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**NEW TRICKS FOR THE NEWSPAPER TRADE:
AN OLD WATCHDOG MEETS PRESS FREEDOM
AND THE INFORMATION AGE**

Inaugural lecture delivered at
RHODES UNIVERSITY

by

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BA(Hons)(UNISA), PhD (Rhodes)

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Guy JEG Berger
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**INAUGURAL LECTURE
DELIVERED AT RHODES UNIVERSITY
ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1995**

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**GRAHAMSTOWN
RHODES UNIVERSITY
1995**

Preface

My first dedication is to my wife, Jeanne, and my daughters Vanessa and Alexia, for having done so much for me to reach this occasion. Secondly, I would like to mention the role of my late father, Nathan Berger, a Russian scholar, who instilled in me a love of thought and learning. Third comes my thanks to my Australian mother, Lucy Gough Berger, who as a journalist on **The Star** newspaper used to bewail how her politicised student son had forsaken Haggard for Hegel.

Further thanks must go to people who have contributed so much to my intellectual development: Professor Terence Beard, Nancy Charton, Professors Ian MacDonald and Jacky Cock. Then there also are my erstwhile student peers, Tony Pinchuck, Ian Donald, Pete Richer and Aurret van Heerden, to whom I owe many intellectual debts.

More recently, I need to thank US publisher David Archie and Swedish newspaperman Ake Ahrsjo for exposing me to international press trends. To my inspiring staff, and to our visiting electronic newspaper expert, Roland Stanbridge, I also express gratitude. Likewise to Janet Carr of Computer Services, and not forgetting our administrative, technical, cleaning and support staff.

Finally, I turn to my predecessors. The first here is the man who conceived this journalism department, Prof Guy Butler. And in a marvellous demonstration of the need for this institution, I remind you all of a caption to a photograph in an edition of **Grocotts Mail** shortly after I took up this post: it cites me as Prof Butler.



Professor Gavin Stewart, Professor John Grogan, and Professor Guy Butler spoke on "Press Freedom and the New Constitution" on Thursday as a part of Law Week at Rhodes University. Picture by John Dennehy. (*Grocotts Mail*)

The first head of the journalism department was Tony Giffard, now an American, whose early work was pioneering research of readership figures of the South African press, and who subsequently published an important review of repression of the South African press. He was followed by a real American, Les Switzer, a man who unearthed the hidden history of a vibrant black press in South Africa. Gavin Stewart, now editor of the **Daily Dispatch**, was the third head of this department, and the man who more than anyone else put together a team of world class teachers of journalism and media studies. It is with pleasure and pride that I come after them.

New Tricks for the Newspaper Trade: An old Watchdog meets press freedom and the information age.

Part One: Whither the watchdog in a democratic dispensation?

The metaphor of a watchdog is well entrenched in the rhetoric in terms of which the "proper" social function of the press is often conceived. It is an interesting metaphor, because it implies the role of a guardian - of the media being firmly in the camp of civil society, and protecting it against predatory intrusions by the state. To hyperlink the watchdog metaphor to another metaphor in journalism, one might say if one of the best forms of defence is attack, the watchdog has at its disposal a number of newshounds, as illustrated by these pages found on the Internet:



Here's a dog that's really paper-trained!

Every day it gets harder to keep track of the important stuff. What's your competition up to? What's going on in your home town? How is the out-of-town press treating a recent announcement by your company? What's the latest news in your hobby? Is your neighborhood in the news? Did anyone pick up your press release? Have you or anyone you know been mentioned in the press? How are the companies in your investment portfolio performing?

NewsHound gets you all the news you need as soon as it's news -- usually before it appears in the paper. It automatically searches articles from a wide range of newspapers and wire services, as well as classified ads from the San Jose Mercury News, and sends any relevant documents directly to your electronic mailbox.

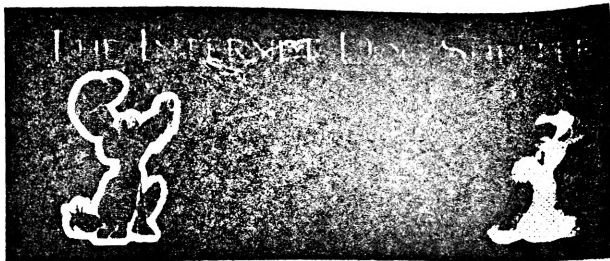
To register for NewsHound, please call 1-800-818-NEWS. If you're already registered for NewsHound, simply click the NewsHound icon below.

MORE INFO ON CANINES?



Comine Saon: Use this NewsHound form with your World Wide Web browser.

The Internet even brings us the site on the right (to which I have added - and expanded upon - one of the more intriguing idioms around the species):



Dogs = media = man's best friend?

KIDZ CANINE FINDER

If you want to continue with dogs outside the space of journalism, you can hyperlink to a real cute collection via "Kidz Canine Finder" (my addition). See the last line below:

Electronic Portfolios from Discovery Middle School

The kids at Discovery Middle School were assigned a ten card portfolio about any subject they wanted. We used all kinds of electronic resources: multimedia encyclopedias, electronic atlases, the Internet, and the World Wide Web. These are some of the portfolios. Some are informational and some are just for fun. We hope *you* have fun.

World Conservation, by Linda McDonald, Jennifer Herman, and Paige Clark, grade 8

Hurricanes, by Rachel Rusch and Janira Vazquez, grade 8

Australia, by Jackie McIlvaine and Ronda Parsons, grade 8

Impressionistic Art, by Annie Khan and Jessica Conte, grade 8

Jet Aircraft, by Jeryme Stahley, grade 8

Hawaii, by Natasha Singh and Mandy George, grade 8

The Sega Home Page for Middle School Kids, by Jason McKeown and Justin Fountain, grade 8

The Country of Oman, by Kevin Pizer and Raf Szytula, Grade 6

Whales and Dolphins, by Shannon Finnegan, Grade 8

The Surfing Home Page, by Alba LaSalle and AJ Reyes, Grade 8

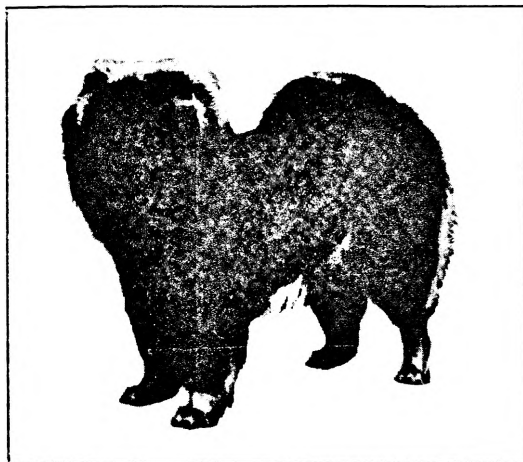
Mars, The Red Planet, by Melanie Adams and Natasha Raynor, Grade 8

Marine Life, by Brandy Hammett and Diana Wilson, Grade 6

➔ All About Dogs, by Lindsey Eppleman and Michelle Mills, Grade 6

And "All About Dogs", by Lindsey Eppleman and Michell Mills, Grade 6, presents us with the following:

Dogs



By Lindsey Eppleman and Michelle Mills, Grade 6

Have you ever seen a dog that can count? Well [Bluedog Can Count!](#) Dogs and humans have lived and worked together for well over 5,000 years. No one knows how they first became partners and friends. Probably wild, wolf-like dogs gathered where people roamed and settled waiting for scraps of food to be thrown away. These wild dogs and humans had one thing in common, they both had to hunt for their food. The human hunters soon found out that dogs could run faster.

Around The World

Many herdsman still control their sheep cattle with a herd dog like a collie or a shetland sheep dog. Small herding dogs drive livestock by nipping at their heels. Larger herding dogs move to and fro around the flock barking, glaring, and urging the animals along.

In The Yard

Larger dogs are often kept outside in a kennel or doghouse. The kennel must be warm and dry. You may need a well-built run of posts and wire netting. But a dog will lead a happier life if it lives in the house with the family. There are many organizations for dogs on the World Wide Web. There is the [Canine Web](#) California Rescue Dog Association, [CARDA](#), and the [Cornell Canine page](#). Everything you want to know about dogs is in the [Dog Glossary](#). There is also a [Dog Home Page](#) and the [Internet Dog Shelter](#). We hope you enjoy these pages and learn some new information about our favorite animal, the canine.

In canine cyber space, we presumably have a case of the byte being stronger than the bark. That aside, however, what we have here is a catalog compiled as part of a class project by American children. But these are not merely children, and contrary to what I just said: this is not outside the space of journalism. These are children researching, writing and publishing their information to a mass audience. They are children, in other words, being reporters.

The watchdog metaphor contrasts with a different one that could be put forward to describe the role of newspapers: the carrier pigeon. This image buttresses the argument that the press as a messenger should not be blamed for the message. There is some truth in this argument, but at the same time, few people would accept that newspapers are merely messengers. The process of selection and emphasis, not to mention political orientation, tends to highlight the partisan character of the press - a character that is better captured by a more forceful beast than the humble pigeon, viz. the watchdog. ⁽¹⁾

The canine metaphor confines non-political considerations to the sidelines, and I intend to remain with it throughout this lecture. I am a cat person myself, and though some of my best friends are dogs, I have some difficulty in knowing the difference between a labrador and a golden retriever. And speaking of retrievers, the Internet offers us one too ..

Introducing the News Retriever...



The Internet's answer to Rover the news hound. Let sleeping dogs lie. Have this golden retriever fetch you some gems. GO BOY!

A personal selection of some of the best newspapers on the World Wide Web

Europe

The Financial Times, London



The Guardian, London

The Observer, London

Sunday Times, London



The Irish Times, Dublin



The Daily Telegraph, London

Fortunately, the difficulties of distinguishing a dachshund from a great dane do not blind me to the fact that the notion of a watchdog does "beg" the question, of the importance of the character of the pooch being put under the spotlight.



The images on this page are Victorian sketches, and not inappropriately such.

The notion of the press as being in an adversarial

relationship with government is not a new or South African phenomenon.⁽²⁾ It is a notion that continues to be jealously guarded. One is

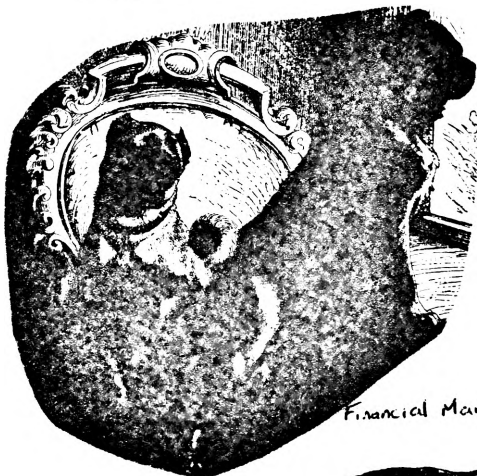
reminded of the quip attributed to US editor HL Mencken:

"The relationship between the government and the press is terrible. I hope it does not improve."

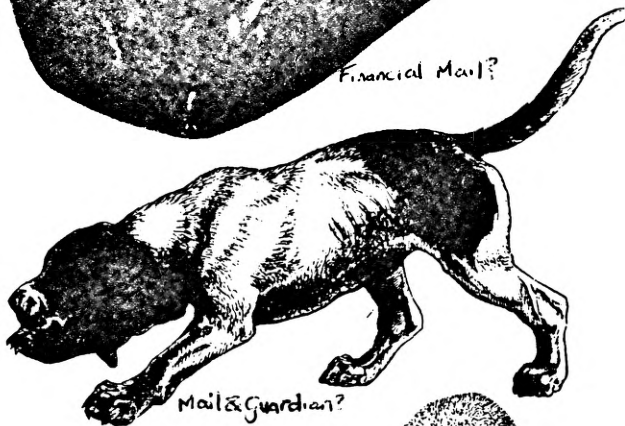
For some people, however, the press is - or should be - a lapdog or a poodle of government.⁽³⁾ That's another apt extension of the dog metaphor, even if it finds little support among independent press people.⁽⁴⁾



Grocott's Mail?



Financial Mail?



Mail & Guardian?



All this canine conversation is at the level of image, sound and fury, of barks rather than bites, if you will. It highlights the way that language can bend and bob to suit our purposes.

But there is a serious thesis, behind all this deconstructing of the watchdog metaphor. It is one eloquently expressed 20 years ago by Elaine Potter, in her book **The Press as Opposition**, and repeated in various forms by eminent liberal ex-editors like **The Star's** former editor Harvey Tyson in his book **Under Fire**, and his successor Richard Steyn (see Switzer, 1995:17). ⁽⁵⁾

Potter's argument is that with the curbing of black resistance and the decline of white liberal opposition in the 1960s, the press found itself willy nilly propelled into the vacuum (1975:11). It was the press, specifically the English press, the argument goes, which has kept alive democratic values in South Africa and curbed the worst excesses of apartheid governments.⁽⁶⁾ In the absence of a legal opposition, the press provided democratic checks and balances, this perspective holds. It is this general approach which I intend to challenge in the course of this paper.

As proof of the Potter verdict, one only needs to look at the history of government reaction to the press.⁽⁷⁾ There was indeed long and harsh government reaction, though - as I will argue later - this is not sufficient evidence to proclaim the

press as opposition. What was this reaction? It took many forms, ranging from the intimidating bluster of bully-boy politicians to truly draconian legislation.⁽⁸⁾ The government's entire endeavour was not merely to muzzle the watchdog, but to draw as many of its teeth as possible. The late Joel Mervis, whose papers his son Jonathan has recently bequeathed to Cory Library, described the state of press freedom at a conference organised by the Rhodes journalism department in 1979: It had, he said, "its left leg in plaster, its right arm in a sling, a patch over the left one eye, deafness in the right ear, a sprained ankle and a number of teeth knocked out ...". (Mervis, 1979:2). The words could just as easily have been applied to the media.

It is this historical backdrop that explains why top anti-apartheid journalists like the **Daily Dispatch's** Donald Woods, the **Rand Daily Mail's** Allister Sparks and Raymond Louw, and later the **Cape Time's** Tony Heard, all ended up losing their editorships. (See Heard, 1991). At a broader level, a huge web of legislation outlawed whole categories of reportage. Censorship and bannings met those who were insufficiently intimidated by the legal minefield in which they laboured. (See Stuart, 1986; Merrett, 1994).

I myself fell victim to such controls: from the viewpoint of today, the two years imprisonment I received in 1980 for - basically - the possession of banned literature seems somewhat excessive. And yet, the punishment - as Rivonia trialist life-

sentence Denis Goldberg told me in Pretoria Central - amounted to a parking ticket compared to what many others incurred for even lesser offences: six years for distributing a few pamphlets in the case of one young man.

South, the newspaper I edited for a period before coming to Rhodes, was banned for three months in 1988. Earlier generations had it even worse: the **World** and **Weekend World** were permanently banned on October 19, 1977. Their reincarnation as the **Post** and **Sunday Post** met the same fate.

The apogee of press repression was the 1980s State of Emergency, where a double censorship was applied: censorship itself was rendered invisible when newspapers were banned from publishing blank white spaces (Merrett, 1994:137)

For Elaine Potter, Harvey Tyson and others, this historical record of repression leaves little doubt that the press did indeed function as a watchdog. But does it prove the case? In my view, it is a faulty logic to read into government responses, the real character of that to which these were reactions. As we know, Nationalist governments typically overreacted to any perceived threat - even regarding butterfly emblems on jeans as evidence of Communist plots to subvert the youth. After all, military conscripts like myself were told, a butterfly flits from flower to flower irrespective of colour. As regards the press in particular, it is likely that Government members' experience of the signal role of the

Afrikaans press and its tightly defined political agenda, gave rise to a false assumption that the English language press would similarly be part of a contest for power. Combined with political paranoia, the result was press repression.

But government reaction was also a lot more than this. Although journalists tend to be extremely media-centric people, the likelihood of the matter is that the apartheid government was probably far less concerned with controlling the press as an end in itself, than in controlling what most South Africans were thinking. My reading is that government anti-press action emanated from a wide-ranging totalitarian philosophy. This philosophy assumes that if you control the schools, the churches, and the media, you control people's minds. It was this thinking that saw not only continuously tightening curbs on the press, but also the SABC becoming tied ever more tightly into Broederbond, and later, military control. Government did not seek to control the media because it was an opposition media: it acted out of the view that the media - just like other social institutions - was a potential extension of its power.

Media is powerful, was thus the premise upon which the government operated. But if there was ever a case that challenged this assumption, it is South Africa. Not only did most South Africans disbelieve pro-apartheid propaganda, contrasting it with their daily lived experiences, many - myself included - adopted diametrically contrary positions.

The logic here is simple: someone who lies to you about what you know, is not to be trusted on areas about which you do not know. So it was that when press and SABC reports parroted police emphases about Communist-made weapons being used to attack South Africa, the effect was to legitimise and popularise Communism. The more an evil regime - and the press - painted the ANC as evil, the more convinced that disbelievers became that the ANC was a force for good. In the absence of independent and credible information, it made sense to read politics in this way.

Today of course we know that not all criticism of the ANC and communism was without foundation. We can see that an incorrect inference was drawn because we judged things in terms of the reaction of another party. It is the same faulty methodology at work, when the advocates of the press as opposition infer the truth of their claims by pointing to the reaction of another party.⁽⁹⁾

The examples of negative press coverage of the liberation movement cited above go further, however, in rebutting the positions of those who argue for recognition of the watchdog performance of the press in the past. As Mark de Vos, a student of mine wrote in an exam earlier this year, it is a poor watchdog that barks at the thief as well as the postman. As regards barking at thieves, many critics argue that historically South Africa's English press was somewhat muted on one of the greatest thefts of all: that of black land,

rights, culture and identity. Attacks on the migrant labour system, grand scale social engineering, and repression of black resistance were under-represented in the press.

It is true that press criticism of petty apartheid and infringement of civil liberties was strong, and this constitutes part of the foundation for those who sincerely believe the press did indeed act as a serious watchdog in the apartheid years. Such people find it unfair to suggest otherwise (eg. Tyson, 1993:328), and indeed they find it hurtful that there is not strong support and gratitude coming from those whose interests the watchdog defended. What has greeted them instead, has been hostility and suspicion towards the press.⁽¹⁰⁾

In fact, many in government and political office today feel that the press was worse than just being half-hearted in its barking at the government, a sin of omission. The newspapers are also accused of sins of commission: of having barked unjustifiably at the liberation movements. It is not difficult to feel resentful, where you - with some justification - can claim to have been the postman, or indeed the legitimate owner of the premisses, yet have found yourself the target of barking as vociferous as that directed at the thief.

Once again, we may tease out the dog metaphor of the media for insight here. It is an extremely sad fact of South African life that many suburbanite pet pooches suffer anti-black racism,

even those who live in liberal homes. That, unfortunately, has also been evident - even if less virulently and often less intentionally - within the English press.⁽¹¹⁾

In its more blatant racially-biased form, editors were quick to condemn what they called, with free and uncritical use of security force terms, "terrorism". Likewise they spared no quarter in attacking non-violent strategies like sanctions. For those in opposition, this meant only one thing: the classic watchdogs were little more than running dogs of apartheid capitalism.⁽¹²⁾

In less blatant ways, indeed in ways that most whites still do not even recognise, the press was - and largely still is - white. This is the result of it being produced by whites and for whites, owned by whites and controlled by whites, and the fact that the sources and experts it quotes are mainly white. Its culture is white. There is nothing wrong with whiteness, except when this goes hand in hand with privilege, discrimination or insularity - as in South Africa. It is hard therefore to decouple these associations, and whiteness therefore understandably limits the appeal of the English-language press. Small wonder then that this press was not, and arguably still is not, universally regarded as a watchdog representing the society as a whole.⁽¹³⁾

As if whiteness was not enough to give a dog a bad name, as the saying goes, this image was compounded by developments in

the 1980s when unprecedented government co-option, supplemented by pressures that culminated in state of emergency rule, saw the closure of the Rand Daily Mail and a real moderating of criticism of government by the media. A different animal metaphor can do service here, and one which is none-too-complimentary for the press. I have in mind here the creature connoted in the phrase of sticks and carrots, in explaining how the government treated the press in the 1980s.⁽¹⁴⁾

Thus, for those in direct opposition to apartheid then, the press has had - if I may twist and adapt a phrase - a bad press. And it was precisely this perception which led to the rise of the alternative press in direct reaction against the mainstream press's perceived racial narrowness, conservatism and journalistic timidity.

For those of us analysing South Africa and its press in the 1980s, the liberationist critique seemed compelling. It seemed clear that the biggest contradiction was not between government and newspapers playing the role of opposition, but between a ruling elite and exploited and oppressed masses. This analysis was neatly encapsulated - all too neatly - by a concept lifted from Althusser (1981). Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) was the concept, and in this rather functionalist view, institutions were lumped together if they could be said to help reproduce social relations through their operation in the realm of ideology.⁽¹⁵⁾

Such a crude concept captured some of the picture, explaining what the press and Pretoria had in common. But it still failed to explain the highly palpable tensions between press and government. To do so, we used concepts from Althusserian political analyst, Nicos Poulantzas, and introduced distinctions between the interests within the ruling class. Thus, we spoke of different fractions of capital and the classes and strata with whom they allied.⁽¹⁶⁾ In this light, the English press - through its ownership, advertising base and readership, represented mining and manufacturing capital and its white middle class support base. The government on the other hand represented Afrikaner agricultural and finance capital in alliance with white workers and petit bourgeoisie. The contradiction between these two class blocs explained the conflict between government and press, even though this contradiction was of a lesser order than that between the masses and the shared interests of these two blocs.⁽¹⁷⁾

To this analysis, one could at the time apply further insight from the cultural studies work of British-based academics. From Stuart Hall (1974, 1977, 1980), came the observation that the media was too dynamic to be a mouthpiece for pre-formulated classes and their conspiracies and fixed interests. Rather it played a creative and catalytic role in generating and developing views which helped constitute constituencies around classes and political blocs. And, crucially, the media were also, internally, sites of struggle between opposing views and interests.

