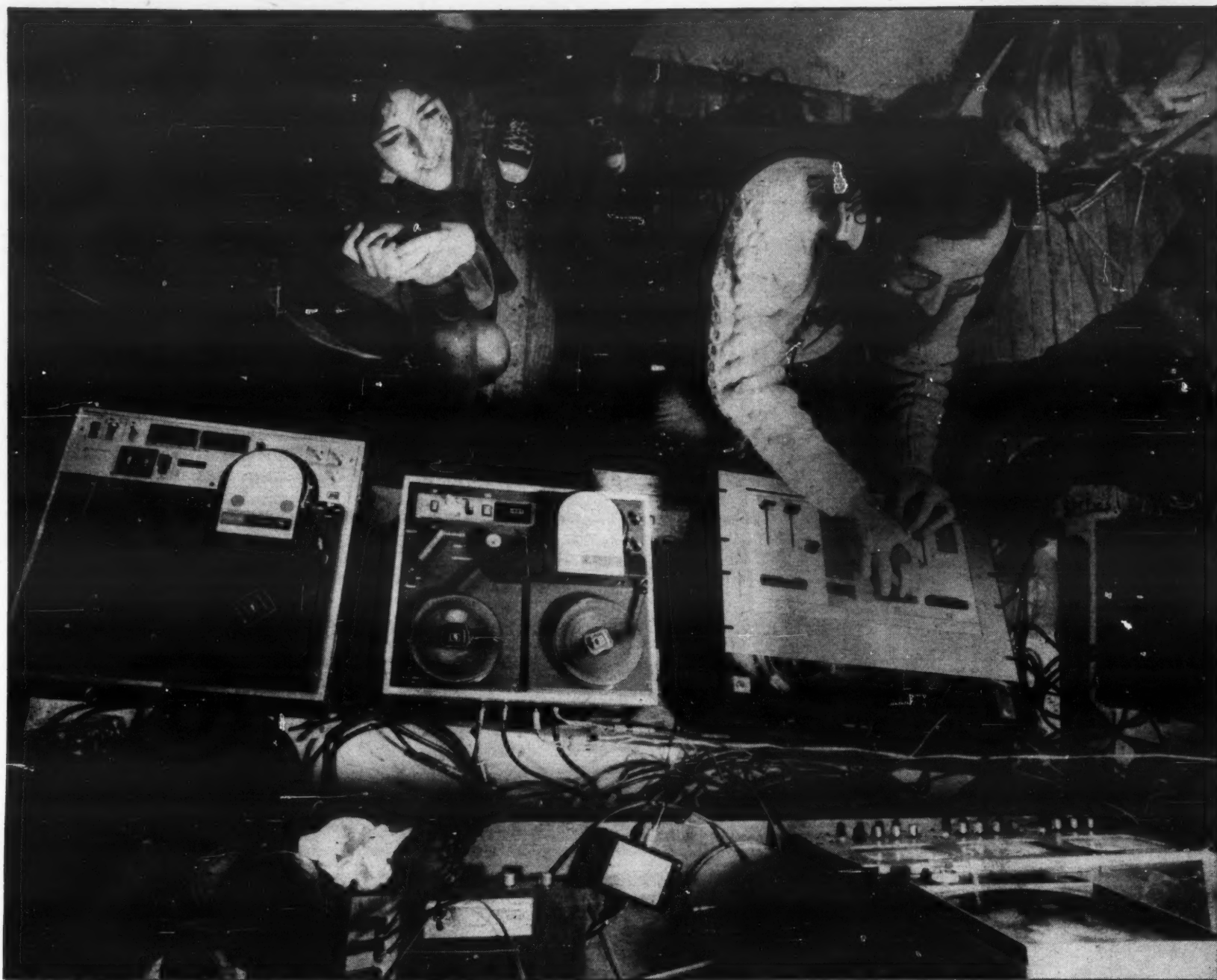
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The tape-it-yourself technology on which most of alternative television is based did not exist until 1968, when Sony put the first fully portable videotape camera and playback equipment on the American market.

Global Village

television has yet to find much of an audience, even for the tapes now being broadcast over public access cable channels. And it has had to look for that audience with the help of established sources of funding (biased toward large-scale projects and academic structures) and publicity (even Raindance uses old-fashioned print for its *Radical Software*, a publication with about 700 subscribers which has been, since 1970, a major source of information for and about the video underground). If and when a no longer passive audience for alternate TV does materialize, it is likely to have some ideas of its own about what it wants to look at and why.