But here the perspective begins to part company with the liberationist model. The press in the Stuart Hall perspective is an institution which has, to use a useful phrase of Althusser's, its own relative autonomy. This was not a view that gained effective currency in the 1980s and 1990s: periods when political polarisation in the society produced polarised attitudes to the press. In that climate, institutions - including universities - were seen as tools or weapons functioning in the interests of one side of the conflict, rather than being relatively autonomous of this conflict. In conditions of struggle, partisanship prevails, and categories that provide clear line-ups are preferred to the subtleties of a Stuart Hall.⁽¹⁸⁾

This instrumentalist approach to the press has not gone away entirely today, despite the changed conditions.⁽¹⁹⁾ Having seen the mass media serve as a kind of handmaiden to powerful interests in the past, it is little wonder that many in the new government take the same view today. Whereas the press was previously seen as having acted to support white supremacy, now it is urged to support democracy and nation-building.⁽²⁰⁾

In 1992, President Nelson Mandela said: "A free press will be the vigilant watchdog of the South African public against the temptation to abuse power" (Mandela, 1992). Others in government have echoed this. But they also stress something else: a new, additional role. In this view, the watchdog should play a St Bernard from time to time: dispensing glad

tidings and a little drop of RDP brandewyn to the masses. The government has a job to do, and the media should be there to help, not to hinder.

After all, you no longer need a watchdog when the good guys are now in power. This - in effect - is the argument of deputy president Thabo Mbeki (see address to Cape Town Press Club, 19/9/94). The press, in his view, is behaving anachronistically, failing to distinguish between the new democratic government and the old dictatorial one and to recognise the changed role of the press as a result. This perspective goes on to suggest that to redress the ravages of apartheid, strong government intervention is prescribed, and social institutions like the press should fall in behind this national, government-led effort of transformation.⁽²¹⁾

For its part, the press is quick to point out that despite the different historical contexts, power can corrupt. In addition, people in the press assert that State corruption and human rights abuses will still occur, and that - as happened to the Mail and Guardian in 1994 - government ministers like Defence Minister Joe Modise resort to legal action to try and suppress information. There is therefore still a need, it is argued, for independent and critical newspapers.

We have thus, in South Africa today, a debate whose differing positions may be represented in terms of the model of society-state relations to which they subscribe. On the one hand, we

have a government that seeks a strong state and communications reach; on the other a press that seeks to retain its strong, independent-position vis-a-vis the state. This presents an internationally distinctive model. Schematically, and at a high level of generality, this may be represented as follows:

<u>State</u>	<u>Society</u>	<u>Example</u>
Weak	Strong	USA
Strong	Weak	Zimbabwe
Strong	Strong	South Africa

It is an interesting thing to pause and ponder for a moment as to whether you can have a strong state **and** strong society, or whether it is a zero sum relationship in which the strength of one is only proportional to the weakness of the other. I leave this issue aside, however, to pursue a different angle: how strong is strong?

It is perhaps a fortunate thing that this government has come to office at a time in history when the totalitarian model has been discredited, and also at a time when it is likely that our fractious society would refuse to tolerate such a dispensation. We are thus not talking about state strength in totalitarian terms.

With government designs on commandeering broadcast time, however, it is still necessary, however, to remind the new authorities what happened to the organs of Communist rule in

the erstwhile Soviet Union. Government paper **Isvestia** (meaning News) and party paper **Pravda** (meaning Truth) served largely as top-down transmission belts. The result, as wags like to point out, was a Pravda lacking in any Isvestia, and an Isvestia lacking any Pravda. The further, and more significant, result - and repeated even in less extreme authoritarian countries - is a media that loses credibility, impact and audience.

But even a media-inclined person like me, who is partisan towards the watchdog, has to sympathise with this government's problem. Mbeki has been rebuffed in the proposal for state time on SABC, a model incidentally that would turn that particular hound back into His Master's Voice. At the same time, the government continues to be treated with suspicion by the private press. How then does it become strong enough to fulfill its communication responsibilities, without becoming too strong?

At a conference on government communication policy convened by Thabo Mbeki during 1995, I argued that rather than mess with the mass media, three steps were needed (Berger, 1995d). The first of these was to recognise that all officials were communicators with the public, and to vastly improve internal communication within the state. The second was for government to professionalise and upgrade its poor media liaison performance. Third, that government should not simply see citizens as receivers of its messages, but as potential communicators in their own right - communicators who send

messages to government and to each other. This required, I argued, things like subsidies for community radio stations, and development of interactive online communications such as e-mail and the Internet.

Government may do some of these things and become a strong communicator while simultaneously facilitating society's own communication capacity. That does not mean that government will cease putting verbal pressure on the press, an ominous increase in which is evident in 1995. But there will be less cause to do so, and even if the authorities wanted to pursue this latter course, there are constitutional among other constraints on it.

So where does all this leave our old watchdog? Yapping on the sidelines? Hardly. In principle, the new and developing situation leaves the press free to do its work without hindrance, but in a neighbourhood with new alleyways and many new noisy critters staking out their turf. This new terrain constitutes a real challenge to the press. In fact, despite my feline propensities, I am less worried about the fat cats in government, who at the end of the day will look after their communication needs: my concern primarily is with the health of the hound.

Journalism in a democracy is something new for South African journalists. What does it mean when things are no longer quite so literally black and white? My discussions with journalists

reveal a real existential crisis. For some, it is business as usual, with an adversarial posture towards the new state. For others, it is this, but with some uncertainty too. For yet others, in particular for leading black journalists like Thami Mazwai, it is a far more accommodating attitude to what is seen as a true people's government.

Journalism in a democracy also means greater government accountability and hence greater access to information for the press. A new liberal publications bill opens space for more journalism, while the proposed Open Democracy Act could empower the press to demand set facts, and appeal to a special court if refused them. Parliament itself has thrown most of its committee meetings open, and every member of the police force is now authorised to speak to the press (within his or her range of competency). Talk about give a dog a bone: this is a veritable surfeit of gravy-drenched riches.

But few journalists, it seems, appear to know what to do with the feast before them.⁽²²⁾ The sense one gets is of journalists who, having fought for press freedom, are now unsure about what to do now they have it. The watchdog appears to be danger of losing its way.⁽²³⁾

What too does journalism in a democracy mean for practioners in the profession, when - just at the time the press is at its most free to report on politics - the public also seems to be losing interest. It is pornography, not politics, that

constitutes the growth area in sales today. Newspaper circulations meanwhile are crashing (Sunday Times, 6/8/95), with some small successful exceptions like our local **Eastern Province Herald** which has eschewed politics in favour of parading crime and sport stories, and the **Daily Dispatch** with a consistent spread of small town and rural news. Could it be that most papers have lost touch with their old readers while failing to win new ones?

Gordon Jackson argued three years ago that "English newspapers will become more oriented to their black constituencies, and become better equipped to serve them, as they hire more blacks" (1993:205; see also Tyson, 1993:375). This is a slow development, and one painfully evidenced by the slow progress of affirmative action in the press. In turn, this is mirrored by the difficulty I have of persuading the press to create bursaries for black students to study journalism.⁽²⁴⁾

Jackson is also wrong about the switch of white papers towards black readers. A paper like the Sunday Times is currently caught tight in a fix between trying to hold the advertising-drawcard, affluent white readers, and catering for less well-off black readers (Ken Owen, 1995). The market has not yet developed sufficient critical mass for the racial proportions to change, but that is no excuse for conservatism. The big question really is whether the media is leading or lagging in developing the market in this direction.

The significance of falling circulations in the meantime is of more than economic concern. Press freedom needs more than a healthy industry and a convivial legislative dispensation: it requires public support. A press watchdog that is not regarded as reporting the concerns of the majority of the public is unlikely to enjoy this support (see Jackson, 1993:181).⁽²⁵⁾

Another, related question flummoxing journalists in this new open South Africa is whom they're working for (Berger, 1995a). It was a staid board of directors in the Argus company a while ago, now it is for the opinionated Irish media magnate, Tony O'Reilly, and in the case of the **Sowetan**, it is the equally opinionated Dr Nthatho Motlana. Times Media Ltd, still fresh from buying the **Daily Dispatch**, is itself up for sale, and the new bosses there could well be an alliance of black business and trade unions in what is called the Black Empowerment Consortium.

So far, this new ownership dispensation has not impacted so much on the politics of the press, as upon the commercialisation of journalism (Berger, 1995b, 1995c). The watchdog today must bay for its breakfast.⁽²⁷⁾ It also means farewell to writing for readers, and all hail to serving the customer. That means - at its worst - fulfilling the pre-existing needs and preferences of the buyer. Pandering to the punters' prejudices may thus mean keeping politics - or blacks - off the front page (or back page in the case of the **Sunday Times**). The result is to leave society all the poorer.

Good for business, bad for the potential of the press to play a leadership agenda-setting and guardian role in the society. What ought to be only the tail, it seems, is in danger of wagging the dog.

The "reader-as-customer" vision has a mirror opposite in the SABC, whose ideology in the words of Zwelakhe Sisulu is "the audience-as-citizen".⁽²⁸⁾ These equally reductionist models lessen the creative dynamism of the media. On the one hand, there is an abdication of a leadership or even social-responsibility role on the part of the press. On the other, there is paternalistic prescriptiveness in the public broadcaster. The ground between these two extremes, and one based on the all-rounded and diverse character of people consuming media, seems to elude many South African journalists today. The result - speaking generally, and bearing in mind factors like inexperienced, undertrained and overstretched newsrooms - is mediocre journalism.

The question to pose is: Will our watchdogs therefore chase their tails and miss out on the myriad opportunities in the new order? It is hard to say. But what is of even greater concern is whether the malaise means they will not be caught wrong-footed by a more dangerous medium-term threat. I refer here to that new medium called the Internet and to the roaring torrent of traffic that could leave more than a few watchdogs squashed on the Information Highway.

Part Two: Newspapering in the Information Age.

We are living in the Information Age, one which began with mass media reproduction through the printing press, and which now provides us with electronic replication as the cheapest means of mass communication yet known to humankind.

This age, according to Neil Postman, means that information comes at us indiscriminately. We are glutted with it, have no control over it, do not know what to do with it (1993:10).⁽¹⁾ South Africa looks set for a similar future, even although the latest figures show a society consuming fewer newspapers and listening less to radio than a year ago (Mail and Guardian, 15/9/95). With rising literacy, spreading wealth and more consumer choice, media consumption is likely to begin rising again - though the media consumed may well be different to previous patterns. Our classic watchdogs need to watch out: 80 new radio stations have been licensed this year; a cluster of small community papers is growing up to replace the demise of the alternative press generation; magazines trading in voyeurism of both the **Hustler** and **Huisgenoot** variants are flourishing. Satellite developments promise up to 24 new TV and radio channels (Beeld, 14/6/95).

It is veritably raining cats, dogs and several other creatures from the sky.

Amongst these blessings in this Information Age is the

Internet, which I use here as shorthand for the whole Infobahn. It is an elitist medium at present. But like the postal system, rail, electricity, and telephony, it is likely to become more and more accessible - even, I predict, spreading as fast as cellphones, and reaching through schools and community centres to spaza shops and other entrepreneurial off and on ramps in the townships. It is after all, only a kind of glorified extension of the French minitel system, where instead of telephone books at the end of every line, you have a computer that can communicate.

It is the Internet part of the Information Age, I believe, which will prompt the greatest changes to newspapers and their role. TV, it is pointed out, did not kill books, nor marginalise radio (Traber, 1994). Says Professor Peter Cole, "in 1475, we had the first book. Books are still with us, thank god, and selling in vast quantities." (1995:4). However, as another writer points out, while old media persist, the newcomers do hijack some of their best features. Thus film repurposed plays, TV repurposed films (Negroponte, 1995:61). The CD gave new life to music originally recorded and sold on vinyl. The question is: will the Internet repurpose newspapers, or simply supercede them?

It is not original, but nonetheless worth mentioning that few people suspected what would happen when computers first entered newspapers to work in the accounts department. Today the computer is set to take the paper out of newspapers

altogether.⁽²⁾ This is not welcome news to many in the newspaper reading public, already anticipating the nostalgia they will feel about no longer enjoying the feel of newsprint between their fingers as they enjoy a good read. Significantly, however, this public, in the industrialised countries - and, in part, in South Africa - is also an aging public. All the gimmickry, colour, promotions and targetting in the world is not sufficient to replenish those readers who dying off. In short, there are fewer and fewer new recruits from the youth. The situation was so bad for one UK publisher, Andy Hughes, with his newspaper's market dying off at the same time as youngsters migrated away in search of better prospects, that in his words, the only thing left in his county were sheep - selling newspapers to them would have been the ultimate marketing challenge (Hughes, 1992).

So it's a shrinking older population that likes the feel of newspapers. So too do many print journalists. Ah, to see a printing press in action, with the papers coming hot off the heads, being folded and bundled at ferocious speed - who could ever give this up? To be bitten by the newspaper bug, to have ink flowing in your veins, is this not the kernel of newspaper journalism?

So, it is not surprising that so many people react vehemently against the warnings about the coming demise of newspapers as we know them: they don't only believe it can't happen, more fundamentally they don't want it to happen. I am sorry to

bring the bad tidings to them.⁽³⁾ Like it or not, the demise of printed newspapers is on the agenda. And, from many points of view, as I will argue, it is a case of bad news being good news.

People like to point to an observation by John Carey who says that the newspaper took 100 years to reach 50% of Americans. In contrast, the telephone took 70 years; radio only about 10 years, and television less than that. Of course this trend doesn't always hold: cable took nearly 40 years to reach the same penetration rate (Dennis, 1989:2). But it seems to be the general thrust of things, and if you want an image for the future, look at the success of CD's in mass music markets, where this technology has spread at an incredibly rapid rate.⁽⁴⁾

The situation in newspapers is likely to be less extreme, but there is an extremely compelling reason why it will be all the more a determined and unstoppable process. That reason is money. In short, electronic papers will be much, much cheaper for everyone, as compared to their old-fashioned pulp-descended counterparts.⁽⁵⁾ And with cheaper and more varied electronic newspapers, South Africa - for one - may be able to look towards raising its daily newspaper circulation levels above the paltry 44 per 1000 people, even if we may never reach the Norwegian world record of 619 per 1000. Cheaper newspapers may mean more newspaper readers in a country like ours. More people may read. This is part of the

good news.

The electronic newspaper will be cheaper precisely because of the contradiction embodied in its name.⁽⁶⁾ Simply, paperless newspapers mean - at last - freedom from the fetters of newsprint prices, space constraints and blunderbuss targetting of audiences. Paperless media mean freedom from the huge investment, maintenance and operating costs of printing presses.⁽⁷⁾ Lastly, paperless media mean freedom from distribution - from trucks, trains and planes, from banks of phone operators dealing with delivery complaints. Imagine what this means to the biggest newspaper in the world, Yomiuri Shimbun, which prints 14.5 million copies daily, 24 hours a day, and which co-ordinates 100 000 schoolboys to drop off its paper. (Fukushima, 1992; Berger, 1992).

Paper is a curse for papers, from a cost and delivery point of view. So a scheme that can deliver a newspaper while bypassing the vast expenses that are tied up with newsprint is clearly a highly attractive option for any publisher. Presuming you can keep your revenue stream constant, the cost cutting entailed would result in huge increases in profitability. Or, your savings could help you increase sales/market share by offering lower prices to subscribers, and/or to advertisers.

There's another aspect of this scenario that makes it even more commercially attractive. Electronic delivery of newspapers allows for much more targetted marketing than even

the most segmented newsprint paper can accomplish. It allows for near realtime delivery of information. And it gives advertisers the technical facility to track penetration and response with unprecedented accuracy. The economics of all this are terrific: you reach consumers far more cheaply than traditional print, and you reach 'em far faster. We're talking greyhounds here.

If you're not spending all your budget on printing and distribution anymore, it also becomes possible to invest in the information gathering and processing side of the operation. According to Fry (1993), just 14% of the St Petersburg Times budget is spent on editorial right now - electronic newspapering would free up resources for a lot more. In principle, the watchdog can concentrate on its core business - which is not business in the narrow sense of the term.

But what exactly then is this business of the press? Many people thought the railways were in the business of running trains and coaches. They only discovered that it was really mass and bulk transportation when it was too late (Fidler, 1992:24), and the far more flexible motor vehicle, showed up their confusion of form with content.

Newspaper publishing, and indeed much other publishing, is not about paper primarily. Unless one redefines the business as that of killing trees (Economist, 1993) and consuming pulp,

there is no fixed reason why publishing has to stay stuck with paper. But if you do dispense with paper, what do you stick with - if anything? "Although we publish newspapers," Mexican publisher Alejandro Junco told the World Newspaper Congress in Berlin in 1993, "we do not consider ourselves newspaper publishers". Instead, he explained, "we are an information company which creates information products to satisfy information needs."

By this he means the primary business of a media enterprise is the selling of information to an audience. Obvious? No. For many if not most publications today, selling information to an audience is not really the fundamental and determining character of the business. Despite such appearances, the primary transaction is something different: it is selling these audiences to advertisers (Smythe 1978, Levant, 1979). This is not how print used to be, but it is now. From a business point of view, the name of the game is creating a constituency, gathering intelligence about it, and then selling access to other groups wanting to reach it.⁽⁸⁾

The benefit of the economics of the new electronic newspaper is that it becomes possible for publishers to return to their original mission: the business of publishing information for information's sake. The point to note here is that whether the business is about selling audiences or selling information (and there are different competitors facing newspapers in both areas), it is not about manufacturing paper products.

The newspaper reader of the early 21st century will probably still have the option of a hard-copy newsprint newspaper. But with publishers getting their advertising and sales revenues from electronic newspapers, the price of your dead tree is going to be charged at its real rate. My guess is that, at today's prices, your electronic paper will cost you R100 a month, your paper edition R18 an edition (see International Advertising Association advert, Business Day, 30/10/95).

This is merely one aspect of the differences. It is not simply a question of same product, cheaper price. The electronic version will offer undreamt of flexibility, range, depth and power; the worthy paper version will scarcely differ from its current package, give or take a few more graphics and colour. I will return to this, but to stick with the economics a bit longer, let us first see who is driving the electronic publishing process.

Until recently, the biggest players in electronic publishing were computer data-base services like Prodigy and America Online - offering computer users access to a range of major newspapers' archives as well as a wide range of other electronic resources. Rather than playing the role of media, they tended rather to be intermediaries between audience and media. They were, and are, not electronic publishers in the fullest sense.⁽⁹⁾

There are other, even more threatening, players poised to

enter the field of electronic information publishing - businesses who have not traditionally been involved in this area. I refer here to the American telecommunications companies, followed closely by paging and cable TV companies.⁽¹⁰⁾

These companies compete with newspapers in several different ways; some hitting the business of selling audiences to advertisers, others grabbing marketshare in the selling of information to audiences.⁽¹¹⁾ Faced with this competition, some US newspaper publishers are urging a link-up with these companies (Potter, 1992:6). But there is a strong fear among American journalists that these outsiders do not have the interests of editorial content at heart, that they have no understanding of the mission or ethics of "the press" as a unique institution in society.⁽¹²⁾

A different question to who is driving the process, has been what the electronic paper will look like. The MIT has experimented with recyclable electronic plastic paper, which you put in a set-top box, much like an M-Net decoder, each evening, and take out as a printed paper the next day. But the bigger interest has been in moving away from any kind of paper at all. Three years ago, Knight Ridder's Roger Fidler was predicting that the new electronic newspaper would be a portable, hi-resolution, electronic device, standard for all newspapers (Markoff, 1992). His prototype was about the size of a thick magazine, almost the same weight, and dubbed a

"newstablet". You would get your information updated in your newstablet through docking it up to a telephone cable link for the bulk information, and receiving broadcast information (via satellite or cellular networks) for real-time updating during a day. The device would also have a degree of hyper-media capabilities that allow for video and audio clips to be part of the publication. (1994:28)

Fidler's tablet prototype (right) looked a lot like the real thing - it is configured like a newspaper, with recognisable layout and vertical format. He argued that documents have evolved in vertical format, and that the horizontal screens of the TV and the computer

meant that electronic papers published through them would not catch on (ibid:27).

By David Karpman
Special to The Home World

DISPLAYS

Field Emission Display
This flat screen technology packs millions of tiny emitters that emit electrons. The electrons strike a phosphor screen and create a sharp image. The screen is a vacuum tube, so it must be sealed in a glass envelope.

A novel way to make video screens flat

By David Karpman
Special to The Home World

The state of the art in flat TV and computer screens is liquid crystal display technology, similar to that in a digital watch. But it's a technology that's been around for decades. The application of LCDs to flat screens, sure, nobody else has a chance, right?

Wrong. There is a surprising alternative that no less an authority than MIT's Computer CEO James J. Hayes could agree is only better: the U.S. government's high-tech screen, now, Princeton University's LUT, a government lab in Princeton, New Jersey, has been working on a new kind of screen that's flat, thin, and the corner of a hardback book. The so-called field emission display (FED) may turn out to be lighter, cheaper, easier to use, and less power-hungry than today's advanced LCDs. As almost everything else in computers

gets measured, screens become proportionately more important. In some laptop machines, the flat screen alone accounts for half of the cost. Research labs of half-inch flat-screen computers that are built more than a screen, but more to a screen with microelectronics. Previously all computer displays, portable or not, were built by flat. If former makes them and even more, it's a matter of time before the computer business and probably the market for high-resolution information too.

FED screens have been in existence with conventional TVs that use LCD screens (see diagram). Like ordinary TV tubes, FEDs emit light. LCDs don't, they merely direct or channel it, so an LCD screen requires external illumination - adding to weight and power consumption. FEDs have sharper contrast than LCDs, which should

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Menu | Order | Enter | End | View | Print | Quit

That was Fidler's vision. With an eye to the new markets, others predicted a different look. The Poynter Institute's Don Fry (1993) suggested the electronic tablet would resemble a Nintendo games device (see also Aumente, 1994:39). Why? Because there were 55 million of these portable screens in the hands of American children, and they sure know how to operate them. Unlike Fidler, Fry predicted that the tablet would be video tape size. So too do those who think that the model will be the PDA - the personal digital assistant.⁽¹³⁾ All, however, have been proved wrong - as has been the case with predictions about the timescale for the rising of the electronic newspaper tide? Some years ago, Gilder (n.d.:145) said that "within the next three or four years, a portable table with laser-printer resolution and contrast and with hundreds of megabytes of solid- state or hard disk memory will be purchaseable for an acceptable price." Other forecasts ranged from five to 50 years (Shaw, 1991:16; Christopher, 1994:28)⁽¹⁴⁾

Five years, fifteen, ten ... these commentators, making their predictions, sometimes as recently as 1994, have been overtaken by history - at least for now. By focussing introspectively on the question of device, the prototype of the portable technical tablet to come, they failed to see the burgeoning of an entirely new medium that does not have at its core the idea of an electronic newspaper, and which does not revolve around transforming paper versions of newspapers into electronic ones. I refer to the Internet and its potential - inter alia - to play host to electronic publications. It is

not, then, the case of people getting dedicated electronic newspaper devices - which devices might also be used as an interface to the world's information system. It is the other way around.