**B**oth the pitfalls and possibilities for alternate television were obvious early this fall during a ten-day-long Women's Video Festival at the Kitchen, a multi-media theatre funded by the New York State Council on the Arts, and one of the few places in New York where people without cable service can see alternate TV. (John Reilly's Global Village, on Broome Street, is another.) Coordinating the festival with Kitchen director Shridar Bapat and Patti Hazan was Syracuse Videostream veteran Susan Milano, a dark, vivacious young tape-maker who, like Shridar, once worked with Reilly, and now runs the video program at the Women's Interart Center. She

talked frankly about the difficulties inherent in a truly "open" festival: so many of the tapes, all made by women although not necessarily about them, were bad. Susan feels committed to having this work be seen, yet she says this may be the last open festival she runs.

Still, several dozens of people were showing up each night to lounge on a foam sculpture—one hairy, foetal-looking little man got so comfortable that he took off his socks—and watch tapes like "Superdream Dream Clackers," "I Sold My Car for a Port-a-pak," "Karma," "Confessions of An Adolescent Murderer" (a superbly documented ten minutes of horror), "Video Songs for Navajo Sky," and "Votes for Women" (a feminist's-eye view of the 1972 Democratic National Convention, in which Gloria Steinem and other people sing a lot—"I'm tired of fuckers fucking-over me"—and an Indian woman speaks movingly about her people's plight). All this on two banks of monitors, whose out-of-sync images were in themselves a perceptual trip.

One evening was For Women Only; if you were female, you could see a tape about gynecological self-help and a Lesbian documentary made by a group which calls itself Vulva Video. On another evening, avant-gardiste Charlotte Moorman did a live video performance of "Crotch Music," in which she attached balloons, aerosol cans, and other objects to the crotches of twenty

males in the audience, presumably a more liberated woman than she was in 1969 at the Howard Wise gallery, when she played Dick Cavett's opening monologue on her cello while wearing what must have been that season's most bizarre bra: a tiny TV monitor strapped to each of her otherwise bare breasts.

**T**he tape-it-yourself technology on which most of these assays are predicated did not even exist until 1968, when Sony put the first fully portable videotape camera and playback equipment on the American market, liberating television from the studio environment, and making possible the current involvement in street television and video verite by media activists. The basic black and white Port-a-pak system, which sells for between \$1,600 and \$1,700 today, uses half-inch-wide Mylar tape to record light and sound information electronically, rather than chemically as in film, and therefore cheaply (as little as \$15 for thirty minutes worth, and like any magnetic tape, it's reusable) and instantly—there's nothing to develop, another cost-cutting factor. In addition, the Port-a-pak cameras are so easy to operate that even ten-year-olds can and do shoot with them; a New York grammar school class is broadcasting its tapes over the cable right now.

With the addition of an editing deck (\$1,000



Peter Simon

In a class by herself is Shirley Clarke, the tough, brilliant dancer and filmmaker, who sees media not as a mere extension of man but as necessary for humane behavior in a post-electronic world.

to \$1,500), a candy-box-sized special effects generator or "mixer" (\$600 and up), and one or more monitors (\$250), the pure video potential grows: instant replay capability allows people to react immediately to information about themselves, and ideally to control it; feedback lets them interact in real time with the television image itself. Or, live and taped images may be superimposed, shown simultaneously on several monitors (multi-channel programming), wiped (split screen effects), faded, negatively keyed (black and white reversed), colorized and time delayed. But image manipulation of this kind appeals mostly to the often highly seminal video makers like Nam June Paik, Eric Siegel, and Steina and Woody Vasulka, whose main orientation is abstract, and to conceptual artists like Peter Campus or those in the Castelli stable, who use video without really being part of the alternate television movement.

In a class by herself is Shirley Clarke, the tough, brilliant dancer and filmmaker whose current work as head of the Videospace Troupe, supported by the New York State Council on the Arts and a \$20,000 grant from the Museum of Modern Art, anticipates what she calls the "World Communications Web," a network of two-way video technology that will enable "anyone to produce his own inputs to be mixed with feeds from

other spaces/places." She considers videotape as only another possible feed into this mix; it does not interest her to "edit" it like film. For her purposes, the live camera is essential, but even with it, "we don't look *through* lenses anymore—we look at what we are doing."

Fascinated with the occult—her bookshelves are crammed with works on witchcraft, Satanism, and the Tarot—she conjures with a world of electronic play in which the witch doctor (artist) will be reunited with the community (participating audience) for their first collective magic dance since the fall of Early Tribal Civilizations: the result, not rain, but a revolution in consciousness, a revision to our notions of time and space, psyche and soma. For Shirley the video image of herself is part of her body. "I could dance with it, as it were." Like many of the most advanced media thinkers, she goes beyond McLuhan (though her vocabulary is full of him) to a crucial acceptance of media not as mere extension of man but as *necessary* for humane behavior in a post-electronic world: the third eye, with which we are to look at our own experience, has revealed itself to be an electronic beam.

Her home is her T.P., a television playpen, a soaringly pointed tower on top of the Chelsea Hotel which is at once both architectural (physical) space and video (electronic) space. With junction boxes and monitors all around, plus a patchboard

and switches, there is no place, not even in the roof garden, where she must step outside the video continuum. Even the view from the window is video, as the rooftops of Manhattan float, mysterious and beautiful, caught in Shirley's "head ball," a spherical television globe of Italian design.

About a mile south of the T.P., in one of

Soho's old commercial buildings, Global Village director and first generation video maker John Reilly is far less spacy in his conception of social change through human feedback. Global's "Lifestyles," an "experiment in living the process of video," is not only a feedback tape in the technical sense of using a recycled electronic signal (e.g., we see a tape on a monitor as part of the tape we are viewing on another monitor), but is also an almost terrifying demonstration of video's self-reflective potential. One of its main subjects is Nancy, whom we see both in her twenty year role as wife and mother, Italian-American style, and—with her glasses on—examining that role in a videotaped exchange with another woman tapemaker. Her husband Joey watches and comments on the strange video-Nancy, while the "real" Nancy tries, before our eyes, to reintegrate her contradicting selves.

Unlike the Louds, Nancy and Joey divorce off-camera, but despite Reilly's insistence on the family's "process" involvement in editing the tapes, some troubling questions about the power of media psuedoevents to accelerate and alter our commonplaces refuse to go away. Is the kind of contrived perceptual situation toward which Reilly

guided his students *really* better than broadcast media attempts to mess with our heads, or is it merely the same bullshit, reshaped? Somehow the radical manipulation of another's self-perception seems as brutal when justified by "art" or "process" as it does when the motivation is purely commercial. Perhaps only love will do, and even media guru Dr. Caleb Gattegno knows that one "cannot say 'I love you' through television."

Some of the same questions concern George Stoney, who together with Mrs. Red Burns heads New York University's Alternate Media Center, which was established in 1971 with a \$275,000 grant from the Markle Foundation, and has since received \$10,000 worth of equipment from Sterling Cable. Stoney feels that the use of video has enlightened his attitude toward journalistic responsibility, brought him up short and made him wonder. When his neighborhood auxiliary police organization gave him an innocent *carte blanche* to record them in a state of Keystone cop disorganization ("I can't go out tonight—somebody stole my badge"), he put a blunt question to himself: "Well, Stoney, who the hell are you?" Refusing to "rip them off," he came back another night, and showed them as they wanted to

be seen on a tape meant to help them recruit block watchers, but also effective in helping them see themselves as a lopsided, mostly white group. The truth? A composite of all these things, not the product of any one person's "objectivity."

The Center's work in Manhattan has gotten its video people into the lives of several of the city's communities. The Alternate Media Center tape catalog documents the experience in Washington Heights, the borough's most heavily cabled area, where project members tried to play back what they shot immediately, to erase any taped material if asked to by the subjects, and to teach people to shoot their own tapes before a pattern of dependency developed. In many cases the video people had difficulty with their own tendency to manipulate: "We were trying to get a community to examine itself, when they had no interest in doing so." Some people did not even want to see the tapes of themselves, or when they did see them were only amazed that anyone would watch such stuff on the cable when they could see a good ballgame instead. And when issue-oriented material developed at one point during the project, the urge for a good story took over: "Our journalistic spirits wouldn't let us turn it over to the amateurs." But an opposite breakdown in discipline is also possible. The crew of a different project "became very much involved with the problems of the [NYU Rights of Minors] conference itself and were forced to face questions as to the difference between covering an event as an audio-visual service and being involved in it."

Stoney himself seems unusually honest in his effort to develop the humanistic potential of public access, without seeing cable as panacea or himself as anything more than a facilitator. He feels that alternate television will find its audience most readily in small coherent communities where a geographic need for cable ensures the penetration needed for effectiveness. (The Center's work in Reading, Pa. and Cape May, N.J. has been notable.) In fact, he isn't really sure that we need "the wired nation," and still allows for the possibility of using the existing media structure in better ways. A two-way cable system, he says, would cost us hundreds of millions to ignore simpler means (telephone lines, for example) of achieving the same ends: "Only the military have been so irresponsible with funds." And he is even skeptical of his own fascination with mediated communication. "That's what we've done to ourselves—we need a \$2,000 rig to talk to one another, when true communication should end with a handshake or a kiss."

The "rig" indeed may be the rub. Most obviously, no one hooked on video stays content for long with a Port-a-pak: when \$20,000 worth of equipment begins to seem inadequate, battles for a piece of the foundation action, family ripoffs and commercial sell-outs become an inevitable corrosive to the alternate television community. Cassette manufacturers, for example, are already beginning to buy up the rights to a lot of good video software. Despite the tape producers' rhetoric about the need to control their own distribution structures, plans at the Kitchen and elsewhere for non-profit distribution systems have yet to get off proposal paper.