The Internet has brought us the electronic paper not on a dedicated tablet, but on a multi-purpose, and only occasionally portable, computer. And not generally in portrait format, which contradicts the landscape shape of the computer screen, and nor generally with newspaper lay-out and design.

Thus, instead of making its debut as Fidler expected, the electronic paper today typically comes on computer courtesy of the World Wide Web, with a format designed using HyperText Make Up Language, abbreviated to HTML. A pioneer HTML editing programme for Internet publishing, cheekily named HoTMetaL after that now outdated printing method, has itself become

outdated. You may not believe this, but any watchdogs wanting to go online will find the best HTML editor on the Internet under the name of ... Hot Dog.



About the HotDog Web Editor

The HotDog Web Editor is a fast, flexible, and friendly way of creating HTML documents like this one for publishing on the World Wide Web. HotDog currently runs as a 16-bit Windows program (a 32-bit version is being developed now).

Check out [what's so great about HotDog](#) and find out why *you* need HotDog!

BIG plans. HotDog teaming up with I-View, check out what HotDog and I-View have on the drawing board, to make HotDog the complete HTML tool.

The newspaper industry has been so preoccupied with licking the wounds of falling circulations, that it has only very recently looked up to see the flurry of new publishers setting up on the Internet.

In the scramble to catch up, a newly born generation of stand-alone electronic versions of newspapers

is exploding on the Internet. They are there independently, not courtesy of Prodigy, America Online, the telephone companies-become-publishers, or anyone else. A baby boom - or should we say a puppy boom? - is taking place. South Africa too is getting in on the act, led by the country's most innovative paper: the Mail and Guardian, (right), followed by

Independent Newspapers' **IONS**, **Finance Week** and the **Financial Mail**.



Johannesburg, South Africa.

Updated September 15 1995

NEWS AND FEATURES

☛ The official papal visit to SA spells an end to the era of 'Roomse Gevaar'

NEW Will the next pope be black?

☛ A heart-wrenching court case examines the case of a "wrongful birth"

NEW Conditions in South Africa are ripe for an increase in serial killings

☛ In the week of Helmut Kohl's visit, fears that German funds are being used for Inkatha's paramilitary purposes

NEW The Kruger Park may halt its elephant culling if it raises new funds. And an inquiry has revealed new evidence about the army's role in ivory smuggling

☛ A spotlight on the Independent Broadcasting Authority Report into broadcasting

☛ An abusers guide to porn mags in SA

Child labour in South Africa. A reporter poses as a child and works in a factory. **PLUS:** The state of child labour in South Africa. **PLUS:** Entertainment's just child's play.

☛ Scramble for Africa's healing wisdom: Pharmaceutical companies rush to learn from Africa's traditional cures. But is this good for Africa? **PLUS:** Smart drugs and smart drinks. New healing, or new self-abuse?



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Gambling could offer SA a R20bn jackpot, but only if legislation and tough crackdowns are effective
 Iscor's about-turn on Saldanha leaves a lot of questions unresolved
 For the new stock exchange to work properly, the right hand has got to know what the left hand is doing
 Barring the food price wildcard, the outlook for consumers looks good
 There's a great deal more to property syndications than just offering an investor the chance to say: 'Look! I own that building!'
 SA's meat industry is an object lesson in how not to administer agriculture in the new SA
 There's more to November's local elections than posters of Mandela's smile
 Tax benefits are not as generous as they once were, but expanding business in Africa is one good reason to buy a corporate aircraft
 Piker





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The Internet-based newspaper is not the last word in electronic newspapering. But for the

moment, it is here and it is growing.⁽¹⁵⁾ It is online all the time, and 100% interactive, unlike Fidler's tablet. It already contains Hypertext links - these are not some futuristic promises. Click on **Electronic Telegraph's**

Home News, and you find a list of stories. Follow the roller blade one ...



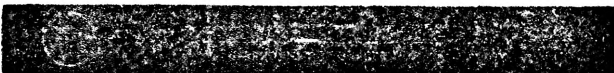
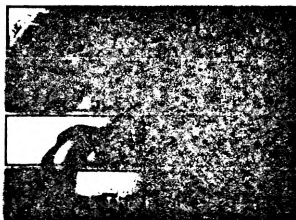
Thursday 12 October 1995

Issue No 132



Tories bang the drum of populism

THE TORIES made their pitch yesterday for a fifth term of government with an array of populist policy announcements, including a campaign to improve spoken English, cuts in NHS bureaucrats and a drive against benefit fraud. The leadership launched a concerted effort to show that the party had not run out of ideas after 16 years in power and was ready to take on revitalised Labour at the polls.



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'I wanted to get justice for girls who did not make it'



A WOMAN who was subjected to a violent and sustained sex attack by Rosemary and Frederick West told a jury yesterday that she blamed herself for the deaths of nine young women.

Rollerblade craze to be curbed in Royal Parks



RESTRICTIONS on roller-blading in the Royal Parks in London were extended yesterday as concern grew about dangers to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

Cool-headed women are the stars of space travel



WOMEN make the best astronauts because they cope better than men with boredom and are more

Rollerblade craze to be curbed in Royal Parks

By Colin Randall

RESTRICTIONS on roller-blading in the Royal Parks in London were extended yesterday as concern grew about dangers to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

The new arrangements announced by the Royal Parks Agency, however, fell short of a ban on the activity in Hyde Park, where a BBC researcher, Mark Welch, 26, was killed in a collision between his bicycle and a rollerblader in July.

The agency said roller-blading would be permitted on cycle tracks in Hyde Park, the Serpentine Road and - on Sundays when traffic is prohibited - South Carriage Drive.

In Kensington Gardens, rollerblading will be allowed on the Albert Memorial Road and in a special area set aside for it on the Broadwalk.

The activity will be banned in Green Park and Greenwich Park. Bans in St James's Park and Regent's Park will continue.

The restrictions in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens were reluctantly accepted by the British Inline Skating Association, which says 500,000 people in Britain are involved in what it calls the world's fastest-growing sport.

8 August 1995: Rider blinded as rollerblader startles horse

Rider blinded as rollerblader startles horse

By Toby Hamden

A RIDER was blinded in one eye after her horse was startled by a rollerblader. Janet Cunningham, 33, suffered a crushed eye, broken teeth and injuries to her neck and face after being thrown on to cobblestones in London's Hyde Park. Surgeons at St Thomas's Hospital were unable to save her sight in the damaged eye.

The incident raises further concern about rollerblading in public parks. Last month, Mark Welch, 26, a BBC researcher, from Durham, died from head injuries after colliding with a rollerblader while cycling in Hyde Park.

A voluntary code of conduct for rollerbladers has been introduced jointly by the Royal Parks Agency and the In-Line Skating Association. The agency is to meet to consider further measures.

Tom Corby, spokesman for the Royal Parks Agency, said: "The rollerblader was correctly on the path and committed no offence.

"We do not believe banning rollerbladers is the answer. We want to accommodate them safely along with cyclists, horseriders and all other park users."

Park death raises safety fears

By Toby Hamden

A CODE of conduct for rollerbladers in London's royal parks is being considered following the death from head injuries of a cyclist yesterday.

Mark Welch, 26, a BBC television researcher, from Durham, was riding on a cycle path in Hyde Park on Thursday evening when he collided with a rollerblader and hit his head.

He died at the Royal London Hospital without regaining consciousness. Police say that he had not been wearing a cycle helmet. The rollerblader, a 32-year-old London man, was slightly injured. He has been interviewed by police but has not been charged with any offence.

Rollerblading, also called in-line skating, originates from the US and has grown popular over the last three years.

Practitioners use skates with a row of wheels set in the soles and can reach speeds in excess of 30 mph.

Tom Corby, spokesman for the Royal Parks Agency, said: "We are having talks with the In-Line Skating Association to try to set up a code of conduct for rollerbladers in the parks."

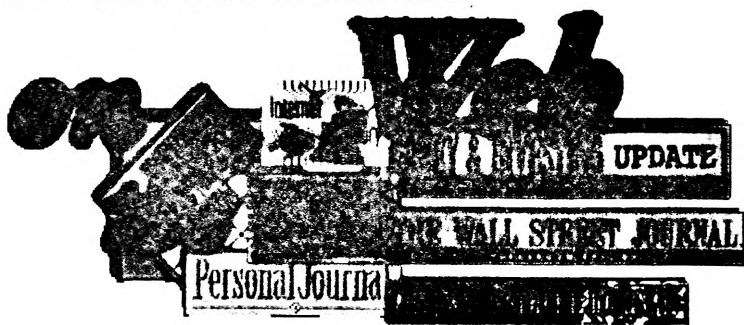
Last year, an Italian woman tourist spent two days in hospital with head injuries after being knocked down by a rollerblader in Kensington Gardens.

In some electronic publications, there are - and can be - long, short, intermediate and link-in levels of information accessible to a reader through hypertext links.⁽¹⁶⁾ Want the full text of the president's speech? It can be called up if you like. Audio too is beginning to be more easily available. The soundbite from the Internet's electronic watchdog could be far more of a mouthful than the unsatisfying nibbles carried by broadcast media. Suffering tired eyes (and believe me, so much screen gazing will result in a boom for eye drop companies) - you can get the device to read out loud to you. Increasingly, multi-media capabilities will mean that you will be able to touch a photo and activate a video clip complete with sound.

For some papers, the demand for data has come as a surprise. As the editor of the Electronic Telegraph recently told me, they began with a pure on-line replica of the print version of the paper - until readers began querying whether there wasn't more information available on particular stories. There was, of course: it had simply been left out of the print version for reasons of space. Now the full, unabridged version of the Telegraph goes out on the Internet. The electronic medium means that sub-editors no longer have to spike or butcher stories in order to squeeze things into a fixed (and shrinking) newshole. You can also archive, and sell, all the data collected by the paper, and presto: you have eliminated the previous regular wastage of four-fifths of the information collected in your business. For readers with special interests

and a thirst for more information on these topics, this is a huge benefit. Even more, though, the electronic paper may also be customised for each reader. It used to be that newspapers left out a large portion of information they collected, and readers ignored a large portion of that which was actually published. No longer. You're a sports lover who normally reads the back page of a paper first? Simply get it as the first page of your opening screen. Interested in keeping up with a particular story as it unfolds? Earmark it electronically, and new developments will be prominently flagged as they are reported. This service exists in one of its best forms in the on-line **Wall St Journal**. Intriguingly, the paper with probably the most archaic design (deliberately retained even in its European edition - see next page) is one of the most advanced electronically. It supplies you with software called **Relevant**, and you customise your version of the paper according to what topics, countries, industries, etc. are of most interest.

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Cash-Flow Woes Law Firm's Downfall Exposes New Methods Of Money Laundering

Tough Banking Rules Force Cali Drug Cartel to Use Complex Financial Plays

A Police Locker's Contents

By THOMAS L. O'BRIEN

NEW YORK—One afternoon here last fall, Robert Hirsch, a banking and entertainment attorney, listened on his phone as a woman from the Cali cocaine cartel threatened to send someone from Colombia to cut him and his family to pieces unless he turned over \$25,000.

The next day, federal agents and New York police, who had learned from wiretaps that assassins were waiting to kill Mr. Hirsch at his Manhattan office, appeared on his doorstep. They whisked him away to a "safe house," with Mr. Hirsch unaware that the agents also knew that he had stolen \$2.5 million from members of the cartel—people who had once provided the attorney with a rich source of income.

Thus began to unravel a \$100 million money laundering scheme, described by law-enforcement officials as one of the biggest operations ever uncovered in New York, leading to felony charges against 23 people, most of whom have pleaded guilty. It also exemplifies the growing involvement, and importance, of seemingly innocuous professionals in the world of money laundering.

"Drug laundering has become such a complex process that it requires individuals with a sophisticated understanding of banking and law," says Gregory Pastis, a supervisory agent with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. "I see the Hirsches of New York as the problem, because lawyers allow their firms' accounts to be used to move money."



Robert Hirsch

What's News

Business and Finance

INTERNATIONAL PAPER SAID it will fight BBA Group for Holvis, the Swiss textile and paper producer. International Paper said a new offer to be announced today depends on it acquiring both of Holvis's units. But Holvis already has agreed to sell its nonalloys division to BBA, making for the most heated takeover battle in Swiss corporate history.

(Article on page 3.)

Shifting U.S. stock prices are inviting analysts to fine-tune their predictions on when a correction will come and how severe it might be. On Friday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 43.23 points to 4369.00.

(Article on page 1.)

Olivetti's net loss widened to \$412 million in 1994 due to restructuring charges, increased debt and operating deficits. But the company said it expects to break even in 1995.

(Article on page 2.)

ABB signed an agreement with Ukraine on behalf of an international consortium that plans to replace Chernobyl's nuclear plants with a non-nuclear power plant, at a cost of \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

(Article on page 4.)

Nissan swung to a parent-company pretax loss of \$719.7 million for its fiscal year from year-earlier profit, as Mitsubishi Motors' profit jumped 36%, Mazda's loss narrowed, Daihatsu's earnings more than doubled and Fuji Heavy Industries returned to the black.

(Article on page 2.)

BK Vision said it is not pulling out of UBS despite contentious relations between the two Swiss companies. The value of BK Vision's stake in the

World-Wide

U.S. AND EUROPEAN governments pushed to alleviate the Bosnian crisis.

The so-called Contact Group—composed of U.S., European and Russian diplomats—will meet today in Holland to consider its next moves amid the heightened crisis. Over the weekend, Bosnia's foreign minister was killed when rebel Serbs shot down his helicopter, and Bosnian Serbs increased to 317 the number of U.N. peacekeepers held hostage in retaliation for NATO's air strikes last week. France and the U.S. began moving aircraft carriers into the Adriatic to signal their growing concern for the safety of the 22,000 peacekeepers now in Bosnia. France's new President Chirac said that France would withdraw from the region if its troops couldn't be better protected. (Article on page 2.)

Senior representatives of NATO and the U.S. Security Council will also meet this week to discuss the crisis.

Unofficial exit polls in Spain indicated the center-right Popular Party scored substantial gains in voting for municipal and regional elections in what was widely seen as a run-up to victory over the ruling Socialists in general elections that could be called next year. Estimates indicated the PP would control at least 11 of the 13 regional governments being contested and that it had won control of a majority of Spain's 10 largest cities, excluding Barcelona and Bilbao. (Article on page 2.)

A massive earthquake hit Sakhalin Island, off Russia's Pacific coast, and officials said up to 2,500 people could have been killed or injured after being buried under debris in wrecked buildings. Officials said 70 people were confirmed killed in the quake, while confirmed injuries numbered over 200.

Israeli Foreign Minister Peres and PLO chief Arafat renewed their commitment to meeting a July 1 target to agree on a second phase of a Palestinian autonomy plan. Peres and Arafat pledged to agree by July 1 on "the redeployment of the Israeli army, security arrangements, elections and the transfer of authority" in West Bank towns.

Peres said the Golan Heights are Syrian territory, continuing efforts to pressure Israel for withdrawal from the area.

Markets Summary				
Dow Jones Industrial Average				
4369.00				CLOSE: 4369.00
4370				-43.23
M	T	W	T	F
LONDON				
FT-SE 100	3311.1			-17.1
TOKYO				
NIKKEI	2077.87			-27.25
DOLLAR				
DM1.3770	-0.0206			-0.002
POUND				
				-0.002
Currency values represent 3 p.m. New York trading				

High-End Holidays Help Rich Americans Search for Sublime

From Kyoto to Lake Como,
Money Flows Like Perrier,
And Europe Draws Well

By LISA MILLER

Staff Reporter

Roger and Miriam Bilyeu are counting the seconds until their summer vacation. The retirees from Northridge, California, will cruise the islands off Sweden, do some sightseeing in London and then board a private train in Uzbekistan to enjoy the old Silk Road from Tashkent to Beijing. The Bilyeys will jet off to Kyoto for a fall-foliage walking tour.

Quest for the Sublime

Each summer, wealthy Americans resume their journeys seeking something new and different. It could be the English countryside in Jaguar convertibles, taking their children gorilla-stalking in Tanzania or ballooning in Tuscany. But lavish surroundings aren't always the point: Their vacations are a quest for the sublime.

These people "want the perfect experience," says Nancy Nowgold, editor of Travel & Leisure magazine. "Just like they want the best cappuccino machine."

This June, Bill Young of Canandaigua, New York, is going to one of the most exclu-

The Outlook U.S. Keeps China Trade, Human Rights Separate

WASHINGTON

The Clinton administration is preparing to renew China's most-favored-nation trading status for another year with just a token acknowledgment of its continuing differences with Beijing on human rights.

Anthony Lake, U.S. President Bill Clinton's national security adviser, said Friday a favorable decision is forthcoming. The White House announcement is expected to reaffirm Mr. Clinton's policy of allowing China its accustomed trading privileges while pursuing a policy of "comprehensive engagement" on other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship.

In previous years, particularly since China's violent suppression of dissent in 1989, the annual review of China's trade status sparked heated debate in the U.S. about human-rights policies. Last year, Mr. Clinton formally separated consideration of trade and human rights in China, making his policy for the renewal of China's law-of-trade access to the U.S. market this year nearly a foregone conclusion.

There's little evidence that China's human-rights performance has improved since last year's renewal. Indeed, police last week rounded up several dissidents who signed a petition calling on the government to reverse its verdict on the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown.

Human-rights advocates have criticized the Clinton administration for making the trade review toothless even while extracting little in the way of human-rights concessions from Beijing.

Though Republicans have traditionally been the vocal critics of China's MFN trading status, the new Republican-controlled Congress may challenge Mr. Clinton's decision, which he must announce by June 3. In a television interview Saturday, North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he doesn't favor renewing China's MFN status "under the present circumstances." The Clinton policy isn't likely to have much support in the House International Relations Committee, either.

Some trade experts, however, say Clinton opponents won't have enough votes to overturn the decision.

Deep Trouble Eurotunnel Becomes Part of the Landscape As Feat and Fiasco

Marvel Link Amazes Riders, But Red Ink Sours Backers On Similar Grand Projects

Anybody Recall Suez Canal?

By DANA MILANKA

Staff Reporter

LONDON—On a wall in Eurotunnel Chairman Alastair Morton's office hangs a framed quotation of Lenin's: "A tunnel beneath the English Channel couldn't be built. The Communist leader said, because 'capitalism is in the way.'"

Eurotunnel, born in Margaret Thatcher's heyday, was created to prove Lenin wrong. To be a symbol of the power of private enterprise. The tunnel was financed without a penny of public money by 720 shareholders and a global syndicate of 220 banks.

A decade later, the Channel is indeed a symbol, but not the type intended. Woefully over budget and built the tunnel, but they are focused on short-term returns that for projects of Eurotunnel's size, "the economics don't work out."

"Lenin was half right," Sir Alastair says. Global capital markets proved big enough to build the tunnel, but they are focused on short-term returns that for projects of Eurotunnel's size, "the economics don't work out."

Gating Under?

Newcomer banks have made less provisions on their Eurotunnel loans and may well seek to take an equity stake in Eurotunnel if the project can't make loan payments. To the traveling public, this hardly matters. "I think it's wonderful," says Chris Wood, a New Zealand tourist, as his train from London to Paris makes the 15-minute pass beneath the Channel. What about the financial troubles? "Those financial troubles," he asks, "a few minutes later, a passenger on the train admires the French scenery whizzing by at 300 kilometers per

Personal JournalSM

Published for a circulation of one.

This Just In

Personal Journal is updated continuously: so at any time, day or night, you can download the latest news.

Personal Journal

File Edit Contents Setup Help

Published: 11/11/95

Business & Finance

Stock prices are moving higher on enthusiasm about a slowdown in economic growth following this morning's durable-goods report. The Dow industrials were up 28.01 points at 4115.84 at 10 a.m. EST. Broader market gauges also were higher.

World News

The House is set to approve a major overhaul of the nation's welfare system today after Republicans defeated a Democratic challenge to their reform plan in a 228-205 vote Thursday night. The Republican bill would dismantle 45 social programs.

Personal News

1 IBM (IBM) Block 128,500 Shrs At 83 5/8 (IBM)

2 Hot Stocks To Watch: SVGI PFE GRA (PFE)

3 *Smithkline Beecham, Schering Plough, Mid-Atlantic In Pact (S)

4 *Genl Automation, All-Quotes Unit to Consolidate Some Ops (T)

This individualisation means that readers only need receive, and pay for, what they want. It is described by Swedish media manager, Birgir Magnus, as the shift from *Le Monde* to *Le Moi* (Magnus, 1995), or what Negroponte likes to call, *The Daily Me*.⁽¹⁷⁾

The dual multi-media and televisual capabilities of the medium raise the question of what the successful model of electronic newspapers will be. Will it render obsolete the models of USA Today or British tabloids where stories are written to sound-bite length? Will the audio-visual come to predominate over the purely textual? There is no answer, because there will probably be no singular success story. The point is that the electronic newspaper is a vehicle enabling a multitude of newspaper styles, formats and titles with supplemental audio and visual dimensions.

At the same time, it is interesting to note an argument by George Gilder (n.d.147). For him, new technologies make available a plethora of narrowcasting, appealing to special interests. And here, he argues, text, enhanced by graphics where needed, is "by far the best (and digitally the most efficient) way to convey most information and ideas". As a result, he concludes, the new technologies favour text over pure video.

Written words then will not become extinct. No one doubts the

value of a medium emphasising text in easily retrievable format, and with the power to compress and condense a whole world of meaning. And this is not even touching upon the strength of the written to conjure meaning that can be even richer than audiovisual messages and life experience itself.

Part Three: The Making of an Electronic Watchdog.

It is still early days, but one can still ask: What will be the role of an electronic newspaper operating in the vastly overpopulated Internet, and in the formidable shadow of huge databases, e-mail traffic, commercial information, discussion groups, magazines and news agencies?