But that's only Catch 21. The triumph of greed is, after all, an old, almost reassuring story; the triumph of technology is newer and more disturbing. In 1969, Nam June Paik, quoted by John Margolies in *Art in America*, was already prepared to sell his video hardware to buy the ultimate media Nirvana: "I am tired of TV now. TV is passe. Next comes the direct contact of electrodes to the brain cells, leading to electronic Zen." Oh, Tonto, Tonto, where are you now when we need you most?

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# COLUMN TWO

(continued from page 2)

ultimately recoil from the consummate vulgarity of capitalism. And you'll learn, in passing, that Xmas catalogues are unregenerately pornographic and sexist, and, as if that weren't enough, guilty of misleading advertising as well.

The snitzy catalogues from reputable houses and department stores are neither tacky nor fraudulent, of course. But if you flee from the gross bad taste of, say, *The Sunset House* (Beverly Hills, Calif.) catalogue—"Chopper Hoppers for folks with removable smiles...the last word in bedtime service. Wind the clock, put out the cat—and place your dental plates inside the jolly figurine containers. . . . Hoppers in Papa or Mama versions, \$1.89 each"—to find truth and beauty in a more elegant catalogue, you're likely to be disappointed. Chopper Hoppers are silly and sad and hokey, but hardly more vulgar than a Computer Bar (\$1,800, serves up to 47 drinks automatically) into which you "put a punched card into the slot and automatically, up comes your favorite drink blended to precise bartender portions." Or a Performer Synthesizer/Modulator—"no need for years of musical study, no skills required, produces sounds of all instruments (\$1,350)." Or, for that matter, a Surf and Rain Sleep Sound machine that simulates "the pattern of surf and the sound of rain" to "promote sleep and relaxation." My own feeling is that anyone who could afford to shell out \$75 for that particular fancy could also probably afford an ocean or at the very least a cloud-seeder of his or her very own. . . . or maybe it's one of those guilt-gifts (the kind you'd bring to your aging mother if you'd just shut her away in a nursing

## Death . . .

(continued from page 16)

serve a reactionary function in the sense that they represent catastrophe reduced to tolerable proportions.

On the one hand disasters represent the opaque workings of providence, on the other they symbolize the folly and wickedness of man. Voltaire could not countenance a God that permitted the Lisbon earthquake to occur—but most people cannot endure an impersonally malign universe. People cannot, at some sympathetic level distinct from mere indifference, confront squarely a world in which millions can and do die of hunger or disease. By deploying the ancient rituals and idioms of disaster coverage the media blunt and control such basic horrors.

Disasters are what is wrong with the world. What the media do, in carefully forged language, is to immunize people against horror by devaluing it. So in the end the soothing distress of misfortune befalling other people is something that readers and viewers begin to crave, starting at the simple level of relief that it is happening somewhere else to someone else.

The distress is soothing since most people, even in advanced industrial countries, expect disaster to befall them. On the superstitious level, as a symbol of such neurotic apprehension, such fears emerge in the disaster coverage of truly popular papers such as the *National Enquirer*, which deal in the idiom of planetary collision, or the menacing onrush of Kohoutek; on a more respectable level it emerges in such mechanism of disaster coverage as the Dow Jones index, a kind of cardiogram of national apprehension, a *momento mori* of when disaster can finally come home.

home).

When I was little, I was taken into "the city" and allowed to gaze at Tiffany's windows for a treat. I wondered then why Tiffany's copied the Brooklyn Woolworth's rhinestone designs. I'm still wondering. If anyone needs to be reminded that price is no index to good taste, I recommend a week's wallow in Christmas catalogues. . . . a mere glance at which will also serve to prove irrefutably that this entire country is anally fixated. In one catalogue that specializes in inexpensive—*cheap*—gift items (*Hanover House*, Hanover, Penna.) I found, among others, the following bathroom items: A Bathroom Radio/Tissue Holder ("Houses a fine fidelity radio especially for the 'John'"); Talking Toilet ("It's wild! A toilet that talks! A real ingenious gadget that installs easily on the throne. When friend innocently sits down a deep gruff voice says, 'Hey! I'm working down here,' or 'Move over, you're blocking the light.' Any pressure on seat activates tape to speak—\$6.98"); Let Ye Tissue Greetings Role ("toilet tissue gaily decorated with comic holiday cartoons and jolly greetings, 89c each"); a "Wee Boy" Switch Plate that glows in the dark and illustrates, with graphic emphasis on male anatomy, what it is you came in there to do, just in case you forgot (98c); and a year's supply of sanitary commode covers "for that germfree trip away from home."

This year's catalogues are also more law-and-order paranoid than ever: An incredible variety of safety locks and burglar traps and sirens, a Currency Checker (\$1.49) which is an "amazing new little device that has a built-in magnifying lens so you can compare suspected bills you receive with the genuine article," and—my favorite—a Bra Bank that "snaps onto bra so your cache of cash stays safely out of sight of pick pockets and purse snatchers."

The merchants are betting that paranoia items will sell well this year; but they haven't given up on the staples of years past—religion and pornography. The sleazy catalogues (which have, by the way, some marvellous utilitarian gadgets in them, super stocking stuffers for kids, and much lower prices for comparative articles than the classy catalogues) all do something I can't believe is entirely accidental or coincidental. If they have, say, an ad for Striptease Soapcakes on one page ("There's a girl in your soap. . . . as you take off the dirt she takes off her skirt—and then some"), they inevitably have, on the facing page, an ad for something like Hands Clapsed in Perpetual Prayer ("Bless This House played by the skillfully concealed musical works"). Somewhere in this country there's a red-blooded, Sunday-go-to-church man who's reading his Heirloom Family Bible (\$15.95) through his Bottoms Up Rose Colored Sexy-Shaped Eyeglasses (modestly described as having a "bawdy" shape). (I can't quite bring myself to describe these particular \$2.79 horrors—if I tell you that the glasses terminate in high heels that tuck behind the ears you'll get the general idea.) It's worth noting that in years past, one saw ads for little plaster statuettes of alligators gobbling up black men; there isn't anything remotely like that in this year's offerings, not a single racist joke. But it's still possible to buy ashtrays that allow men the pleasure of crushing cigarettes out between plaster facsimiles of women's breasts.

By such items I was, needless to say, untempted. But it's amazing how my judgment was

corrupted by the classy catalogues. About F.A.O. Schwarz I will say nothing except that I have probably permanently damaged my children's social consciousness—a 2-page order form proved not to be long enough. I've behaved as if Bankamericard charges were Monopoly money and I hope they extend my credit limit. Bewitched by the exquisite photography in the catalogue of Paragon—a Rhode Island mail-order house—I bought a crystal bud vase for a friend of mine who is allergic to everything that grows in soil. I bought a Droll Yankee Bird Feeder for a gentleman farmer in Maine, which is reasonable on the face of it; but I remembered, as soon as I'd sent in my check, that the last time I visited his farmhouse it looked like the set for Hitchcock's *The Birds* and we spent the entire weekend constructing a diabolical scarecrow to frighten the wretched things away. I could go on.

On the other hand, nice things happen: I would never have thought of buying an old-fashioned snow scene in a dome—those magical things you used to love when you were a kid. . . . you turn them upside down and snowflakes fall?—for one of the three people I love best in the world until I saw it in Hammacher Schlemmer. It's perfect. I think. If he doesn't love it, I'll kill myself—with a wonderful French Chef Knife I ordered from Colonial Gardens Kitchens. Anyway, I'm the only person I know who's done all her Christmas shopping. . . . which leaves me plenty of time to curl up in my 56" x 84" Moon Mission Blanket (fits in my pocket, made of super insulating material developed by NASA, guards me against snow and sleet and wind and rain, \$2.99) and wonder what in the world a Harn orv Pillow—"Today's Modern Aid to Younger, Happier Marriages, resilient and stimulating"—could possibly be.

"This could well be the most interesting book of the year"\*

## Cruel AND Unusual

THE SUPREME COURT AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

By MICHAEL MELTSNER

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—Boston Sunday Globe

"Michael Meltner's excellent book recounts the absorbing story of how the historic reversal in the attitude of the Supreme Court towards the death penalty took place. . . . I commend it to all who are rightly concerned with this overriding aspect of enlightened justice."  
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"Very lucid, eloquent and informative. . . . The best book we are likely to get on the subject."  
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"A persuasive brief against death."  
—The Wall Street Journal

\$8.95, now at your bookstore RANDOM HOUSE 

# FURTHER MORE

(continued from page 24)

give awards in a number of categories every year. Flashiest retrieval system: *The St. Petersburg Times*, which has everything stashed in the walls, ready to be summoned by the push of a button. Most difficult to use: *The Los Angeles Times*, which requires an appointment that can be made only by telephone between four and six in the afternoon, during which hours the editorial reference library is as easy to reach on the phone as Frank Sinatra. Most difficult to use even with an appointment: *The Santa Fe New Mexican*, the only daily paper in the state capital, which, last time I went around looking for its editorial reference library, wasn't bothering to maintain one.

In a conventional daily, a lot of the space that is not taken up by wire copy seems to be taken up by the kind of local items that are important mainly to the people they're written about. (John

Cole, the editor of *Maine Times*, told me once that one of the great freedoms he felt when he started his state-wide weekly was freedom from all the stories he didn't feel he had to run—all of those club elections and high school graduations and obituaries. *The New York Times* is not the only newspaper of record.) Occasionally, I run across a useful underground paper—such as *Take Over*, in Madison, Wisconsin, which endeared itself to me not only by running some fascinating interviews with the mayor but by publishing a parody edition of the local dailies that included the headline NIXON EATS KROGH. (The kicker head was TRACES FOUND IN BLOOD.) But the most important emancipation enjoyed by most of the papers I have found most useful—*Maine Times*, for instance, or *The Intermountain Observer* or *The Texas Observer*—is not freedom from straight culture but from a hometown. Which makes it even more remarkable to find local weeklies—the *Mountain Eagle*, in Whitesburg, Kentucky, for instance, or the *York County Coast Star* in Kennebunk, Maine—that manage to record the doings of the water board and to face the local businessmen every morning and to do a lot of strong, enterprising reporting at the same time.