In considering an answer to this, the first factor to take account of is that newspapers, for all their importance as agenda setters for society as well as other news media, have increasingly lost influence and authority to the non-news media. Popular agendas and popular culture today, to the extent they are linked to the mass media, are influenced less by news in any form than by symbols and sounds.⁽¹⁾ Whether it is music, fashion, youth publications in Western industrialised countries, or symbols, like Nelson Mandela in a Springbok rugby jersey, meanings are being made and conveyed in ways that sideline the media as active agents.⁽²⁾

These popular cultural phenomena of course spread their message through what we traditionally call the mass media, (and much else besides: fashion, the direct CD or homevideo), but it is their activities - not the media, and even less the newspapers - that set the pace. Gone are "the good old days" (if they ever existed), when solitary watchdogs stood guard against governments, and not even electronic newspapering will bring them back.

A second factor to consider in assessing the role of an electronic newspaper is that the Internet and compact discs are mass media headed towards the technological convergence of media. Of course, people's overall media consumption has long been a multiple media affair, but the production has been segregated according to the tools entailed. The point of multi-media, as Negroponte stresses, is not simply a mix of different media, but the ability to switch freely between them (1995:71). That means they need to be produced jointly, and indeed that a newspaper becomes a fluid entity in a universe where media seamlessly blend into each other. If audiovisual media, generally speaking, have traditionally been entertainment oriented, and if electronic papers blur into these media, what will happen to the seriousness of the watchdog enterprise?⁽³⁾

A third factor is the increasing scope of consumer choice among audiences. In the old system, newspapers decided whether they were morning or afternoon reads, what merited page one treatment, what was newsworthy. With the Daily Me, the subscriber, not the paper, decides when to read, what is most newsworthy, what merits further detail and what does not (Kellogg, 1995:18). When everyone can retrieve information directly, when they want it, and ultimately in multiple- or uni-medium format, do publishers become redundant? Will people continue to need newspapers and journalists as intermediaries?⁽⁴⁾ If newspapers are suffering a loss in their leadership role now, what do they do when readers will choose

what they want, rather than the newspapers making those decisions for them?

A fourth factor for newspapers to consider in the coming era is the effect of the low cost of publishing.⁽⁵⁾ Many thousands of people have already set up their own electronic publications on the Internet. In time though, even greater numbers will establish personal home pages, and on the graphics-capable Web sector of the Internet. The Independent on-line service **IONS** will have to compete for young readers with dedicated kids magazines like **Discovery Middle School**, complete with their school projects about dogs on the Internet.⁽⁶⁾

What do these four factors add up to, in assessing the role of the electronic newspaper? For Negroponte, a media company of the future will be less a publisher than a talent scout and a test bed for researchers and writers. For many others, mass dissemination of digitalised information gives the electronic newspaper an even more important role than its paper counterpart. But, intriguingly, this is not seen, however, as a watchdog role.

In Cole's view, "the superhighway, the modern information world, needs sherpas, guides. Those ancient journalistic skills, of selection, of presentation, of analysis, of prioritising, are more necessary than they have ever been." (1995:7).

This theme is expressed by Stoll as follows: "The information highway is being sold to us as delivering information, but what it's really delivering is data. ... Unlike data, information has utility, timeliness, accuracy, a pedigree." (Clifford Stoll, St Petersburg Times, 6/6/95). The remark about pedigree returns us to the canine species - but is more a retriever than a watchdog that is implied in this vision.

Content is king, says Fidler (1992:27). He argues that the newspaper industry is in a better position than the telephone companies to profit from electronic papers, because "content is what newspaper publishers know best" (ibid:24). Ethics too are the preserve of newspapers, particularly things like independence, balance and the separation of advertising and editorial (cited by Christopher, 1994).⁽⁷⁾

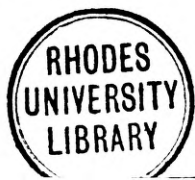
Reputable paper newspapers already have a brand identity and character, a pedigree, and they bring this with them to the Internet. And even with the horizontal format, they can retain a unique design, logo and typography. Like the paper version, the electronic product represents an editorial judgement about the comparative importance of information.

But there is more that newspapers and electronic newspapers in particular can do than prioritising a plethora of information into visual menus. They can help explain this information. I spoke earlier about watchdogs that go for postmen. I would now like to discuss a real life "distortion" of this relationship.

Analyst Neil Postman argues that for people to have a sense of meaning, they must have a believable narrative, which gives meaning to the past, explains the present and provides guidance for the future. Information by itself is not a narrative (1992: 13) For Postman, when you have a sense of meaning, you know what to do with information - what to ignore, what to value, how much weight to give a fact, how to connect a fact to another (ibid:15). But - and here comes the bite - Postman is sceptical about whether newspapers can give people the meaning needed to control information (ibid).

We have here a case of man bites dog, in particular a Postman turning on the watchdog, expressing doubt about its competence. He may be right, and yet he also errs by ignoring the way that newspapers already convey narrative meanings.

I used to be one of those who believed that newspapers were part of the rational, modern, scientific age - that they were attempts, however flawed, to gather and reflect knowledge about the world. Nowadays, I am beginning to see that this journalistic endeavour is not a self-contained, self-evident enterprise. If you turn away from the metaphor of the press being a window to the world, and do a 180 degree about-turn, you begin to notice the background cultural narrative light formerly behind you. You realise, then, how in passing over the shoulders of journalists all these years it has highlighted some things and given sense to others. Newspapers, it seems, are more about recognising and reinterpreting, the



world according to pre-existing narrative themes and structures, than about a positivistic method of collecting knowledge (see Tilley, 1991:59).

Deeply embedded themes, like family homecoming - a story line that features in folklore, religion, rhymes, fairytales, songs and culture generally, are - it now appears - what determines much about the media. The story of the American pilot, shot down in Bosnia in May 1995, resonated so powerfully in the US media not only because of its political echoes of downed pilots lost in Vietnam, but because it was about homecoming. And is not the South African story - in part at least - also really about home-coming as well, a Mayibuye iAfrika? Does the media therefore not play the role of a St Bernard, not in the RDP brandewyn sense, but in the sense of rescuing us from the drifts of anomie and bringing us home, time and time again, to our familiar cultural identities?

It is these kind of human narratives - and one can point to other near-primordial topics as well, like tragedy, courage, betrayal, the supernatural - all with strong roots in culture and the psyche, that seem to be the unconscious, unrecognised business of media. The quality of these narratives is a topic for another lecture; suffice it to say here that sometimes these frames are misleading, sometimes they are coloured by reactionary culture - how many stories confirm the stereotype that blacks cannot govern?⁽⁸⁾ But the point is that whether desired or despised, these stories give sense. They tell who,

what, where, when, and crucially why and how.

And now, to return to the question of the political role of newspapers, what political sense can electronic publishing contribute to the stock of human understanding? Many media can contribute narratives. What are the prospects for the electronic press to play a particular watchdog function - something of a different, more specific, order than that of providing general cultural frameworks for information?

In some ways, our old watchdog function is made redundant by the Internet. As governments worldwide are finding, the Internet - unlike the mass media before it - is not the kind of medium that lends itself to central control (see Wavell, 1995:15; Vadon, 1995:9; Shenon, 1995:1). South Africa's watchdogs traditionally have had to spend time in sounding the alarm in regard to government attacks on them. Internet publishers have a lot less to worry about.

Internet publishers, of course, can still act as watchdogs vis-a-vis government abuses in realms other than press freedom. Some of this work can be done by an electronic surveillance system, independently of electronic newspapers. Search programmes, called Intelligent Agents in the jargon, will trawl the Internet and pick out what's needed to keep an eye on governments. The Internet can mobilise constituencies beyond media to bark like a watchdog - even, ironically, on behalf of the classic newspaper watchdogs. Examples of this

are the following e-mail from the Media Institute of Southern Africa, and an extract from the electronic **Mail & Guardian**.

"ACTION ALERT - SOUTH AFRICA, SEPTEMBER 15, 1995,
ATTORNEY GENERAL SUES PAPER

THE Attorney General of KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa, Tim McNally, is suing the Weekly Mail & Guardian (M&G) newspaper for R250 000 over reports published by the paper last month detailing criticism of his handing of investigations into hit squad activities."

Web Feet Bruce Cohen

August 25 1995

Revenge of the Net

I felt the wrath of the Internet this week -- a sampling of the way the information highway is reshaping journalism.

An article I wrote last week about Pallo Jordan's IRC chat on the green paper on telecommunications included a despatch from one of our correspondents concerning the moderator of the discussion, "Beamjack".

It turns out that our correspondent was wrong. The anger of the local Net community, however, was turned on me and I received numerous "flames".

This instant reaction, beamed directly at me via my email address (and probably on some news groups and listservs), reflects a powerful trend facing the global media fraternity, one which has been the subject of much discussion on the Net's journalism forums: the price of being wired is accessibility -- and accountability.

Journalists can longer hide behind the pages of their papers. If our copy is inaccurate or misleading, we can be instantly and easily challenged by readers directly or in the Net's massive public domain.

Bluntly, we are no longer the gatekeepers of information. The floodgates have been opened

Time magazine felt the enormous power this Net democracy recently when it's now-notorious Cyberporn article launched an avalanche of angry reaction across the information highway that it simply could not ignore.

The Fourth Estate is being watched by the Fifth Estate -- the Internet community. And it's a good thing.

Comments and queries to wmail@is.co.za

The role works the other way round, too, however. Electronic newspapers will find a niche checking the information available on the Internet, scrutinising who supplies it, why and whether it can be trusted (Vasterman and Verwey, 1994:11). The point is that newspapers are not just any conveyers of narrative. They are not merely Lollipop Ladies shepherding people safely across the information highway. We are talking about the press as an institution with potential, at least, to function as an independent watchdog, on behalf of assorted publics and against the abuse of power - especially governmental abuses.

This function reinforces the observation that newspapers have always played roles far greater than gleaners, interpreters and disseminators of information. As Chicago Tribune CEO Jack Fuller points out, they have especially played political and social leadership roles (Christopher, 1994: 29). Unless other social institutions - like the church, the schools, business, etc. - take over these critical functions, it seems clear the character of the press will continue long after presses themselves are consigned to museums.

This paper would not be complete if I did not address some remarks to the training of journalists, especially in the context of press freedom and the information age.

The first point here is that journalists need an up-to-date sense of purpose - one that is conscious of opportunities

provided by press freedom, and one that is conscious of technological possibilities without being mesmerised by them. To be future oriented, new journalists require some multi-media competence. According to one commentator, Katherine Fulter, "We won't be just print journalists, or radio journalists, or television journalists. We may well be digital, multimedia journalists" (1993:31). Certainly, a journalist in that situation will need to script a text for suitability for both visual and verbal reading.⁽⁹⁾

These insights have informed our new curriculum where students at second year have a taste of writing, design, photo-journalism, television and radio, before proceeding to specialise in one medium.

Secondly, it is also clear that the emerging job of journalists will require computer research capacity - another dimension we are introducing into our curriculum.⁽¹⁰⁾ News that does no more than quote officials and experts - journalism that distributes information from the top to the bottom of society - is not the future, according to Dutch commentators, Vasterman and Verwey (1994:10). For them, computer-assisted journalism allows reporters to check the information given by officials and to be less dependent on their sources. It pushes investigative reporting to the fore, and it also provides for computer-generated journalism, where a reporter becomes a researcher, producing facts - like trends - upon which officials are asked to comment (Koch, 1994:22).

Along with the new media thus comes the need for enhanced research and analytical skills, and the ability to sift, separate and link levels of information. Our students will increasingly have to think up their stories in various levels of complexity and comprehensiveness. Operating in a world of hypertext will also require a broad liberal arts and scientific knowledge, in order to make the links between information. Here, sadly, our students still have enormous distance to travel, judging by the dismal answers to our compulsory newsawareness tests. And in terms of information presentation, from having traditionally written in an inverted pyramid style, with information presented in order of descending importance, journalists in electronic publishing will have to present the tip of the iceberg, and a route map about how to reach the mass below.

If we are to produce more than reporters, more than unthinking and mechanical robots channelling traffic in the Information Age, i.e. if we are to produce journalists, then we have to teach far more than technical skills. This is not always welcomed by industry or by students. But we are arrogant enough to try to lead, rather than simply service, these two markets for our products. We are not simply a journalism department, but a journalism and media studies department, and the two are inseparable for us.

We, like journalism schools based at universities abroad, and unlike journalism training at technical colleges, are always

in dynamic tension over the theory-practice mix: over what should get the greatest emphasis, how and why (see also Fliess, 1994). My view is that the theory and practice should be dialectically linked. Theory - like cultural studies, media economics, film history - can, and should, be fed into practice, whether that practice is a media research project or a community video. Similarly, media practices should be informed by the theory, and should inform and develop that theory as well. We need to investigate the idea of senior student internships in industry, which count for part of the degree, and which are an occasion for marrying theory and practice in a fulltime dedicated and professional environment.

Likewise, the notion of recognising journalism teaching staff as multi-faceted is vital: we need university acknowledgement of those staff who publish in the mass or community media as well as in the academic journals, of those who spend time liaising with industry and community in mutually beneficial programmes, as well as those more oriented to conventional academic research and teaching. We have staff who are mainly theoreticians and researchers, others with a more practical media bent, and a healthy degree of overlap in most instances. That is the strength and essence of this department.

Our journalism-media studies linkage and practice-theory linkage are distinct, if related, concerns. Much could be said about them, but for this lecture, what is important to highlight is that both gain extra currency in the age of

democracy and information.

Who are the skilled and thinking journalists, the amateur high school student project reporters, the electronic newspaper publishers and everyone else all a-publishing on the Internet? Some, and an increasing number, will be South Africans. During 1995, my department put on-line South Africa's first magazine of student writing, as well as the country's first school newspaper (produced by township scholars trained by our senior students). But the majority of people on the Internet are, and will be for a long time to come, middle class white American males.⁽¹¹⁾ Notwithstanding its international reach, electronic journalism will fall into the same historical limitations as South Africa's white watchdogs did, if it is not careful. If our students are to operate in this universe as effective journalists, they need to know the debates about media and cultural imperialism, about cultural studies, communication and development, media and economics and so on.⁽¹²⁾

It is this media studies education that constitutes one of the most significant differences between a reporter and a journalist in the vision of our curriculum. With community radio and Internet access promising every Josephine Soap and Jabu Sithole the power to be a communicator, professionalism in journalism training is underlined. To quote Professor Cole: "We must continue to emphasise the reporting, the writing, the scepticism and the ethics, to draw out the inquiring mind, to prepare students for a journalism that demands the old skills

as well as the new, more than it ever did." (Cole 1995:9).

I would like to underline the point about ethics, and add the key value upon which journalistic ethics are ultimately based: the value placed on the watchdog mindset.

There is a new global community growing out there, one that makes the space and territory of different media, notably one which is punted as "702land", look contrived.⁽¹³⁾ This new cyber-community, linked of course to masses of real communities, will need, in its diverse populations, professional journalists and electronic newspapers as watchdogs. At the same time, journalists, whether they work as freelancers on the information highway, as employees for electronic publishers, or work for themselves as one-person publishers, will not have special status.

A long-standing cartoon about the Internet shows two dogs conversing. Says the one to other: "the great thing about accessing the 'Net is that no one knows you're a dog". This is precisely the challenge facing newspapers and journalists in danger of losing their unique historical identity under the dual pressures of a new democracy and a new Information Age.

To be recognised as a watchdog, in whatever medium, is never automatic. It helps if you have pedigree (not least one from Rhodes) but even then, your credibility has to be continuously earned. You earn it through the craft and consciousness of

your communication. It is these characteristics that I hope to stress as I pursue the honour of being professor in this institution.

Can we help an old watchdog learn the new tricks required for democracy and the information age? Watch this space.

Endnotes to Part One.

1. Naturally, the watchdog metaphor highlights only one dimension of the media: a political one. We should not forget Althusser's phrase that in electing some problems, a paradigm (or what he called a problematic) thereby elides others (1971:113). By electing the watchdog focus, we elide emphases like the role of the media as educator or entertainer. But I think it quite legitimate to concentrate on the watchdog aspect, because the media - like few other social institutions - has a profound political significance.

2. Terminology drawn from feudalism conveys the same outlook. This is the fourth estate role of the press, attributed to Edmund Burke: "There are three estates in Parliament, but in the reporters' gallery yonder sits a fourth state more important than they all. It is not a figure of speech or a witty saying; it is a literal fact, very momentous to us in these times". (cited in Donohue et al, 1995:118).

3. C Wright Mills saw the press as being "at the disposal of the elites of wealth and power" and so have many leftwing-inclined analysts (1956:315, cited in Donohue et al, 1995:120).

4. In a rather ironic twist to the dog metaphor, Chris Tipler - the tough man brought in to shake up the Argus company when its new owner took over last year - was dubbed the "Rottweiler" in anticipation of his savaging - not the government on behalf of the public, but the staff of that august company.

5. The Sunday Times' redoubtable Ken Owen has taken same approach in several polemics in his column. Owen has also correctly observed that the full history of the South African press has yet to be written. While, indeed we hope to attract him as a visiting scholar to Rhodes in 1998 to attempt exactly this, as exponent of the Potter position, he will need to take a step back and evaluate the thesis more rigorously.

6. "In hindsight, it may be seen that the English-language press was the major and irreplaceable force in keeping alive the values of democrats during a prolonged and debilitating siege. ... Without their presence, no advocacy journals, no 'alternative press', few extra-parliamentary opposition organisations could have existed in the republic. Had the mainstream press surrendered at any time, all opposition voices would have gone underground as they did in Poland and other communist states." (Tyson, 1993:406). (See also Jackson, 1993:7).

7. Potter writes: "The English Press increasingly became identified with those interests to which it gave expression. ... Once the English ceased to be major opponents, the English Press became a more serious opposition, which at times represented the interests of non-Whites. In Nationalist eyes

the English Press became not a fourth estate but a fifth column" (1975:207).

8. Nationalist Government actions against the press saw continuous prosecutions and imprisonments of journalists. To mention just three cases: There was the seminal conviction against the Rand Daily Mail for its expose of prison conditions in 1965; the jailings of journalists for refusing to reveal their sources - continuing up to the 1994 trial of Beeld reporter Andries Cornellisen, who spurned a Criminal Amendment Act Section 205 subpoena; the detention for more than a year of the current chief executive of the SABC, Zwelakhe Sisulu while editor of the New Nation.

9. Interestingly, however, to the extent that one may use the argument of government reaction to claim a watchdog role, the opposite may be proved. The Government, Potter points out, could have silenced the English Press altogether, but did not. Why? Because, she says, it was a White Press, not a serious threat, and part of White democracy. Finally, it was a "responsible" press, which attacked the rules of the political game, but never flouted them or encouraged others to do so. (1975:207/8).

10. The ANC Youth League had this to say: "While noting the role played by the media in the fight against apartheid, the (ANC- GB) NEC pointed out that, just like all other institutions of white domination have to change, the media has to accept that up to now it is by and large representative of the old establishment and in fact continues to expound its values in a number of ways. This has to change." (Daily Dispatch, 6/9/94).

11. Potter claimed that "the English-language Press gave recognition to all groups in the society despite its sectional bias. As Black South Africans had no means of articulating their interests or communicating their claims, they were effectively not a part of the political system at all. But by representing non-White interests as they saw them, the English Press forced an entry for the non-White into the political system." (1975:207). The key words here are "as they saw them". In the liberationist perspective, the press, far from playing the role of opposition, is branded as having shared interests in maintaining white supremacy.

12. "People who called our organisations terrorist groups still control the main media," points out Thami Mazwai (Sowetan, 5/6/95). "The media, which in the not so distant past, called the ANC terrorists from President Nelson Mandela down, have found ways of fighting the progressive direction the country is taking," says MP Titus Mafolo, former editor of The Eye community newspaper. (15/6/95, Sowetan).

13. Gordon Jackson, in his book Breaking Story, writes: "white ownership and control was one strike against the English press' credibility." (1993:37).

14. An alternative to the donkey is the guard dog. Donahue et al (1995:115) distinguish the guard dog metaphor from the watch dog - the former suggesting "that the media perform as a sentry not for the community as a whole, but for those particular groups who have the power and influence to create and control their own security systems."

15. The parallel leg of the system was the Repressive State Apparatus, abbreviated - appropriately in this country - to the initials RSA.

16. P Eric Louw took this approach in an analysis published in 1983.

17. According to Donohue et al (1995:122), the occasional tendency to turn on one of the masters in a pluralistic power structure and yet protect their house is fundamental to the guard dog conception of media.

18. For an exception to this, however, see Collinge (1989:70): "The deeply contradictory nature of the commercial media makes it difficult to settle for the stereotypical label of victim or villain."

19. This is probably to be expected: internationally, many revolutionary movements and governments see the mass media not as a separate institution, but as a tool to achieve goals of the revolution (Pierce, 1979:123).

20. East Cape "RDP" MEC, Smuts Ngonyama, for instance argues that the media should give good news as much as coverage as bad news in order to promote peace, stability and general harmony (EPH, 2/6/95). MP Titus Mafolo criticises the press in arguing that "the Government, elected by the majority of the people, should communicate the important RDP projects which affluent Press editors do not find newsworthy." More accusatory, the Black Editors Forum declares that "(t)he media's control and focus is dominated by forces hostile to the main component of the Government of National Unity" (Sowetan, 29/5/95). It continues: "We cannot let the 'media mafia' get away with consciously and unconsciously trying to compromise black political organisations which might allow FW de Klerk to spring back as a knight in shining armour because black governance has supposedly failed." (Sowetan, 5/6/95).

21. "A slot (on national television - GB) for government to inform people about work that affects the poor will go a long way in speeding up the project of nation building." - Titus Mafolo, MP. Sowetan, 15/6/95.

22. Sowetan political editor, Mathatha Tsedu, for instance, says that his staff can hardly handle what they have, let alone deal with more information. Financial Mail editor Nigel Bruce joins Ken Owen in opposing the Open Democracy bill on the grounds that this particular government gift horse could be a Trojan steed. (See Berger and Clayton, 1995).