**W**hen we paper-users find a good local paper, of course, we fasten onto it the way a bunch of freshmen suffering through Spanish 101 start hanging around the quiet guy in the dormitory who turns out to have been raised in Costa Rica. Reporters for magazines or television networks or what amount to national newspapers know that a wise place to start any story about Appalachia is Whitesburg, Kentucky, which has not only the *Mountain Eagle* but Harry Caudill, author of *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*—two institutions in the same town. I suspect that the subscription list of *The Intermountain Observer*, which just folded (may it rest in peace), always included a lot of reporters. A few years ago, a number of reporters were asked to contribute to a fund, set up through the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism, that would have provided a graduate of the journalism school for a year to one of the papers we had used most regularly—giving the paper (which was even closer to financial ruin than such papers normally are) a free reporter and giving the journalism-school graduate an extraordinary year's experience. Along with my check, I sent a note suggesting that a more important target for solicitation might be the corporations that employed us. A few months later, I got another letter that didn't mention corporations but said that the fund-raising had fallen short and the project had been abandoned.

It still occurs to me, as I turn the pages of fat and eminently polite big-city dailies, that cultural centers and summer camps may not be the most appropriate outlets for their displays of good citizenship. It might be more appropriate for them to give some young reporter a year's experience on a tough weekly, learning the art of bad manners. Not long ago, I happened to read some figures on how many millions of dollars *The Los Angeles Times* took in last year. I suspect it could afford to send a man to the *Mountain Eagle* and another one to the *High Country News* in Wyoming. If that seems like too much, maybe it could pay for an extra person in the library to answer the phone between three and four.

**SPECIAL INTRODUCTORY OFFER**  
to anyone placing a classified ad in [MORE]: We'll give you one month free with your first order.

## JOB OFFERED

**COMMUNICATIONS ANALYST:** A TV News background, an MA, a creative imagination, ambition and management capability are required. You should be personable, responsible, persuasive, and flexible. Write Box 43, [MORE]. (28)

**LARGE METROPOLITAN ALTERNATIVE WEEKLY** seeks tough, experienced, imaginative person with very high standards as managing editor. Salary, bonuses, and stock. Write Box 46, [MORE]. (28)

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**PROGRESSIVE, SELF-CONTROLLED WEEKLY** in California's beautiful trend-setting city seeks you. Token salary and plenty satisfaction. *News and Review*, 424 Nopal, Santa Barbara, CA. (28)

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**TWO YEARS FREELANCING AND REPORTING** for wire services, mags and radio, expert international affairs, want position on daily/weekly. Willing to travel. Reviews also. Reply Box 50, [MORE]. (28)

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**BUFFALO EDITORS!** Award-winning reporter who knows Western New York wants to grow in Buffalo. Politics, business, sports, labor experience. Box 53, [MORE]. (28)

**S.F. BASED JOURNALIST:** Columbia J-School, seeks PIO in California: D. Eisman, 1814 Hamilton, Palo Alto, CA 94303. (28)

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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**YOUNG STILL PHOTOGRAPHER** wants position at newspaper or magazine—proven investigative experience—actually can read and has ideas—self-starting. Reply Box 54. [MORE]. (28)

**CIRCULATION EXPERIENCE** from sales to fulfillment. Can develop subscription audience from trade references, directories, organizations, purchased lists and industry shows. Samuel Yager, 1190 Shakespeare Avenue, Bronx, NY. (28)

**FEBRUARY, 1974 JOURNALISM GRADUATE** looking for reporting or public relations job. Available March. Miss Donna Carlson, 2412 Knapp Street, Ames, Iowa. (515) 292-3348. (28)

**FILM REVIEWING** work desired. Much experience in film criticism, film reporting, and a good knowledge of film business in New York. Also excellent editorial skills. Write Box 55. [MORE]. (29)

**DECEMBER PUBLIC RELATIONS GRAD** seeks trainee position with company, newspaper or agency. Experience in promotional campaigns and news writing. Will relocate. Box 57. [MORE]. (28)

**PRODUCTION editor.** Book and journal production. Thoroughly experienced in all phases and techniques. For resume, please reply Box 48. [MORE]. (28)

**MAGAZINE EDITOR, 27,** seeking position with more progressive company. Editing, writing, production, layout and photography experience on both trade and consumer publications. MSJ degree, PR and newspaper experience. Box 49. [MORE]. (28)