23. People - and the press - nowadays complain about the lack of government delivery in the RDP, but let no one forget that what has been delivered is media freedom (Berger, 1995:63). Today, the press enjoys an unparalleled right to communicate, but seems to be slow to take advantage of this. Yet it can be argued that South Africa desperately needs watchdogs to do justice to this formative period of South African democracy.

24. There seems to be a failure to recognise that black journalism graduates are still a minority, and one that is quickly creamed off by rich multinationals seeking public relations personnel. Put nothing in, and you get nothing out, I find myself preaching to assorted editors who phone me seeking black journalism graduates.

25. Another poser facing the watchdogs in the new democratic landscape is the character of their journalism. Gordon Jackson argues that the nonracial and campaigning alternative publications of the 1980s were prototypes for the way the mainstream would change in the 1990s. In some ways he was right, and it is significant that many alternative journalists today - most prominently former South editor Moegsien Williams who now edits the Cape Times - hold top positions in the mainstream. The alternative press's coverage of black politics, and its pioneering of DTP, are now no longer alternative things to do. But campaigning journalism has taken a back seat, even though thanks to the alternatives, there is a broader spread of investigative journalism (which is the equivalent of Bob Martens tablets for our watchdogs, even if the does is still far from sufficient).

27. In terms of the new ideology, money counts, and that means increasing hidden sponsorships in magazines and pressures on newspaper editors to do the same.

28. The IBA similarly states that a public service broadcaster should address people's "needs as citizens primarily, rather than their preference as consumers." (1995:54).

Endnotes to Part Two

1. That may be so in the USA, but less so in South Africa. Here, according to Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) statistics, for 18% of South Africans, radio is the only mainstream medium to which they have access. More than 50% of rural Africans and the same percentage of African women seldom or never watch television (IBA, 1995:67,70). According to fairly recent readership figures, 95 percent of South Africa's more than nine million rural adults do not read a daily newspaper; 79 percent do not read any magazine (AMPS 1991:6-11). The assumption of the Information Society is that there is too much information to make sense of. But one can equally insist that it is as difficult to make sense of a little bit of information. Quantity is significant, but it is only part of the story. The more important question is quality, and how it is distributed in society. I will come back to this.

2. Nor did the press industry anticipate this fatal outcome when computers began to spread to typesetting, and not even when computers helped with wordprocessing, receiving data, page make-up, graphics, and through scanning capacities rendered process cameras and finally film cameras obsolete. Where will it end? Consider the following article in The Independent, 25/6/95, titled "Kasparov charged up for PC clash". It reads: "Gary Kasparov, the Russian world chess champion, today takes on his most implacable opponent - a computer. ... Last August in London, Kasparov lost the first game and drew the second from a position where some believed the computer had a losing position. Before the match, he said: 'If a computer can beat the world chess champion, a computer can read the best books in the world, can write the best plays and can know everything about history, literature and people.' Afterwards, he refused to speak to the media. The computer was also unavailable for comment." The time will come when that final sentence is not written tongue in cheek.

3. Maybe it is an unfair analogy, but I like to tell the sceptics, the newsprint diehards amongst us, to picture a couple of monks monkeying about their business in a far off monastery some time in the early 16th century. What is this business they're on about? - mass communication; to be precise the laborious process of transcribing copies of the bible, using quill, ink and leather. They're muttering amongst themselves about that damn fellow Gutenberg with his converted wine presses, talking about the decline of standards, deliberating on the need for their craft to defend itself. Bad enough to have mass printing, complains one, these upstarts have done the dirty on velum. But it's all to no avail: the march of progress is irresistible. And it is quickening.

4. The interesting thing about CDs is that these devices were not something new, like television was: rather they were simply a technological advance on what up till then had been pretty adequate vinyl discs. CDs captured their markets

because of their better quality sound, and let us not forget, because of their marketing as a status symbol - a fashion accessory for the 1990s. And because of these factors, they won predominant market share despite being more expensive than vinyl records, and despite requiring consumers to invest in new technology to be able to utilise them. The end result with CDs is that, finally, whether you like it or not, you can no longer even buy most of your music on vinyl any more. The industry, combined with the developing tastes of the consumer music market, has worked to render your medium archaic. Thus, a teenager in the 1990s has to hassle parents for mega-buck pocket money to pay for a whole CD; in the 1960s you could buy a host of hit parade highlights issued on Seven-Singles.

5. Commentators like the Poynter Institute's Don Fry (1993), looking at the trend in cellular phones, believe that a time will come when papers (or petrol stations) will give out free electronic receivers as an incentive to customers, and charges will only be levied for the information subscribed to. Says Fry: "You make money on the blades, not the razors."

6. It will not be a news-paper. Staff writer for the **Los Angeles Times**, David Shaw, spells it out: "Newspapers spend an enormous amount of money to gather an enormous amount of information; only a small percentage of that information is actually published - most of it virtually identical for all readers regardless of their varying interests. The information is used only once - printed in tens of thousands of copies, trucked to individual locations, read and thrown away. The next day, the entire process begins anew - and more trees are killed to produce more papers." (1991:13)

7. A press may be an "engineering marvel" argues Roger Fidler, and its expense may have kept competitors out of the industry in the past, but it is now so costly, that it may even become a barrier to exit (1992:24).

8. In this sense, a newspaper publisher is no different to an advertiser: both offer information to consumers only as a means to other ends. The difference is that the publishers uses it as bait to sell the hapless victims onwards; the advertiser seeks to hook the recipient into making a purchase, lifestyle change or similar advertising goal.

9. However, the commercial and gatekeeping challenge posed by their middleman function should not be underestimated by newspapers.

10. The names include American Telephone and Telegraph Co (AT&T), MCI Communications Corp, business information provider and Yellow Pages publishers The Dun and Bradstreet Corp, and financial services groups Citicorp.

11. In the business of selling audiences, these formidable enterprises, like Citicorp's Credit Card business, build mega-databases of clients which they sell to advertisers for

direct mail and other marketing methods that bypass newspapers and retailers (a key staple of newspaper advertising) alike. In South Africa, the biggest circulating medium, the Edgars Club magazine, does exactly the same. It gathers data on its readers and markets this to other retailers. (Intelligence, February, 1995). In combining both sides of the business, AT&T, with double the annual revenue of the total US newspaper business, is advancing a Smart Phone concept and interactive cable systems - offering advertisers not only direct reach but also direct response to highly specific markets. It already has a "personal digital assistant" pager - a kind of souped-up cellphone which offers two way communication, handles personal organising functions, and can send faxes. One consultant predicts some 20 million hand-held wireless reading devices before 2000 (Presstime, 1993:18, August).

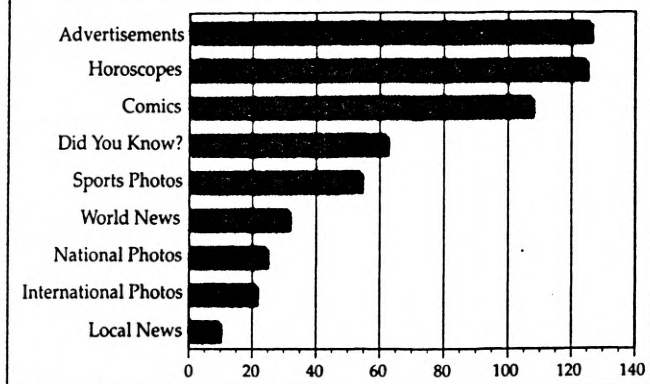
12. Executive editor of the **San Jose Mercury News**, Robert D Ingle said in 1993 that newspapers should network electronically, because it is not in their best interests to wind up "on a network controlled by somebody else with no connection to newspapers [and] without our historic ideas." (presstime, July 1993:36). Until a year ago, it looked like newspapers were losing the race. Today, it is looking different, as I will show later. What Ingle's own company has done has been demonstrated earlier: they designed the Newshound.

13. Whatever the size, the point is that electronic newspapers - whether portable or not - are something new. Just as mountain bikes reinvented the bicycle as a fashion accessory, and cellular phones have become a definitive status symbol, so the new electronic paper has the potential to win over parts of youth markets that conventional newspapers have been unable to reach. Not least because, according to Don Fry (1993), the tablets will also have Nintendo games that come with them. Teenagers and kids will no longer regard newspapers as snooze-papers (or as sleeping dogs, if we recall our canine metaphors for a moment).

According to one writer, both conventional print and passive TV are less and less attractive to children who want something interactive. (Oppenheimer, 1993:35). If he is right, then the electronic paper, with its interactivity, will appeal - in the US at least - to young people in a way that all the NiE schemes in the world have not succeeded in doing. This in fact is the experience of one paper, the **Digital Missourian**. In its experimental phase, it was given to a classroom sixth-grade American pupils. "The kids were just intrigued with the whole nature of the Digital Missourian - the interactivity, the colours, the graphics - by the medium itself, the way the information was delivered," said developer Jeff Adams (Terrell, 1992: 20). The results of this trial, recorded by the newspaper programme itself, and presented on the next page are fascinating (chart source: Presstime, September 1992:20):

DIGITAL MISSOURIAN: WHAT STUDENTS READ

Total Minutes Spent on Each Section Over a Three -Week Period



14. Fidler said that paper will decline after the turn of the century, and within two to three decades electronic publishing will overtake print. He also said sometimes, however, it would take till the end of the decade to penetrate the general consumer market (Christopher, 1994:28) And in 1992, he said a popular, portable electronic newspaper was about five years away (Markoff, 1992). On another occasion he predicted it would be available and affordable within seven to 10 years, for as little as \$200.

15. In 1989, there were 42 papers with audiotext and online capabilities, in April 1995 there were 3200 and growing. (Wilson, 1995:17)

16. The different levels of information are connected through hypertext links. As George Gilber (n.d.:148) argues, the effect is that newspapers can combine the best features of daily journalism with the best qualities of speciality magazines. "The front pages and shallower levels of the system will still function like a streamlined newspaper, which readers can browse, search and explore as they do a conventional paper without thrashing about through the pages. The deeper levels will function like magazines, focussing on business, technology, lifestyles, sports, religion or art." (ibid.)

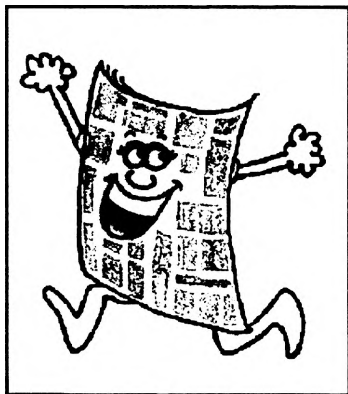
17. There is a danger of people becoming extremely narrow under these conditions, but the reality is that they are already doing an enormous range of pre-screening and selecting from the mass of information currently thrust upon them. Some arguments in the debate predict the growth of individuality as against a sense of local common community is likely to be reinforced. Others argue that the Daily Me is, far from being an introspective self-centred phenomenon, a Daily Planet - an membership of diverse global communities - of unprecedented proportions.

Endnotes to Part Three

1. In South Africa with its low media consumption, this is probably not to the degree that Western-derived theories might otherwise suggest, even if it still probably significant.
2. Child abuse is on the social and media agenda, not least because of what Michael Jackson is alleged to have gotten up to. The rain forests and indigenous peoples can be put down to Sting.
3. Negroponte (1995) predicts a future where messages are sent out in multiple code, and those sending them do not know whether they will be decoded as text, read as radio, viewed as TV, or as some mix between them. That would put paid to the IBA's bid to restrict cross-ownership between newspapers and radio stations.
4. Already in the last US elections, the TV networks lost out to viewers preferring the unmediated coverage of campaign meetings offered by C-Span.
5. Commentator Don Peppers says: "in an age of two-way communications, your readers can become your contributors, and there are a lot more readers than contributors in the current architecture of publishing" (1994:9). He is right, but there is also no reason why readers should only contribute to an institution controlled by someone else.
6. Or children's magazines like that featured on the next page - or literally hundreds of others on the Internet.
7. According to Gilder, "the ultimate reason that the newspapers will prevail in the Information Age is that they are better than anyone else at collecting, editing, filtering and presenting real information, and they are allying with the computer juggernaut to do it." (nd.:149; See also Fidler 1992:24; Christopher, 1994:28; Markoff, 1992).
8. Often these narratives are proscribed and patterned by people in power. Thus, "more than 70 per cent of the stories in the (United States - GB) nation's principal newspapers are based on the statements and quotes of government officials," writes Koch (1990:175). This pattern is underpinned by news conventions which give rise to a special narrative structure and sources, according to Koch. The end result, in his view, is to make the fourth estate a partner rather than an adversary of government (ibid:177). There is some validity here, though for the purposes of this discussion, I am focussing upon the role of media in communicating narrative, rather than the character of the narratives themselves.
9. Asks professor Stephen D Isaacs of Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, who will research, collect and display the coming "combination of video, text, photographs, graphics, voice and who knows what else"?. Will it, he asks, "be

computer wizards? Cyberspace entrepreneurs? Librarians?". He answers: "The fact is it had better be journalists... people steeped in a tradition of journalistic goals, of public service and of commitment" (1995:50). The title of his article is, pointedly, "The gatekeepers or the barbarians?" Things are unlikely to be as stark. Rather there will be collaboration between a range of skilled people, including animators, film-producers and camera-operators, graphic artists, information systems people, computer specialists and so on.

Illustration for note 6:



Kids newspaper making its debut!

Hey kids!

Be sure to check out the **Columbia Missourian on Fridays**, for the great issues of miniMO, a newspaper just for kids!

Just like any other paper, you'll find articles about stuff you are interested in: sports, games, comics, jokes, and of course, news. In the first issue there are some submissions from some fourth graders in Columbia, and we hope to have lots of submissions from kids of all ages in future issues.

You can send in anything you want -- stories, jokes, games, poems, black-and-white artwork -- and we'll try to print it. You can even sign up to be a Student of the Week or Athlete of the Week! Or maybe your pet will be featured as the Pet of the Week!

We called the newspaper miniMO because it is a mini version of the Missourian, and MO is the abbreviation for Missouri. You'll find miniMO in the Missourian every Friday through the end of the school year.

And because this is your paper, you can also send in letters to the editor to voice your opinion on things. Adults can talk back to the editor in the regular Missourian, so you should be able to talk to the editor too. And if there's something you'd like us to write about, you can tell us that, too. There are three ways you can talk back to us:

- You can write us at: miniMO, Columbia Missourian, P.O. Box 917, 301 S. Ninth St., Columbia, MO 65205.
- Or you can call our voice mailbox at 882-5739.
- Or you can even send us e-mail on the Internet at this address: c620715@mizzou1.missouri.edu

We hope you'll get the miniMO each week and have fun reading it and seeing people you know in it -- maybe even yourself!

10. As the Poynter Institute's Nora Paul says, "Together, primary and secondary sources add up to good research. Today's reporter, making the leap from mere observer of events to analyst and interpreter of those events, needs access to secondary sources." (1994:36). Computer research capacity empowers journalists to gather such secondary information - as an extremely powerful complement to primary information.

11. As with Hollywood films, California has conquered global culture on the Net. It is no coincidence that the leading cult magazine on the Internet, HotWired, is located there. It is also not fortuitous that a South African best needs to access the Net in the morning when the Americans are still asleep and cyber-jams are accordingly diminished. And as we increasingly adopt Windows 95, so we will find Bill Gates's software channeling our Internet access via his corporation's gates and gatekeepers.

12. Even more broadly, to quote Everette E Dennis: "A university graduate who has no concept of the role of communication in society, of freedom of expression, how to use the media to stay informed and so on, is not an educated person prepared for society today. (1989:7). That is the non-negotiable starting point for students who want to graduate with a Rhodes journalism degree.

13. According to Nicholas Negroponte, "(t)he true value of a networking is less about information and more about community. The information superhighway is more than a shortcut to every book in the Library of Congress. It is creating a totally new, global social fabric."

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PROFESSOR GJEG BERGER

BJourn, BA(Hons)(Rhodes),
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**NEW TRICKS FOR THE NEWSPAPER TRADE:
AN OLD WATCHDOG MEETS PRESS FREEDOM
AND THE INFORMATION AGE**

**INAUGURAL LECTURE
DELIVERED AT RHODES UNIVERSITY
ON 20 SEPTEMBER 1995**

by

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Preface

My first dedication is to my wife, Jeanne, and my daughters Vanessa and Alexia, for having done so much for me to reach this occasion. Secondly, I would like to mention the role of my late father, Nathan Berger, a Russian scholar, who instilled in me a love of thought and learning. Third comes my thanks to my Australian mother, Lucy Gough Berger, who as a journalist on **The Star** newspaper used to bewail how her politicised student son had forsaken Haggard for Hegel.

Further thanks must go to people who have contributed so much to my intellectual development: Professor Terence Beard, Nancy Charton, Professors Ian MacDonald and Jacky Cock. Then there also are my erstwhile student peers, Tony Pinchuck, Ian Donald, Pete Richer and Aurret van Heerden, to whom I owe many intellectual debts.

More recently, I need to thank US publisher David Archie and Swedish newspaperman Ake Ahrsjo for exposing me to international press trends. To my inspiring staff, and to our visiting electronic newspaper expert, Roland Stanbridge, I also express gratitude. Likewise to Janet Carr of Computer Services, and not forgetting our administrative, technical, cleaning and support staff.

Finally, I turn to my predecessors. The first here is the man who conceived this journalism department, Prof Guy Butler. And in a marvellous demonstration of the need for this institution, I remind you all of a caption to a photograph in an edition of **Grocotts Mail** shortly after I took up this post: it cites me as Prof Butler.



Professor Gavin Stewart, Professor John Grogan, and Professor Guy Butler spoke on "Press Freedom and the New Constitution" on Thursday as a part of Law Week at Rhodes University. Picture by John Dennehy. (*Grocotts Mail*)

The first head of the journalism department was Tony Giffard, now an American, whose early work was pioneering research of readership figures of the South African press, and who subsequently published an important review of repression of the South African press. He was followed by a real American, Les Switzer, a man who unearthed the hidden history of a vibrant black press in South Africa. Gavin Stewart, now editor of the **Daily Dispatch**, was the third head of this department, and the man who more than anyone else put together a team of world class teachers of journalism and media studies. It is with pleasure and pride that I come after them.

New Tricks for the Newspaper Trade: An old Watchdog meets press freedom and the information age.

Part One: Whither the watchdog in a democratic dispensation?

The metaphor of a watchdog is well entrenched in the rhetoric in terms of which the "proper" social function of the press is often conceived. It is an interesting metaphor, because it implies the role of a guardian - of the media being firmly in the camp of civil society, and protecting it against predatory intrusions by the state. To hyperlink the watchdog metaphor to another metaphor in journalism, one might say if one of the best forms of defence is attack, the watchdog has at its disposal a number of newshounds, as illustrated by these pages found on the Internet:



Here's a dog that's really paper-trained!

Every day it gets harder to keep track of the important stuff. What's your competition up to? What's going on in your home town? How is the out-of-town press treating a recent announcement by your company? What's the latest news in your hobby? Is your neighborhood in the news? Did anyone pick up your press release? Have you or anyone you know been mentioned in the press? How are the companies in your investment portfolio performing?

NewsHound gets you all the news you need as soon as it's news -- usually before it appears in the paper. It automatically searches articles from a wide range of newspapers and wire services, as well as classified ads from the San Jose Mercury News, and sends any relevant documents directly to your electronic mailbox.

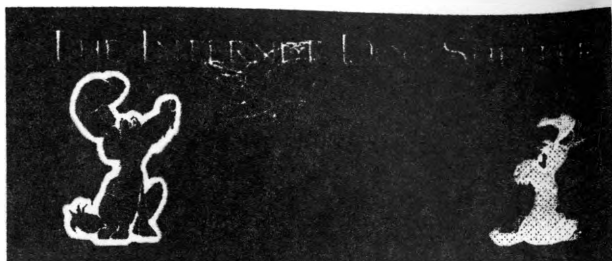
To register for NewsHound, please call 1-800-818-NEWS. If you're already registered for NewsHound, simply click the NewsHound icon below.

MORE INFO ON CANINES?



Coming Soon: Use this NewsHound form with your World Wide Web browser.

The Internet even brings us the site on the right (to which I have added - and expanded upon - one of the more intriguing idioms around the species):



Dogs = media = man's best friend?

KIDZ CANINE FINDER

If you want to continue with dogs outside the space of journalism, you can hyperlink to a real cute collection via "Kidz Canine Finder" (my addition). See the last line below:

Electronic Portfolios from Discovery Middle School

The kids at Discovery Middle School were assigned a ten card portfolio about any subject they wanted. We used all kinds of electronic resources: multimedia encyclopedias, electronic atlases, the Internet, and the World Wide Web. These are some of the portfolios. Some are informational and some are just for fun. We hope *you* have fun.

World Conservation, by Linda McDonald, Jennifer Herman, and Paige Clark, grade 8

Hurricanes, by Rachel Rusch and Janira Vazquez, grade 8

Australia, by Jackie McIlvaine and Ronda Parsons, grade 8

Impressionistic Art, by Annie Khan and Jessica Conte, grade 8

Jet Aircraft, by Jeryme Stahley, grade 8

Hawaii, by Natasha Singh and Mandy George, grade 8

The Sega Home Page for Middle School Kids, by Jason McKeown and Justin Fountain, grade 8

The Country of Oman, by Kevin Pizer and Raf Szytula, Grade 6

Whales and Dolphins, by Shannon Finnegan, Grade 8

The Surfing Home Page, by Alba LaSalle and AJ Reyes, Grade 8

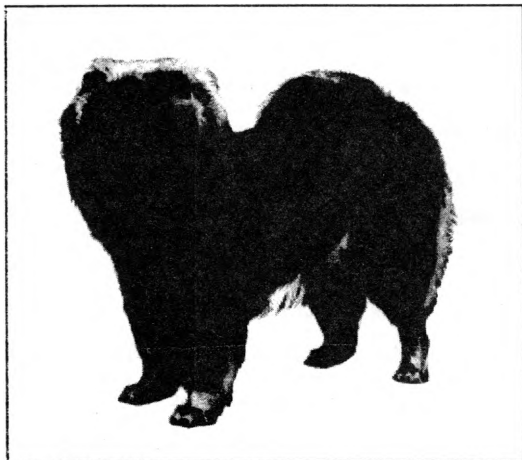
Mars. The Red Planet, by Melanie Adams and Natasha Raynor, Grade 8

Marine Life, by Brandy Hammett and Diana Wilson, Grade 6

➔ All About Dogs, by Lindsey Eppleman and Michelle Mills, Grade 6

And "All About Dogs", by Lindsey Eppleman and Michell Mills, Grade 6, presents us with the following:

Dogs



By Lindsey Eppleman and Michelle Mills, Grade 6

Have you ever seen a dog that can count? Well Bluedog Can Count! Dogs and humans have lived and worked together for well over 5,000 years. No one knows how they first became partners and friends. Probably wild, wolf-like dogs gathered where people roamed and settled waiting for scraps of food to be thrown away. These wild dogs and humans had one thing in common, they both had to hunt for their food. The human hunters soon found out that dogs could run faster.