**IOWA STATE GRADUATE** desires job in communications. Previous experience in radio and television includes air work, research, promotion and news. Can travel. Resume available. Box 77. [MORE]. (28)

**REPORTER** serious about television news with five years experience. MA, network exposure, "Times" stringer. Relocate in major market on East Coast or elsewhere. Reply Box 76. [MORE]. (28)

## BOOKS & MAGS

Central Committee of Correspondence has published a revised **MAILING LIST OF MOVEMENT ORGANIZATIONS**, October 1973. List includes about 1500 groups in US and Canada, some foreign listings. Available for \$1 (if you have it): free to prisoners. Also available on gummed sheets for \$3. Write: CCC, 310 N. 33rd St., Philadelphia, PA 19104. (28)

**LOLLIPOP POWER**—Feminist nonsexist children's books. 9 titles. Brochures: Box 1171, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. Send stamped envelope. (29)

**SLEIGHT-OF-HAND WITH CHALK** enlivens lectures. Illustrated handbook. \$3.95. Tigner Magic Supply Co., PO Box 7149, Toledo, OHIO 43615. (29)

**"ON FARTS"**—by Cannum. Offbeat cartoon booklet by woman author, publishers, and printers. \$1. Carol Hannum, 11528 Occidental Road, Sebastopol, CA 95472. (29)

**WE DON'T KNOW HOW**, by William and Elizabeth Paddock. Husband and wife team (William co-authored **HUNGRY NATIONS AND FAMINE 1975!**) went to 50 development projects in Central America and Mexico highly recommended by Washington officialdom. Found **NONE** that could be called a "model." Book tells why not, who is responsible. \$10 Cloth; \$5 Paper. 326 pp. Write: **THE LATIN AMERICAN SERVICE**, 327 Colorado Building, 1341 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20005. (29)

**EROTIC BOOK OF POETRY & DRAWINGS**—weird, mammalian, eximious, juicy. Send \$2 to Patricia, RI 354, 1230 Grant Avenue, San Francisco—add 50c if mailing outside US. (29)

**MS. GOOSE**—Libretta, L.A. Times: "New Consciousness for Mother Goose." Illustrated. Grown-up. Send \$2.25 to PO Box 49494, Los Angeles, CA 90049. (29)

**FREELANCER'S NEWSLETTER:** the semimonthly forum where publishers and businesses announce their needs for freelance help on editorial/graphics projects. An invaluable tool for writers, artists, editors, photographers, a/v, indexers. \$16.00 yearly. 37 West 57th St., Room 1209, New York, NY 10019. (28)

## BOOKS & MAGS

**TIRED OF TARZAN AND SIR GALAHAD?** "Feminist Folklore" has stories about strong and heroic women. For copy, send 50c to Feminist Folklore, 312 N. Aurora St., Ithaca, N.Y. 14850. (28)

**"GRANTS AND AWARDS AVAILABLE TO WRITERS,"** 71 pages. 1973 edition available from P.E.N. American Center, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010. (28)

**LIED INTO OUR WARS?** Read "Confessions of a Patriot," a second book by H.L. Lane who declined to teach history at a state university. 50 cents. Lane Bookshop, Jerome, Michigan 49249. (31)

## FOR SALE

**WATERGATE DART GAME**—Throw darts, not stones, at alleged participants. Silk/screen photo reproductions on a 16" square dart board with velcro-tipped darts. \$8.00. Ed Gardner, Dept. 52, 1625 Stanford Avenue, Redondo Beach, CA 90278. (28)

**RADIO STATION!** FM, Class B 50,000 watt limit! Boston area. Profitable! Syndicate being formed to buy. Meyer Gottesman, PO Box 1191, Coconut Grove, Fla. 33133. (28)

**SOUVENIRS OF ISRAEL**—Slides, Pictures, Mother of Pearl Crafts, Olive Wood Crafts, Carvings, Jewelry, Souvenirs, etc. Free Catalog. Fauth, POB 10373-E, Jerusalem, Israel. (29)

**INFORMATION, BIBLIOGRAPHIES, QUESTIONS ANSWERED.** All topics. Details free. Fact Finder, Box 84V, Brooklyn, NY 11212. (29)

**PICTURES OF WOMEN** in non-traditional jobs. \$2.75/set of 8 pictures. Set #1—Community Helpers. Set #2—Professional women. F.R.E.E., PO Box 3185, Framingham, MA 01701. (29)

**BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES TAPE LIBRARY**—Leading psychiatrists and psychologists discuss psychotherapy, schizophrenia, adolescents, drugs, human sexuality, etc., on cassettes. Free catalogue. B.S.T.L., Dept. 297, 485 Main Street, Ft. Lee, N.J. 07024. (29)

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**NOW! A FEMINIST COLUMN** with wit, style, humor. It's Changing Woman, another winner from Contemporary Feature Service, Box 404, Chappaqua, NY 10514. Today's features for today's readers. Write for samples. (28)

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## MEDIA

Between the Lines, Wednesday nights at 9, WKCR FM (89.9), New York. (28)

## MANUSCRIPTS WANTED

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Leading book publisher seeks manuscripts of all types: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, scholarly and juvenile works, etc. New authors welcomed. For complete information, send for free booklet L-70 Vantage Press, 516 W. 34 St., New York 10001 (28)

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**STEW FLEW COOP.** Dirty old editor seeks bird to keep Malibu Beach nest clean. Box 75. [MORE]. (29)

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\$2.50 per line (6 lines to the inch) for display space in the classified section, with camera-ready copy provided.