Around The World

Many herdsman still control their sheep cattle with a herd dog like a collie or a shetland sheep dog. Small herding dogs drive livestock by nipping at their heels. Larger herding dogs move to and fro around the flock barking, glaring, and urging the animals along.

In The Yard

Larger dogs are often kept outside in a kennel or doghouse. The kennel must be warm and dry. You may need a well-built run of posts and wire netting. But a dog will lead a happier life if it lives in the house with the family. There are many organizations for dogs on the World Wide Web. There is the Canine Web California Rescue Dog Association, CARDA, and the Cornell Canine page. Everything you want to know about dogs is in the Dog Glossary. There is also a Dog Home Page and the Internet Dog Shelter. We hope you enjoy these pages and learn some new information about our favorite animal, the canine.

In canine cyber space, we presumably have a case of the byte being stronger than the bark. That aside, however, what we have here is a catalog compiled as part of a class project by American children. But these are not merely children, and contrary to what I just said: this is not outside the space of journalism. These are children researching, writing and publishing their information to a mass audience. They are children, in other words, being reporters.

The watchdog metaphor contrasts with a different one that could be put forward to describe the role of newspapers: the carrier pigeon. This image buttresses the argument that the press as a messenger should not be blamed for the message. There is some truth in this argument, but at the same time, few people would accept that newspapers are merely messengers. The process of selection and emphasis, not to mention political orientation, tends to highlight the partisan character of the press - a character that is better captured by a more forceful beast than the humble pigeon, viz. the watchdog. ⁽¹⁾

The canine metaphor confines non-political considerations to the sidelines, and I intend to remain with it throughout this lecture. I am a cat person myself, and though some of my best friends are dogs, I have some difficulty in knowing the difference between a labrador and a golden retriever. And speaking of retrievers, the Internet offers us one too ..

Introducing the News Retriever...

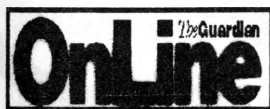


The Internet's answer to Rover the news hound. Let sleeping dogs lie. Have this golden retriever fetch you some gems. GO BOY!

A personal selection of some of the best newspapers on the World Wide Web

Europe

The Financial Times, London



The Guardian, London

The Observer, London

Sunday Times, London



The Irish Times, Dublin



The Daily Telegraph, London

Fortunately, the difficulties of distinguishing a dachshund from a great dane do not blind me to the fact that the notion of a watchdog does "beg" the question, of the importance of the character of the pooch being put under the spotlight.



The images on this page are Victorian sketches, and not inappropriately such.

The notion of the press as being in an adversarial

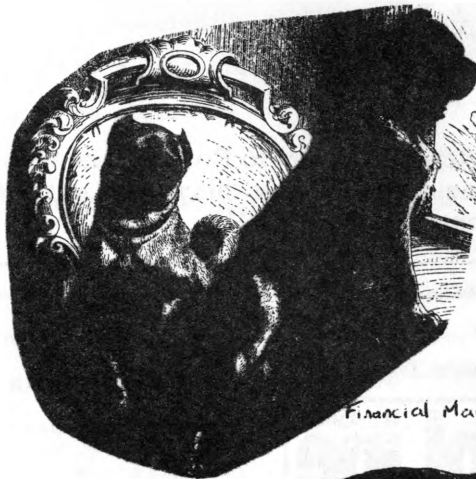
relationship with government is not a new or South African phenomenon.⁽²⁾ It is a

notion that continues to be jealously guarded. One is

reminded of the quip attributed to US editor HL Mencken:

"The relationship between the government and the press is terrible. I hope it does not improve."

For some people, however, the press is - or should be - a lapdog or a poodle of government.⁽³⁾ That's another apt extension of the dog metaphor, even if it finds little support among independent press people.⁽⁴⁾



All this canine conversation is at the level of image, sound and fury, of barks rather than bites, if you will. It highlights the way that language can bend and bob to suit our purposes.

But there is a serious thesis, behind all this deconstructing of the watchdog metaphor. It is one eloquently expressed 20 years ago by Elaine Potter, in her book **The Press as Opposition**, and repeated in various forms by eminent liberal ex-editors like **The Star's** former editor Harvey Tyson in his book **Under Fire**, and his successor Richard Steyn (see Switzer, 1995:17). ⁽⁵⁾

Potter's argument is that with the curbing of black resistance and the decline of white liberal opposition in the 1960s, the press found itself willy nilly propelled into the vacuum (1975:11). It was the press, specifically the English press, the argument goes, which has kept alive democratic values in South Africa and curbed the worst excesses of apartheid governments. ⁽⁶⁾ In the absence of a legal opposition, the press provided democratic checks and balances, this perspective holds. It is this general approach which I intend to challenge in the course of this paper.

As proof of the Potter verdict, one only needs to look at the history of government reaction to the press. ⁽⁷⁾ There was indeed long and harsh government reaction, though - as I will argue later - this is not sufficient evidence to proclaim the

press as opposition. What was this reaction? It took many forms, ranging from the intimidating bluster of bully-boy politicians to truly draconian legislation.⁽⁸⁾ The government's entire endeavour was not merely to muzzle the watchdog, but to draw as many of its teeth as possible. The late Joel Mervis, whose papers his son Jonathan has recently bequeathed to Cory Library, described the state of press freedom at a conference organised by the Rhodes journalism department in 1979: It had, he said, "its left leg in plaster, its right arm in a sling, a patch over the left one eye, deafness in the right ear, a sprained ankle and a number of teeth knocked out ...". (Mervis, 1979:2). The words could just as easily have been applied to the media.

It is this historical backdrop that explains why top anti-apartheid journalists like the **Daily Dispatch's** Donald Woods, the **Rand Daily Mail's** Allister Sparks and Raymond Louw, and later the **Cape Time's** Tony Heard, all ended up losing their editorships. (See Heard, 1991). At a broader level, a huge web of legislation outlawed whole categories of reportage. Censorship and bannings met those who were insufficiently intimidated by the legal minefield in which they laboured. (See Stuart, 1986; Merrett, 1994).

I myself fell victim to such controls: from the viewpoint of today, the two years imprisonment I received in 1980 for - basically - the possession of banned literature seems somewhat excessive. And yet, the punishment - as Rivonia trialist life-

sentence Denis Goldberg told me in Pretoria Central - amounted to a parking ticket compared to what many others incurred for even lesser offences: six years for distributing a few pamphlets in the case of one young man.

South, the newspaper I edited for a period before coming to Rhodes, was banned for three months in 1988. Earlier generations had it even worse: the **World** and **Weekend World** were permanently banned on October 19, 1977. Their reincarnation as the **Post** and **Sunday Post** met the same fate.

The apogee of press repression was the 1980s State of Emergency, where a double censorship was applied: censorship itself was rendered invisible when newspapers were banned from publishing blank white spaces (Merrett, 1994:137)

For Elaine Potter, Harvey Tyson and others, this historical record of repression leaves little doubt that the press did indeed function as a watchdog. But does it prove the case? In my view, it is a faulty logic to read into government responses, the real character of that to which these were reactions. As we know, Nationalist governments typically overreacted to any perceived threat - even regarding butterfly emblems on jeans as evidence of Communist plots to subvert the youth. After all, military conscripts like myself were told, a butterfly flits from flower to flower irrespective of colour. As regards the press in particular, it is likely that Government members' experience of the signal role of the

Afrikaans press and its tightly defined political agenda, gave rise to a false assumption that the English language press would similarly be part of a contest for power. Combined with political paranoia, the result was press repression.

But government reaction was also a lot more than this. Although journalists tend to be extremely media-centric people, the likelihood of the matter is that the apartheid government was probably far less concerned with controlling the press as an end in itself, than in controlling what most South Africans were thinking. My reading is that government anti-press action emanated from a wide-ranging totalitarian philosophy. This philosophy assumes that if you control the schools, the churches, and the media, you control people's minds. It was this thinking that saw not only continuously tightening curbs on the press, but also the SABC becoming tied ever more tightly into Broederbond, and later, military control. Government did not seek to control the media because it was an opposition media: it acted out of the view that the media - just like other social institutions - was a potential extension of its power.

Media is powerful, was thus the premise upon which the government operated. But if there was ever a case that challenged this assumption, it is South Africa. Not only did most South Africans disbelieve pro-apartheid propaganda, contrasting it with their daily lived experiences, many - myself included - adopted diametrically contrary positions.

The logic here is simple: someone who lies to you about what you know, is not to be trusted on areas about which you do not know. So it was that when press and SABC reports parroted police emphases about Communist-made weapons being used to attack South Africa, the effect was to legitimise and popularise Communism. The more an evil regime - and the press - painted the ANC as evil, the more convinced that disbelievers became that the ANC was a force for good. In the absence of independent and credible information, it made sense to read politics in this way.

Today of course we know that not all criticism of the ANC and communism was without foundation. We can see that an incorrect inference was drawn because we judged things in terms of the reaction of another party. It is the same faulty methodology at work, when the advocates of the press as opposition infer the truth of their claims by pointing to the reaction of another party.⁽⁹⁾

The examples of negative press coverage of the liberation movement cited above go further, however, in rebutting the positions of those who argue for recognition of the watchdog performance of the press in the past. As Mark de Vos, a student of mine wrote in an exam earlier this year, it is a poor watchdog that barks at the thief as well as the postman. As regards barking at thieves, many critics argue that historically South Africa's English press was somewhat muted on one of the greatest thefts of all: that of black land,

rights, culture and identity. Attacks on the migrant labour system, grand scale social engineering, and repression of black resistance were under-represented in the press.

It is true that press criticism of petty apartheid and infringement of civil liberties was strong, and this constitutes part of the foundation for those who sincerely believe the press did indeed act as a serious watchdog in the apartheid years. Such people find it unfair to suggest otherwise (eg. Tyson, 1993:328), and indeed they find it hurtful that there is not strong support and gratitude coming from those whose interests the watchdog defended. What has greeted them instead, has been hostility and suspicion towards the press.⁽¹⁰⁾

In fact, many in government and political office today feel that the press was worse than just being half-hearted in its barking at the government, a sin of omission. The newspapers are also accused of sins of commission: of having barked unjustifiably at the liberation movements. It is not difficult to feel resentful, where you - with some justification - can claim to have been the postman, or indeed the legitimate owner of the premisses, yet have found yourself the target of barking as vociferous as that directed at the thief.

Once again, we may tease out the dog metaphor of the media for insight here. It is an extremely sad fact of South African life that many suburbanite pet pooches suffer anti-black racism,

even those who live in liberal homes. That, unfortunately, has also been evident - even if less virulently and often less intentionally - within the English press.⁽¹¹⁾

In its more blatant racially-biased form, editors were quick to condemn what they called, with free and uncritical use of security force terms, "terrorism". Likewise they spared no quarter in attacking non-violent strategies like sanctions. For those in opposition, this meant only one thing: the classic watchdogs were little more than running dogs of apartheid capitalism.⁽¹²⁾

In less blatant ways, indeed in ways that most whites still do not even recognise, the press was - and largely still is - white. This is the result of it being produced by whites and for whites, owned by whites and controlled by whites, and the fact that the sources and experts it quotes are mainly white. Its culture is white. There is nothing wrong with whiteness, except when this goes hand in hand with privilege, discrimination or insularity - as in South Africa. It is hard therefore to decouple these associations, and whiteness therefore understandably limits the appeal of the English-language press. Small wonder then that this press was not, and arguably still is not, universally regarded as a watchdog representing the society as a whole.⁽¹³⁾

As if whiteness was not enough to give a dog a bad name, as the saying goes, this image was compounded by developments in

the 1980s when unprecedented government co-optation, supplemented by pressures that culminated in state of emergency rule, saw the closure of the Rand Daily Mail and a real moderating of criticism of government by the media. A different animal metaphor can do service here, and one which is none-too-complimentary for the press. I have in mind here the creature connoted in the phrase of sticks and carrots, in explaining how the government treated the press in the 1980s.⁽¹⁴⁾

Thus, for those in direct opposition to apartheid then, the press has had - if I may twist and adapt a phrase - a bad press. And it was precisely this perception which led to the rise of the alternative press in direct reaction against the mainstream press's perceived racial narrowness, conservatism and journalistic timidity.

For those of us analysing South Africa and its press in the 1980s, the liberationist critique seemed compelling. It seemed clear that the biggest contradiction was not between government and newspapers playing the role of opposition, but between a ruling elite and exploited and oppressed masses. This analysis was neatly encapsulated - all too neatly - by a concept lifted from Althusser (1981). Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) was the concept, and in this rather functionalist view, institutions were lumped together if they could be said to help reproduce social relations through their operation in the realm of ideology.⁽¹⁵⁾

Such a crude concept captured some of the picture, explaining what the press and Pretoria had in common. But it still failed to explain the highly palpable tensions between press and government. To do so, we used concepts from Althusserian political analyst, Nicos Poulantzas, and introduced distinctions between the interests within the ruling class. Thus, we spoke of different fractions of capital and the classes and strata with whom they allied.⁽¹⁶⁾ In this light, the English press - through its ownership, advertising base and readership, represented mining and manufacturing capital and its white middle class support base. The government on the other hand represented Afrikaner agricultural and finance capital in alliance with white workers and petit bourgeoisie. The contradiction between these two class blocs explained the conflict between government and press, even though this contradiction was of a lesser order than that between the masses and the shared interests of these two blocs.⁽¹⁷⁾

To this analysis, one could at the time apply further insight from the cultural studies work of British-based academics. From Stuart Hall (1974, 1977, 1980), came the observation that the media was too dynamic to be a mouthpiece for pre-formulated classes and their conspiracies and fixed interests. Rather it played a creative and catalytic role in generating and developing views which helped constitute constituencies around classes and political blocs. And, crucially, the media were also, internally, sites of struggle between opposing views and interests.

But here the perspective begins to part company with the liberationist model. The press in the Stuart Hall perspective is an institution which has, to use a useful phrase of Althusser's, its own relative autonomy. This was not a view that gained effective currency in the 1980s and 1990s: periods when political polarisation in the society produced polarised attitudes to the press. In that climate, institutions - including universities - were seen as tools or weapons functioning in the interests of one side of the conflict, rather than being relatively autonomous of this conflict. In conditions of struggle, partisanship prevails, and categories that provide clear line-ups are preferred to the subtleties of a Stuart Hall.⁽¹⁸⁾

This instrumentalist approach to the press has not gone away entirely today, despite the changed conditions.⁽¹⁹⁾ Having seen the mass media serve as a kind of handmaiden to powerful interests in the past, it is little wonder that many in the new government take the same view today. Whereas the press was previously seen as having acted to support white supremacy, now it is urged to support democracy and nation-building.⁽²⁰⁾

In 1992, President Nelson Mandela said: "A free press will be the vigilant watchdog of the South African public against the temptation to abuse power" (Mandela, 1992). Others in government have echoed this. But they also stress something else: a new, additional role. In this view, the watchdog should play a St Bernard from time to time: dispensing glad

tidings and a little drop of RDP brandewyn to the masses. The government has a job to do, and the media should be there to help, not to hinder.

After all, you no longer need a watchdog when the good guys are now in power. This - in effect - is the argument of deputy president Thabo Mbeki (see address to Cape Town Press Club, 19/9/94). The press, in his view, is behaving anachronistically, failing to distinguish between the new democratic government and the old dictatorial one and to recognise the changed role of the press as a result. This perspective goes on to suggest that to redress the ravages of apartheid, strong government intervention is prescribed, and social institutions like the press should fall in behind this national, government-led effort of transformation.⁽²¹⁾

For its part, the press is quick to point out that despite the different historical contexts, power can corrupt. In addition, people in the press assert that State corruption and human rights abuses will still occur, and that - as happened to the Mail and Guardian in 1994 - government ministers like Defence Minister Joe Modise resort to legal action to try and suppress information. There is therefore still a need, it is argued, for independent and critical newspapers.

We have thus, in South Africa today, a debate whose differing positions may be represented in terms of the model of society-state relations to which they subscribe. On the one hand, we

have a government that seeks a strong state and communications reach; on the other a press that seeks to retain its strong, independent-position vis-a-vis the state. This presents an internationally distinctive model. Schematically, and at a high level of generality, this may be represented as follows:

<u>State</u>	<u>Society</u>	<u>Example</u>
Weak	Strong	USA
Strong	Weak	Zimbabwe
Strong	Strong	South Africa

It is an interesting thing to pause and ponder for a moment as to whether you can have a strong state **and** strong society, or whether it is a zero sum relationship in which the strength of one is only proportional to the weakness of the other. I leave this issue aside, however, to pursue a different angle: how strong is strong?

It is perhaps a fortunate thing that this government has come to office at a time in history when the totalitarian model has been discredited, and also at a time when it is likely that our fractious society would refuse to tolerate such a dispensation. We are thus not talking about state strength in totalitarian terms.

With government designs on commandeering broadcast time, however, it is still necessary, however, to remind the new authorities what happened to the organs of Communist rule in

the erstwhile Soviet Union. Government paper **Isvestia** (meaning News) and party paper **Pravda** (meaning Truth) served largely as top-down transmission belts. The result, as wags like to point out, was a Pravda lacking in any Isvestia, and an Isvestia lacking any Pravda. The further, and more significant, result - and repeated even in less extreme authoritarian countries - is a media that loses credibility, impact and audience.

But even a media-inclined person like me, who is partisan towards the watchdog, has to sympathise with this government's problem. Mbeki has been rebuffed in the proposal for state time on SABC, a model incidentally that would turn that particular hound back into His Master's Voice. At the same time, the government continues to be treated with suspicion by the private press. How then does it become strong enough to fulfill its communication responsibilities, without becoming too strong?

At a conference on government communication policy convened by Thabo Mbeki during 1995, I argued that rather than mess with the mass media, three steps were needed (Berger, 1995d). The first of these was to recognise that all officials were communicators with the public, and to vastly improve internal communication within the state. The second was for government to professionalise and upgrade its poor media liaison performance. Third, that government should not simply see citizens as receivers of its messages, but as potential communicators in their own right - communicators who send

messages to government and to each other. This required, I argued, things like subsidies for community radio stations, and development of interactive online communications such as e-mail and the Internet.

Government may do some of these things and become a strong communicator while simultaneously facilitating society's own communication capacity. That does not mean that government will cease putting verbal pressure on the press, an ominous increase in which is evident in 1995. But there will be less cause to do so, and even if the authorities wanted to pursue this latter course, there are constitutional among other constraints on it.

So where does all this leave our old watchdog? Yapping on the sidelines? Hardly. In principle, the new and developing situation leaves the press free to do its work without hindrance, but in a neighbourhood with new alleyways and many new noisy critters staking out their turf. This new terrain constitutes a real challenge to the press. In fact, despite my feline propensities, I am less worried about the fat cats in government, who at the end of the day will look after their communication needs: my concern primarily is with the health of the hound.

Journalism in a democracy is something new for South African journalists. What does it mean when things are no longer quite so literally black and white? My discussions with journalists

reveal a real existential crisis. For some, it is business as usual, with an adversarial posture towards the new state. For others, it is this, but with some uncertainty too. For yet others, in particular for leading black journalists like Thami Mazwai, it is a far more accommodating attitude to what is seen as a true people's government.

Journalism in a democracy also means greater government accountability and hence greater access to information for the press. A new liberal publications bill opens space for more journalism, while the proposed Open Democracy Act could empower the press to demand set facts, and appeal to a special court if refused them. Parliament itself has thrown most of its committee meetings open, and every member of the police force is now authorised to speak to the press (within his or her range of competency). Talk about give a dog a bone: this is a veritable surfeit of gravy-drenched riches.

But few journalists, it seems, appear to know what to do with the feast before them.⁽²²⁾ The sense one gets is of journalists who, having fought for press freedom, are now unsure about what to do now they have it. The watchdog appears to be danger of losing its way.⁽²³⁾

What too does journalism in a democracy mean for practioners in the profession, when - just at the time the press is at its most free to report on politics - the public also seems to be losing interest. It is pornography, not politics, that

constitutes the growth area in sales today. Newspaper circulations meanwhile are crashing (Sunday Times, 6/8/95), with some small successful exceptions like our local **Eastern Province Herald** which has eschewed politics in favour of parading crime and sport stories, and the **Daily Dispatch** with a consistent spread of small town and rural news. Could it be that most papers have lost touch with their old readers while failing to win new ones?

Gordon Jackson argued three years ago that "English newspapers will become more oriented to their black constituencies, and become better equipped to serve them, as they hire more blacks" (1993:205; see also Tyson, 1993:375). This is a slow development, and one painfully evidenced by the slow progress of affirmative action in the press. In turn, this is mirrored by the difficulty I have of persuading the press to create bursaries for black students to study journalism.⁽²⁴⁾

Jackson is also wrong about the switch of white papers towards black readers. A paper like the Sunday Times is currently caught tight in a fix between trying to hold the advertising-drawcard, affluent white readers, and catering for less well-off black readers (Ken Owen, 1995). The market has not yet developed sufficient critical mass for the racial proportions to change, but that is no excuse for conservatism. The big question really is whether the media is leading or lagging in developing the market in this direction.

The significance of falling circulations in the meantime is of more than economic concern. Press freedom needs more than a healthy industry and a convivial legislative dispensation: it requires public support. A press watchdog that is not regarded as reporting the concerns of the majority of the public is unlikely to enjoy this support (see Jackson, 1993:181).⁽²⁵⁾

Another, related question flummoxing journalists in this new open South Africa is whom they're working for (Berger, 1995a). It was a staid board of directors in the Argus company a while ago, now it is for the opinionated Irish media magnate, Tony O'Reilly, and in the case of the **Sowetan**, it is the equally opinionated Dr Nthatho Motlana. Times Media Ltd, still fresh from buying the **Daily Dispatch**, is itself up for sale, and the new bosses there could well be an alliance of black business and trade unions in what is called the Black Empowerment Consortium.

So far, this new ownership dispensation has not impacted so much on the politics of the press, as upon the commercialisation of journalism (Berger, 1995b, 1995c). The watchdog today must bay for its breakfast.⁽²⁷⁾ It also means farewell to writing for readers, and all hail to serving the customer. That means - at its worst - fulfilling the pre-existing needs and preferences of the buyer. Pandering to the punters' prejudices may thus mean keeping politics - or blacks - off the front page (or back page in the case of the **Sunday Times**). The result is to leave society all the poorer.

Good for business, bad for the potential of the press to play a leadership agenda-setting and guardian role in the society. What ought to be only the tail, it seems, is in danger of wagging the dog.

The "reader-as-customer" vision has a mirror opposite in the SABC, whose ideology in the words of Zwelakhe Sisulu is "the audience-as-citizen".⁽²⁸⁾ These equally reductionist models lessen the creative dynamism of the media. On the one hand, there is an abdication of a leadership or even social-responsibility role on the part of the press. On the other, there is paternalistic prescriptiveness in the public broadcaster. The ground between these two extremes, and one based on the all-rounded and diverse character of people consuming media, seems to elude many South African journalists today. The result - speaking generally, and bearing in mind factors like inexperienced, undertrained and overstretched newsrooms - is mediocre journalism.

The question to pose is: Will our watchdogs therefore chase their tails and miss out on the myriad opportunities in the new order? It is hard to say. But what is of even greater concern is whether the malaise means they will not be caught wrong-footed by a more dangerous medium-term threat. I refer here to that new medium called the Internet and to the roaring torrent of traffic that could leave more than a few watchdogs squashed on the Information Highway.

Part Two: Newspapering in the Information Age.

We are living in the Information Age, one which began with mass media reproduction through the printing press, and which now provides us with electronic replication as the cheapest means of mass communication yet known to humankind.

This age, according to Neil Postman, means that information comes at us indiscriminately. We are glutted with it, have no control over it, do not know what to do with it (1993:10).⁽¹⁾ South Africa looks set for a similar future, even although the latest figures show a society consuming fewer newspapers and listening less to radio than a year ago (Mail and Guardian, 15/9/95). With rising literacy, spreading wealth and more consumer choice, media consumption is likely to begin rising again - though the media consumed may well be different to previous patterns. Our classic watchdogs need to watch out: 80 new radio stations have been licensed this year; a cluster of small community papers is growing up to replace the demise of the alternative press generation; magazines trading in voyeurism of both the **Hustler** and **Huisgenoot** variants are flourishing. Satellite developments promise up to 24 new TV and radio channels (Beeld, 14/6/95).

It is veritably raining cats, dogs and several other creatures from the sky.

Amongst these blessings in this Information Age is the

Internet, which I use here as shorthand for the whole Infobahn. It is an elitist medium at present. But like the postal system, rail, electricity, and telephony, it is likely to become more and more accessible - even, I predict, spreading as fast as cellphones, and reaching through schools and community centres to spaza shops and other entrepreneurial off and on ramps in the townships. It is after all, only a kind of glorified extension of the French minitel system, where instead of telephone books at the end of every line, you have a computer that can communicate.

It is the Internet part of the Information Age, I believe, which will prompt the greatest changes to newspapers and their role. TV, it is pointed out, did not kill books, nor marginalise radio (Traber, 1994). Says Professor Peter Cole, "in 1475, we had the first book. Books are still with us, thank god, and selling in vast quantities." (1995:4). However, as another writer points out, while old media persist, the newcomers do hijack some of their best features. Thus film repurposed plays, TV repurposed films (Negroponte, 1995:61). The CD gave new life to music originally recorded and sold on vinyl. The question is: will the Internet repurpose newspapers, or simply supercede them?

It is not original, but nonetheless worth mentioning that few people suspected what would happen when computers first entered newspapers to work in the accounts department. Today the computer is set to take the paper out of newspapers

altogether.⁽²⁾ This is not welcome news to many in the newspaper reading public, already anticipating the nostalgia they will feel about no longer enjoying the feel of newsprint between their fingers as they enjoy a good read.

Significantly, however, this public, in the industrialised countries - and, in part, in South Africa - is also an aging public. All the gimmickry, colour, promotions and targetting in the world is not sufficient to replenish those readers who dying off. In short, there are fewer and fewer new recruits from the youth. The situation was so bad for one UK publisher, Andy Hughes, with his newspaper's market dying off at the same time as youngsters migrated away in search of better prospects, that in his words, the only thing left in his county were sheep - selling newspapers to them would have been the ultimate marketing challenge (Hughes, 1992).

So it's a shrinking older population that likes the feel of newspapers. So too do many print journalists. Ah, to see a printing press in action, with the papers coming hot off the heads, being folded and bundled at ferocious speed - who could ever give this up? To be bitten by the newspaper bug, to have ink flowing in your veins, is this not the kernel of newspaper journalism?

So, it is not surprising that so many people react vehemently against the warnings about the coming demise of newspapers as we know them: they don't only believe it can't happen, more fundamentally they don't want it to happen. I am sorry to

bring the bad tidings to them.⁽³⁾ Like it or not, the demise of printed newspapers is on the agenda. And, from many points of view, as I will argue, it is a case of bad news being good news.

People like to point to an observation by John Carey who says that the newspaper took 100 years to reach 50% of Americans. In contrast, the telephone took 70 years; radio only about 10 years, and television less than that. Of course this trend doesn't always hold: cable took nearly 40 years to reach the same penetration rate (Dennis, 1989:2). But it seems to be the general thrust of things, and if you want an image for the future, look at the success of CD's in mass music markets, where this technology has spread at an incredibly rapid rate.⁽⁴⁾

The situation in newspapers is likely to be less extreme, but there is an extremely compelling reason why it will be all the more a determined and unstoppable process. That reason is money. In short, electronic papers will be much, much cheaper for everyone, as compared to their old-fashioned pulp-descended counterparts.⁽⁵⁾ And with cheaper and more varied electronic newspapers, South Africa - for one - may be able to look towards raising its daily newspaper circulation levels above the paltry 44 per 1000 people, even if we may never reach the Norwegian world record of 619 per 1000. Cheaper newspapers may mean more newspaper readers in a country like ours. More people may read. This is part of the

good news.

The electronic newspaper will be cheaper precisely because of the contradiction embodied in its name.⁽⁶⁾ Simply, paperless newspapers mean - at last - freedom from the fetters of newsprint prices, space constraints and blunderbuss targetting of audiences. Paperless media mean freedom from the huge investment, maintenance and operating costs of printing presses.⁽⁷⁾ Lastly, paperless media mean freedom from distribution - from trucks, trains and planes, from banks of phone operators dealing with delivery complaints. Imagine what this means to the biggest newspaper in the world, Yomiuri Shimbun, which prints 14.5 million copies daily, 24 hours a day, and which co-ordinates 100 000 schoolboys to drop off its paper. (Fukushima, 1992; Berger, 1992).

Paper is a curse for papers, from a cost and delivery point of view. So a scheme that can deliver a newspaper while bypassing the vast expenses that are tied up with newsprint is clearly a highly attractive option for any publisher. Presuming you can keep your revenue stream constant, the cost cutting entailed would result in huge increases in profitability. Or, your savings could help you increase sales/market share by offering lower prices to subscribers, and/or to advertisers.

There's another aspect of this scenario that makes it even more commercially attractive. Electronic delivery of newspapers allows for much more targetted marketing than even

the most segmented newsprint paper can accomplish. It allows for near realtime delivery of information. And it gives advertisers the technical facility to track penetration and response with unprecedented accuracy. The economics of all this are terrific: you reach consumers far more cheaply than traditional print, and you reach 'em far faster. We're talking greyhounds here.

If you're not spending all your budget on printing and distribution anymore, it also becomes possible to invest in the information gathering and processing side of the operation. According to Fry (1993), just 14% of the St Petersburg Times budget is spent on editorial right now - electronic newspapering would free up resources for a lot more. In principle, the watchdog can concentrate on its core business - which is not business in the narrow sense of the term.

But what exactly then is this business of the press? Many people thought the railways were in the business of running trains and coaches. They only discovered that it was really mass and bulk transportation when it was too late (Fidler, 1992:24), and the far more flexible motor vehicle, showed up their confusion of form with content.

Newspaper publishing, and indeed much other publishing, is not about paper primarily. Unless one redefines the business as that of killing trees (Economist, 1993) and consuming pulp,

there is no fixed reason why publishing has to stay stuck with paper. But if you do dispense with paper, what do you stick with - if anything? "Although we publish newspapers," Mexican publisher Alejandro Junco told the World Newspaper Congress in Berlin in 1993, "we do not consider ourselves newspaper publishers". Instead, he explained, "we are an information company which creates information products to satisfy information needs."

By this he means the primary business of a media enterprise is the selling of information to an audience. Obvious? No. For many if not most publications today, selling information to an audience is not really the fundamental and determining character of the business. Despite such appearances, the primary transaction is something different: it is selling these audiences to advertisers (Smythe 1978, Levant, 1979). This is not how print used to be, but it is now. From a business point of view, the name of the game is creating a constituency, gathering intelligence about it, and then selling access to other groups wanting to reach it.⁽⁸⁾

The benefit of the economics of the new electronic newspaper is that it becomes possible for publishers to return to their original mission: the business of publishing information for information's sake. The point to note here is that whether the business is about selling audiences or selling information (and there are different competitors facing newspapers in both areas), it is not about manufacturing paper products.

The newspaper reader of the early 21st century will probably still have the option of a hard-copy newsprint newspaper. But with publishers getting their advertising and sales revenues from electronic newspapers, the price of your dead tree is going to be charged at its real rate. My guess is that, at today's prices, your electronic paper will cost you R100 a month, your paper edition R18 an edition (see International Advertising Association advert, Business Day, 30/10/95).

This is merely one aspect of the differences. It is not simply a question of same product, cheaper price. The electronic version will offer undreamt of flexibility, range, depth and power; the worthy paper version will scarcely differ from its current package, give or take a few more graphics and colour. I will return to this, but to stick with the economics a bit longer, let us first see who is driving the electronic publishing process.

Until recently, the biggest players in electronic publishing were computer data-base services like Prodigy and America Online - offering computer users access to a range of major newspapers' archives as well as a wide range of other electronic resources. Rather than playing the role of media, they tended rather to be intermediaries between audience and media. They were, and are, not electronic publishers in the fullest sense.⁽⁹⁾

There are other, even more threatening, players poised to

enter the field of electronic information publishing - businesses who have not traditionally been involved in this area. I refer here to the American telecommunications companies, followed closely by paging and cable TV companies.⁽¹⁰⁾

These companies compete with newspapers in several different ways; some hitting the business of selling audiences to advertisers, others grabbing marketshare in the selling of information to audiences.⁽¹¹⁾ Faced with this competition, some US newspaper publishers are urging a link-up with these companies (Potter, 1992:6). But there is a strong fear among American journalists that these outsiders do not have the interests of editorial content at heart, that they have no understanding of the mission or ethics of "the press" as a unique institution in society.⁽¹²⁾

A different question to who is driving the process, has been what the electronic paper will look like. The MIT has experimented with recyclable electronic plastic paper, which you put in a set-top box, much like an M-Net decoder, each evening, and take out as a printed paper the next day. But the bigger interest has been in moving away from any kind of paper at all. Three years ago, Knight Ridder's Roger Fidler was predicting that the new electronic newspaper would be a portable, hi-resolution, electronic device, standard for all newspapers (Markoff, 1992). His prototype was about the size of a thick magazine, almost the same weight, and dubbed a

"newstablet". You would get your information updated in your newstablet through docking it up to a telephone cable link for the bulk information, and receiving broadcast information (via satellite or cellular networks) for real-time updating during a day. The device would also have a degree of hyper-media capabilities that allow for video and audio clips to be part of the publication. (1994:28)

Fidler's tablet prototype (right) looked a lot like the real thing - it is configured like a newspaper, with recognisable layout and vertical format. He argued that documents have evolved in vertical format, and that the horizontal screens of the TV and the computer

meant that electronic papers published through them would not catch on (ibid:27).

4 from Page 27 of The New York Current

Wednesday, September 16, 1992, 10:18 AM EST

DISPLAYS



Field Emission Display
The flat screen technology used in this monitor is that employed in the electronic camera's anode - which is a phosphor coating. (Cross-section not shown to scale.)

A novel way to make video screens flat

By David Karpman
Spoken to The House Herald

The state of the art in flat TV and computer screens is liquid crystal display technology similar to that in a digital watch. Since LCDs to flat screens, surely nobody else has a chance, right?

Wrong. There is an emerging alternative that no less an authority than NEXT Computer CEO Steve Jobs says could significantly bolster the U.S. position in high-tech screen icons. Princeton researchers at LETA, a government lab in Grenoble, have built the first working version of a new video screen no thicker than the cover of a hardback book. The so-called field emission display (FED) may turn out to be lighter, cheaper, easier to see, and less power hungry than today's advanced LCDs. As almost everything else in computers

grin, measurement, screens become proportionately more important. In some laptop exchanges, the flat screen alone accounts for half of the cost. Moreover, talk of half-inch-thick computers that are little more than a screen laminated to a dense web of micro-electronics. Inevitably all computer displays, portable or not, will likely be flat. Whichever makes them will exert immediate influence over the computer business and probably the market for high-definition television too.

FED screens have more in common with conventional TVs than with LCD screens (see diagram). Like ordinary TV tubes, FEDs emit light. LCDs don't; they merely direct or channel it, so an LCD screen requires external illumination - adding to weight and power consumption. FEDs have sharper contrast than LCDs, which should

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That was Fidler's vision. With an eye to the new markets, others predicted a different look. The Poynter Institute's Don Fry (1993) suggested the electronic tablet would resemble a Nintendo games device (see also Aumente, 1994:39). Why? Because there were 55 million of these portable screens in the hands of American children, and they sure know how to operate them. Unlike Fidler, Fry predicted that the tablet would be video tape size. So too do those who think that the model will be the PDA - the personal digital assistant.⁽¹³⁾ All, however, have been proved wrong - as has been the case with predictions about the timescale for the rising of the electronic newspaper tide? Some years ago, Gilder (n.d.:145) said that "within the next three or four years, a portable table with laser-printer resolution and contrast and with hundreds of megabytes of solid- state or hard disk memory will be purchaseable for an acceptable price." Other forecasts ranged from five to 50 years (Shaw, 1991:16; Christopher, 1994:28)⁽¹⁴⁾

Five years, fifteen, ten ... these commentators, making their predictions, sometimes as recently as 1994, have been overtaken by history - at least for now. By focussing introspectively on the question of device, the prototype of the portable technical tablet to come, they failed to see the burgeoning of an entirely new medium that does not have at its core the idea of an electronic newspaper, and which does not revolve around transforming paper versions of newspapers into electronic ones. I refer to the Internet and its potential - inter alia - to play host to electronic publications. It is

not, then, the case of people getting dedicated electronic newspaper devices - which devices might also be used as an interface to the world's information system. It is the other way around.

The Internet has brought us the electronic paper not on a dedicated tablet, but on a multi-purpose, and only occasionally portable, computer. And not generally in portrait format, which contradicts the landscape shape of the computer screen, and nor generally with newspaper lay-out and design.

Thus, instead of making its debut as Fidler expected, the electronic paper today typically comes on computer courtesy of the World Wide Web, with a format designed using HyperText Make Up Language, abbreviated to HTML. A pioneer HTML editing programme for Internet publishing, cheekily named HoTMetaL after that now outdated printing method, has itself become outdated. You

may not believe this, but any watchdogs wanting to go online will find the best HTML editor on the Internet under the name of ... Hot Dog.



About the HotDog Web Editor

The HotDog Web Editor is a fast, flexible, and friendly way of creating HTML documents like this one for publishing on the World Wide Web. HotDog currently runs as a 16-bit Windows program (a 32-bit version is being developed now).

Check out what's so great about HotDog and find out why you need HotDog!

BIG plans, HotDog teaming up with I-View, check out what HotDog and I-View have on the drawing board, to make HotDog the complete HTML tool.

The newspaper industry has been so preoccupied with licking the wounds of falling circulations, that it has only very recently looked up to see the flurry of new publishers setting up on the Internet.

In the scramble to catch up, a newly born generation of stand-alone electronic versions of newspapers

is exploding on the Internet. They are there independently, not courtesy of Prodigy, America Online, the telephone companies-become-publishers, or anyone else. A baby boom - or should we say a puppy boom? - is taking place. South Africa too is getting in on the act, led by the country's most innovative paper: the Mail and Guardian, (right), followed by

Independent Newspapers' **IONS**, **Finance Week** and the **Financial Mail**.



Johannesburg, South Africa.

Updated September 15 1995

NEWS AND FEATURES

☛ The official papal visit to SA spells an end to the era of 'Roomse Gevaar'

NEW Will the next pope be black?

☛ A heart-wrenching court case examines the case of a "wrongful birth"

NEW Conditions in South Africa are ripe for an increase in serial killings

☛ In the week of Helmut Kohl's visit, fears that German funds are being used for Inkatha's paramilitary purposes

NEW The Kruger Park may halt its elephant culling if it raises new funds. And an inquiry has revealed new evidence about the army's role in ivory smuggling

☛ A spotlight on the Independent Broadcasting Authority Report into broadcasting

☛ An abusers guide to porn mags in SA

Child labour in South Africa. A reporter poses as a child and works in a factory. **PLUS:** The state of child labour in South Africa. **PLUS:** Entertainment's just child's play.

☛ Scramble for Africa's healing wisdom: Pharmaceutical companies rush to learn from Africa's traditional cures. But is this good for Africa? **PLUS:** Smart drugs and smart drinks. New healing, or new self-abuse?



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Finance Week

latest issue

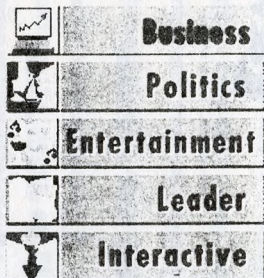
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Gambling could offer SA a R20bn jackpot, but only if legislation and tough crackdowns are effective
 Iscor's about-turn on Saldanha leaves a lot of questions unresolved
 For the new stock exchange to work properly, the right hand has got to know what the left hand is doing
 Barring the food price wildcard, the outlook for consumers looks good
 There's a great deal more to property syndications than just offering an investor the chance to say: 'Look! I own that building!'
 SA's meat industry is an object lesson in how not to administer agriculture in the new SA
 There's more to November's local elections than posters of Mandela's smile
 Tax benefits are not as generous as they once were, but expanding business in Africa is one good reason to buy a corporate aircraft
 Piker





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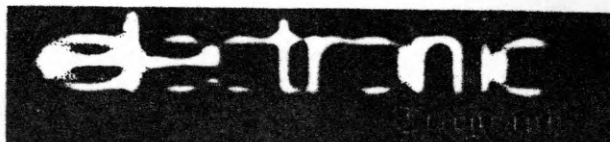
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The Internet-based newspaper is not the last word in electronic newspapering. But for the

moment, it is here and it is growing.⁽¹⁵⁾ It is online all the time, and 100% interactive, unlike Fidler's tablet. It already contains Hypertext links these are not some futuristic promises. Click on **Electronic Telegraph's**

Home News, and you find a list of stories. Follow the roller blade one ...



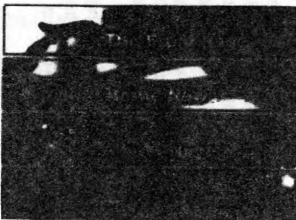
Thursday 12 October 1995

Issue No 232



Tories bang the drum of populism

THE TORIES made their pitch yesterday for a fifth term of government with an array of populist policy announcements, including a campaign to improve spoken English, cuts in NHS bureaucrats and a drive against benefit fraud. The leadership launched a concerted effort to show that the party had not run out of ideas after 16 years in power and was ready to take on revitalised Labour at the polls.



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'I wanted to get justice for girls who did not make it'



A WOMAN who was subjected to a violent and sustained sex attack by Rosemary and Frederick West told a jury yesterday that she blamed herself for the deaths of nine young women.

Rollerblade craze to be curbed in Royal Parks



RESTRICTIONS on roller-blading in the Royal Parks in London were extended yesterday as concern grew about dangers to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

Cool-headed women are the stars of space travel



WOMEN make the best astronauts because they cope better than men with boredom and are more

Rollerblade craze to be curbed in Royal Parks

By Colin Randall

RESTRICTIONS on roller-blading in the Royal Parks in London were extended yesterday as concern grew about dangers to pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders.

The new arrangements announced by the Royal Parks Agency, however, fell short of a ban on the activity in Hyde Park, where a BBC researcher, Mark Welch, 26, was killed in a collision between his bicycle and a rollerblader in July.

The agency said roller-blading would be permitted on cycle tracks in Hyde Park, the Serpentine Road and - on Sundays when traffic is prohibited - South Carriage Drive.

In Kensington Gardens, rollerblading will be allowed on the Albert Memorial Road and in a special area set aside for it on the Broadwalk.

The activity will be banned in Green Park and Greenwich Park. Bans in St James's Park and Regent's Park will continue.

The restrictions in Hyde Park and Kensington Gardens were reluctantly accepted by the British Inline Skating Association, which says 500,000 people in Britain are involved in what it calls the world's fastest-growing sport.

8 August 1995: Rider blinded as rollerblader startles horse

Rider blinded as rollerblader startles horse

By Toby Harnden

A RIDER was blinded in one eye after her horse was startled by a rollerblader. Janet Cunningham, 33, suffered a crushed eye, broken teeth and injuries to her neck and face after being thrown on to cobblestones in London's Hyde Park. Surgeons at St Thomas's Hospital were unable to save her sight in the damaged eye.

The incident raises further concern about rollerblading in public parks. Last month, Mark Welch, 26, a BBC researcher, from Durham, died from head injuries after colliding with a rollerblader while cycling in Hyde Park.

A voluntary code of conduct for rollerbladers has been introduced jointly by the Royal Parks Agency and the In-Line Skating Association. The agency is to meet to consider further measures.

Tom Corby, spokesman for the Royal Parks Agency, said: "The rollerblader was correctly on the path and committed no offence.