**Classified Deadline:** 8th of each month for publication on 15th preceding cover date.

# FURTHER MORE

## On Using Newspapers

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

I have always thought of the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* as a newspaper that prizes discretion above all other virtues. According to a charitable theory I concocted after reading the *Picayune* off and on for a dozen years, the editors do occasionally find themselves with an urge to shout and holler, but they always manage to satisfy it by running an expose of gambling in Jefferson Parish, the next county over—the way a businessman might spend a few hours at the gym punching the big bag in order to avoid throwing an ash tray at his sales manager. The result is that a crapshooter in Metairie can expect to be exposed to public scrutiny more or less annually, like *The New York Times'* hundred neediest cases, and the Civic Leaders of New Orleans have as much fear of being

Calvin Trillin writes "U.S. Journal" for *The New Yorker*. His next book, *American Fried: Adventures of a Happy Eater*, will be published by Doubleday in the spring.

publicly criticized by the *Picayune* as by their stockbrokers.

I mentioned the *Picayune's* custom of respectful silence once in a *New Yorker* piece about the exclusion of Jews from Mardi Gras balls, and added, parenthetically, that a similar policy of exclusion by downtown businessmen's clubs in Kansas City had been made public not by the *Kansas City Star*, a daily with good manners, but by the *National Catholic Reporter*, a weekly that happens to be published in Kansas City. The parenthetical remark caused a Kansas City businessman to write me a long and thoughtful letter suggesting that I had maligned the *Star* unfairly. An American Jewish Committee report on club discrimination, which had been used as documentation by the *National Catholic Reporter*, had been available to the *Star* as well, he wrote, but the *Star's* editors, being Civic Leaders themselves, had realized that the interest of the clubs and the Jewish businessmen who might be considered for the clubs and (most of all) the town would be best served by trying to take care of the matter behind the scenes without embarrassing anyone. I was reminded of a remark I heard from an elderly N.A.A.C.P. lawyer in New Orleans during the school desegregation there in 1960. "If all the people who tell me they're working behind the scenes are working behind the scenes," he said, "it must be getting awfully crowded back there."

I wrote the businessman that newspapers exist partly to embarrass people—a proposition I might have expressed rather too confidently, now that I think of it, for someone who is always safely out of town by the time his piece comes out. The businessman had argued that a loyal Civic Leader's duty was to help the town progress while avoiding embarrassing incidents and divisiveness and damaging publicity. The blandness and timidity of

much of the American press, I think, comes partly from the fact that the local daily is seen (by itself as well as by others) as a Civic Leader as well as a newspaper—responsible for boosting the town as well as for keeping an eye on it.

When decisions are made by the Civic Leaders—at morning coffee in a small town, at the businessmen's luncheon club in a city—one of the Civic Leaders involved is the publisher of the paper, and maybe even the editor of the paper. Their reluctance to deal with certain issues in print is not just a matter of trying to avoid offending advertisers but of doing what is good for the town. They want to be good citizens. There are, of course, differing ways to judge what is good for the town and what isn't, but the measurement most Civic Leaders seem to use is the effect on Gross Retail Sales.

I find myself in the position of being a user rather than a reader of out-of-town papers, since I do regular reporting pieces around the country for a magazine that doesn't have a stringer network or a clip desk or even an AP machine. I make fairly frequent stops at the Times Square out-of-town newspaper stand, and then make my way into the subway bowed under the weight of thirty pounds of identical wire-service stories about what the Cost of Living Council announced in Washington. My use of out-of-town papers is so specialized that my fondness for the *Des Moines Register* is based not just on its willingness to do quite a few stories around the state but on the fact that it marks such stories with an Iowa map, making them easy for a fast page-turner to spot. My use of newspaper "editorial reference libraries"—the things that I used to be called morgues—is so constant that I

(continued on page 22)

# Give [MORE] this year and we'll all have a Merry Christmas

We'd like to strike a bargain with all of you who read [MORE]. As always, we're interested in finding more readers. You need presents for your friends and acquaintances during the holiday season, and there's a fair chance that you know someone who doesn't yet subscribe to [MORE].

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Name \_\_\_\_\_

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City \_\_\_\_\_

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The gift card should read \_\_\_\_\_

The gift card should read \_\_\_\_\_