"We do not believe banning rollerbladers is the answer. We want to accommodate them safely along with cyclists, horseriders and all other park users."

Park death raises safety fears

By Toby Harnden

A CODE of conduct for rollerbladers in London's royal parks is being considered following the death from head injuries of a cyclist yesterday.

Mark Welch, 26, a BBC television researcher, from Durham, was riding on a cycle path in Hyde Park on Thursday evening when he collided with a rollerblader and hit his head.

He died at the Royal London Hospital without regaining consciousness. Police say that he had not been wearing a cycle helmet. The rollerblader, a 32-year-old London man, was slightly injured. He has been interviewed by police but has not been charged with any offence.

Rollerblading, also called in-line skating, originates from the US and has grown popular over the last three years.

Practitioners use skates with a row of wheels set in the soles and can reach speeds in excess of 30 mph.

Tom Corby, spokesman for the Royal Parks Agency, said: "We are having talks with the In-Line Skating Association to try to set up a code of conduct for rollerbladers in the parks."

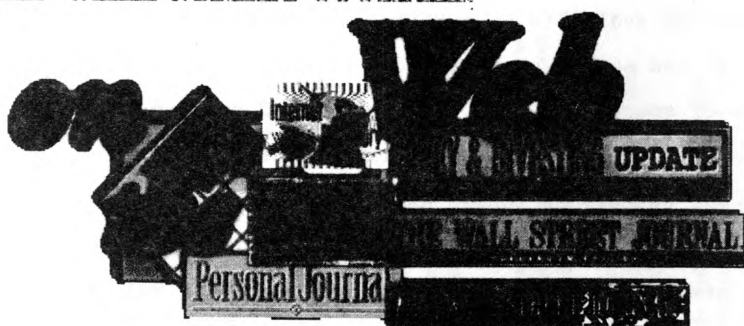
Last year, an Italian woman tourist spent two days in hospital with head injuries after being knocked down by a rollerblader in Kensington Gardens.

In some electronic publications, there are - and can be - long, short, intermediate and link-in levels of information accessible to a reader through hypertext links.⁽¹⁶⁾ Want the full text of the president's speech? It can be called up if you like. Audio too is beginning to be more easily available. The soundbite from the Internet's electronic watchdog could be far more of a mouthful than the unsatisfying nibbles carried by broadcast media. Suffering tired eyes (and believe me, so much screen gazing will result in a boom for eye drop companies) - you can get the device to read out loud to you. Increasingly, multi-media capabilities will mean that you will be able to touch a photo and activate a video clip complete with sound.

For some papers, the demand for data has come as a surprise. As the editor of the Electronic Telegraph recently told me, they began with a pure on-line replica of the print version of the paper - until readers began querying whether there wasn't more information available on particular stories. There was, of course: it had simply been left out of the print version for reasons of space. Now the full, unabridged version of the Telegraph goes out on the Internet. The electronic medium means that sub-editors no longer have to spike or butcher stories in order to squeeze things into a fixed (and shrinking) newshole. You can also archive, and sell, all the data collected by the paper, and presto: you have eliminated the previous regular wastage of four-fifths of the information collected in your business. For readers with special interests

and a thirst for more information on these topics, this is a huge benefit. Even more, though, the electronic paper may also be customised for each reader. It used to be that newspapers left out a large portion of information they collected, and readers ignored a large portion of that which was actually published. No longer. You're a sports lover who normally reads the back page of a paper first? Simply get it as the first page of your opening screen. Interested in keeping up with a particular story as it unfolds? Earmark it electronically, and new developments will be prominently flagged as they are reported. This service exists in one of its best forms in the on-line **Wall St Journal**. Intriguingly, the paper with probably the most archaic design (deliberately retained even in its European edition - see next page) is one of the most advanced electronically. It supplies you with software called **Relevant**, and you customise your version of the paper according to what topics, countries, industries, etc. are of most interest.

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MONDAY, MAY 29, 1995

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Cash-Flow Woes Law Firm's Downfall Exposes New Methods Of Money Laundering

Tough Banking Rules Force Cali Drug Cartel to Use Complex Financial Plays

A Police Locker's Contents

By THOMAS L. O'BRIEN

Staff Reporter

NEW YORK—One afternoon here last fall, Robert Hirsch, a banking and entertainment attorney, listened on his phone as a woman from the Cali cocaine cartel threatened to send someone from Colombia to cut him and his family to pieces unless he turned over \$250,000.

The next day, federal agents and New York police, who had learned from wiretaps that assassins were waiting to kill Mr. Hirsch at his Manhattan office, appeared on his doorstep. They whisked him away to a "safe house," with Mr. Hirsch unaware that the agents also knew that he had stolen \$2.5 million from members of the cartel—people who had once provided the attorney with a rich source of income.

Thus began to unravel a \$100 million money-laundering scheme, described by law-enforcement officials as one of the biggest operations ever uncovered in New York, leading to felony charges against 23 people, most of whom have pleaded guilty. It also exemplifies the growing involvement, and importance, of seemingly innocuous professionals in the world of money laundering.

"Drug laundering has become such a complex process that it requires individuals with a sophisticated understanding of banking and law," says Gregory Pessia, a supervisory agent with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. "I see the Hirsches of New York as the problem, because lawyers allow their firms' accounts to be used to move money."



Robert Hirsch

What's News

Business and Finance

INTERNATIONAL PAPER SAID it will fight BBA Group for Holvis, the Swiss textile and paper producer. International Paper said a new offer to be announced today depends on it acquiring both of Holvis's units. But Holvis already has agreed to sell its nonalloys division to BBA, making for the most heated takeover battle in Swiss corporate history.

(Article on page 3.)

Shifting U.S. stock prices are inviting analysts to fine-tune their predictions on when a correction will come and how severe it might be. On Friday, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 43.23 points to 4369.00.

(Article on page 3.)

Olivetti's net loss widened to \$412 million in 1994 due to restructuring charges, increased debt and operating deficits. But the company said it expects to break even in 1995.

(Article on page 3.)

ABB signed an agreement with Ukraine on behalf of an international consortium that plans to replace Chernobyl's nuclear plants with a non-nuclear power plant, at a cost of \$3 billion to \$4 billion.

(Article on page 4.)

Nissan swung to a parent-company pretax loss of \$719.7 million for its fiscal year from year-earlier profit, as Mitsubishi Motors' profit jumped 36%, Mazda's loss narrowed, Daihatsu's earnings more than doubled and Fuji Heavy Industries returned to the black.

(Article on page 3.)

BK Vison said it is not pulling out of UBS despite contentious relations between the two Swiss companies. The value of BK Vison's stake in the

World-Wide

U.S. AND EUROPEAN governments pushed to alleviate the Bosnian deadlock. The so-called Contact Group—composed of U.S., European and Russian diplomats—will meet today in Holland to consider its next moves amid the heightened crisis. Over the weekend, Bosnia's foreign minister was killed when rebel Serbs shot down his helicopter, and Bosnian Serbs increased to 317 the number of U.N. peacekeepers held hostage in retaliation for NATO's air strikes last week. France and the U.S. began moving aircraft carriers into the Adriatic to signal their growing concern for the safety of the 22,000 peacekeepers now in Bosnia. France's new President Chirac said that France would withdraw from the region if its troops couldn't be better protected. (Article on page 2.)

Senior representatives of NATO and the U.N. Security Council will also meet this week to discuss the crisis.

Unofficial exit polls in Spain indicated the center-right Popular Party scored substantial gains in voting for municipal and regional governments in what was widely seen as a run-up to victory over the ruling Socialists in general elections that could be called next year. Estimates indicated the PP would control at least 11 of the 13 regional governments being contested and that it had won control of a majority of Spain's 10 largest cities, excluding Barcelona and Bilbao. (Article on page 2.)

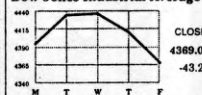
A massive earthquake hit Sakhalin Island, off Russia's Pacific coast, and officials said up to 2,500 people could have been killed or injured after being buried under debris in wrecked buildings. Officials said 70 people were confirmed killed in the quake, while confirmed injuries numbered over 200.

Israeli Foreign Minister Peres and PLO chief Arafat renewed their commitment to meeting a July 1 target to agree on the second phase of a Palestinian autonomy plan. Peres and Arafat pledged to agree by July 1 on "the redeployment of the Israeli army, security arrangements, elections and the transfer of authority" in West Bank towns.

Peres said the Golan Heights are Syrian territory, continuing efforts to prepare Israelis for withdrawal from the area.

Markets Summary

Dow Jones Industrial Average



CLOSE: 4369.00
-43.23

LONDON FT-SE 100 3311.1 -17.1

TOKYO Nikkei 2077.87 -27.28

DOLLAR DM1.3770 -0.0206 POUND \$1.6055 -0.002

Currency values represent 3 p.m. New York trading.

High-End Holidays Help Rich Americans Search for Sublime

From Kyoto to Lake Como,
Many Flows Like Perrier,
And Europe Draws Well

By LISA MILLER

Staff Reporter

Roger and Miriam Bilyeu are counting the seconds until their summer vacation. They retire from Northridge, California, will cruise the islands off Sweden, do some sightseeing in London and then board a private train in Uzbekistan to follow the old Silk Road from Tashkent to Beijing. Then the Bilyeys will jet off to Kyoto for a fall-foliage walking tour.

Each summer, wealthy Americans resume their journeys seeking something new to do. It might be touring the English countryside in Jaguar convertibles, taking their children gorilla-stalking in Tanzania or ballooning in Tuscan. But lavish surroundings aren't always the point: Their vacations are a quest for the sublime.

These people "want the perfect experience," says Nancy Nowogrod, editor of Travel & Leisure magazine. "Just like they want the best cappuccino machine."

This June, Bill Young of Canandaigua, New York, is going to one of the most exclu-

The Outlook

U.S. Keeps China Trade, Human Rights Separate

WASHINGTON

The Clinton administration is preparing to renew China's most-favored-nation trading status for another year with just a token acknowledgment of its continuing differences with Beijing on human rights.

Anthony Lake, U.S. President Bill Clinton's national security adviser, said Friday a favorable decision is forthcoming. The White House announcement is expected to reaffirm Mr. Clinton's policy of allowing China its accustomed trading privileges while pursuing a policy of "comprehensive engagement" on other aspects of the U.S.-China relationship.

In previous years, particularly since China's violent suppression of dissent in 1989, the annual review of China's trade status sparked heated debate in the U.S. about human-rights policies. Last year, Mr. Clinton formally separated consideration of trade and human rights in China, making his support for renewal of China's low-tariff access to the U.S. market this year nearly a foregone conclusion.

There's little evidence that China's human-rights advance has improved since last year's renewal. Indeed, police last week rounded up several dissidents who signed a petition calling on the government to reverse its verdict on the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown.

Human-rights advocates have criticized the Clinton administration for making the trade review a footcandle, even while extracting little in the way of human-rights concessions from Beijing.

Though Republicans have traditionally backed the renewal of MFN trading status, the new Republican-controlled Congress may challenge Mr. Clinton's decision, which he must announce by June 3. In a television interview Saturday, North Carolina Sen. Jesse Helms, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he doesn't favor renewing China's MFN status "under the present circumstances." The Clinton policy isn't likely to have much support in the House International Relations Committee, either.

Some trade experts, however, say Clinton opponents won't have enough votes to overturn the decision.

Deep Trouble

Eurotunnel Becomes Part of the Landscape As Feat and Fiasco

Marvel Link Amazes Riders, But Red Ink Sours Backers On Similar Grand Projects

Anybody Recall Suez Canal?

By DIANA MILBANK

Staff Reporter

LONDON—On a wall in Eurotunnel Chairman Alastair Morton's office hangs a framed quotation of Lenin's: "A tunnel beneath the English Channel couldn't be built. The Communist leader said, because 'capitalism is in the way.'"

Eurotunnel, born in Margaret Thatcher's heyday, was created to prove Lenin wrong. To be a symbol of the power of private enterprise. The tunnel was financed without a penny of public money by 720,000 shareholders and a global syndicate of 250 banks.

A decade later, the Channel is indeed a symbol, but not the type intended. Woolfity budgets and the Eurotunnel's acknowledged recently that it is "at risk" of falling in what some believe could add up to \$5 billion (\$8.94 billion) in potential losses for investors and creditors.

"Lenin was half right," Sir Alastair says. Global capital markets proved big winners in the tunnel, but they are so focused on short-term returns that for projects of Eurotunnel's size, "the economics don't work out."

Gutting Under Newcomer banks have made less provisions on their Eurotunnel loans and may well seek to take an equity stake in Eurotunnel if the project can't make loan payments. That would swamp long-suffering shareholders and relegate the Channel to the ranks of Euro Disney, Canary Wharf and other financial fops.

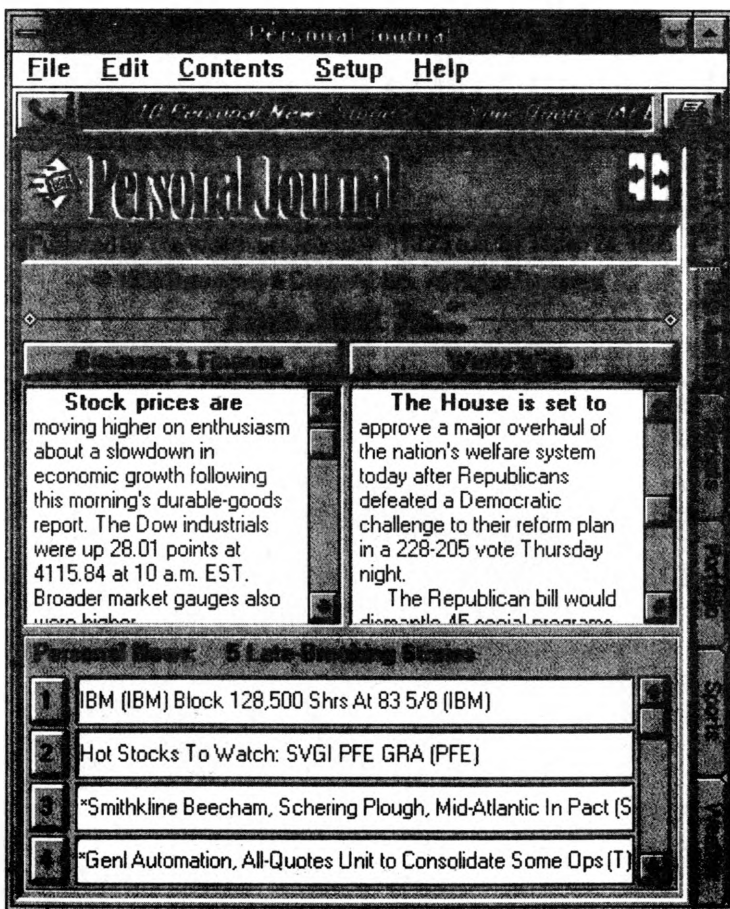
To the traveling public, this hardly matters. "I think it's wonderful," says Chris Wood, a New Zealand tourist, as his train from London to Paris makes the 15-minute pass beneath the Channel. What about the financial troubles? He asks, a few minutes later, a businessman on the train admires the French scenery whizzing by at 300 kilometers per

Personal Journal.

Published for a circulation of one.

This Just In

Personal Journal is updated continuously: so at any time, day or night, you can download the latest news.



This individualisation means that readers only need receive, and pay for, what they want. It is described by Swedish media manager, Birgir Magnus, as the shift from *Le Monde* to *Le Moi* (Magnus, 1995), or what Negroponte likes to call, *The Daily Me*.⁽¹⁷⁾

The dual multi-media and televisual capabilities of the medium raise the question of what the successful model of electronic newspapers will be. Will it render obsolete the models of USA Today or British tabloids where stories are written to sound-bite length? Will the audio-visual come to predominate over the purely textual? There is no answer, because there will probably be no singular success story. The point is that the electronic newspaper is a vehicle enabling a multitude of newspaper styles, formats and titles with supplemental audio and visual dimensions.

At the same time, it is interesting to note an argument by George Gilder (n.d.147). For him, new technologies make available a plethora of narrowcasting, appealing to special interests. And here, he argues, text, enhanced by graphics where needed, is "by far the best (and digitally the most efficient) way to convey most information and ideas". As a result, he concludes, the new technologies favour text over pure video.

Written words then will not become extinct. No one doubts the

value of a medium emphasising text in easily retrievable format, and with the power to compress and condense a whole world of meaning. And this is not even touching upon the strength of the written to conjure meaning that can be even richer than audiovisual messages and life experience itself.

part Three: The Making of an Electronic Watchdog.

It is still early days, but one can still ask: What will be the role of an electronic newspaper operating in the vastly overpopulated Internet, and in the formidable shadow of huge databases, e-mail traffic, commercial information, discussion groups, magazines and news agencies?

In considering an answer to this, the first factor to take account of is that newspapers, for all their importance as agenda setters for society as well as other news media, have increasingly lost influence and authority to the non-news media. Popular agendas and popular culture today, to the extent they are linked to the mass media, are influenced less by news in any form than by symbols and sounds.⁽¹⁾ Whether it is music, fashion, youth publications in Western industrialised countries, or symbols, like Nelson Mandela in a Springbok rugby jersey, meanings are being made and conveyed in ways that sideline the media as active agents.⁽²⁾

These popular cultural phenomena of course spread their message through what we traditionally call the mass media, (and much else besides: fashion, the direct CD or homevideo), but it is their activities - not the media, and even less the newspapers - that set the pace. Gone are "the good old days" (if they ever existed), when solitary watchdogs stood guard against governments, and not even electronic newspapering will bring them back.

A second factor to consider in assessing the role of an electronic newspaper is that the Internet and compact discs are mass media headed towards the technological convergence of media. Of course, people's overall media consumption has long been a multiple media affair, but the production has been segregated according to the tools entailed. The point of multi-media, as Negroponte stresses, is not simply a mix of different media, but the ability to switch freely between them (1995:71). That means they need to be produced jointly, and indeed that a newspaper becomes a fluid entity in a universe where media seamlessly blend into each other. If audiovisual media, generally speaking, have traditionally been entertainment oriented, and if electronic papers blur into these media, what will happen to the seriousness of the watchdog enterprise?⁽³⁾

A third factor is the increasing scope of consumer choice among audiences. In the old system, newspapers decided whether they were morning or afternoon reads, what merited page one treatment, what was newsworthy. With the Daily Me, the subscriber, not the paper, decides when to read, what is most newsworthy, what merits further detail and what does not (Kellogg, 1995:18). When everyone can retrieve information directly, when they want it, and ultimately in multiple- or uni-medium format, do publishers become redundant? Will people continue to need newspapers and journalists as intermediaries?⁽⁴⁾ If newspapers are suffering a loss in their leadership role now, what do they do when readers will choose

what they want, rather than the newspapers making those decisions for them?

A fourth factor for newspapers to consider in the coming era is the effect of the low cost of publishing.⁽⁵⁾ Many thousands of people have already set up their own electronic publications on the Internet. In time though, even greater numbers will establish personal home pages, and on the graphics-capable Web sector of the Internet. The Independent on-line service **IONS** will have to compete for young readers with dedicated kids magazines like **Discovery Middle School**, complete with their school projects about dogs on the Internet.⁽⁶⁾

What do these four factors add up to, in assessing the role of the electronic newspaper? For Negroponte, a media company of the future will be less a publisher than a talent scout and a test bed for researchers and writers. For many others, mass dissemination of digitalised information gives the electronic newspaper an even more important role than its paper counterpart. But, intriguingly, this is not seen, however, as a watchdog role.

In Cole's view, "the superhighway, the modern information world, needs sherpas, guides. Those ancient journalistic skills, of selection, of presentation, of analysis, of prioritising, are more necessary than they have ever been." (1995:7).

This theme is expressed by Stoll as follows: "The information highway is being sold to us as delivering information, but what it's really delivering is data. ... Unlike data, information has utility, timeliness, accuracy, a pedigree." (Clifford Stoll, St Petersburg Times, 6/6/95). The remark about pedigree returns us to the canine species - but is more a retriever than a watchdog that is implied in this vision.

Content is king, says Fidler (1992:27). He argues that the newspaper industry is in a better position than the telephone companies to profit from electronic papers, because "content is what newspaper publishers know best" (ibid:24). Ethics too are the preserve of newspapers, particularly things like independence, balance and the separation of advertising and editorial (cited by Christopher, 1994).⁽⁷⁾

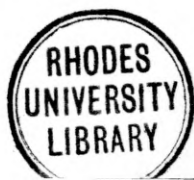
Reputable paper newspapers already have a brand identity and character, a pedigree, and they bring this with them to the Internet. And even with the horizontal format, they can retain a unique design, logo and typography. Like the paper version, the electronic product represents an editorial judgement about the comparative importance of information.

But there is more that newspapers and electronic newspapers in particular can do than prioritising a plethora of information into visual menus. They can help explain this information. I spoke earlier about watchdogs that go for postmen. I would now like to discuss a real life "distortion" of this relationship.

Analyst Neil Postman argues that for people to have a sense of meaning, they must have a believable narrative, which gives meaning to the past, explains the present and provides guidance for the future. Information by itself is not a narrative (1992: 13) For Postman, when you have a sense of meaning, you know what to do with information - what to ignore, what to value, how much weight to give a fact, how to connect a fact to another (ibid:15). But - and here comes the bite - Postman is sceptical about whether newspapers can give people the meaning needed to control information (ibid).

We have here a case of man bites dog, in particular a Postman turning on the watchdog, expressing doubt about its competence. He may be right, and yet he also errs by ignoring the way that newspapers already convey narrative meanings.

I used to be one of those who believed that newspapers were part of the rational, modern, scientific age - that they were attempts, however flawed, to gather and reflect knowledge about the world. Nowadays, I am beginning to see that this journalistic endeavour is not a self-contained, self-evident enterprise. If you turn away from the metaphor of the press being a window to the world, and do a 180 degree about-turn, you begin to notice the background cultural narrative light formerly behind you. You realise, then, how in passing over the shoulders of journalists all these years it has highlighted some things and given sense to others. Newspapers, it seems, are more about recognising and reinterpreting, the



world according to pre-existing narrative themes and structures, than about a positivistic method of collecting knowledge (see Tilley, 1991:59).

Deeply embedded themes, like family homecoming - a story line that features in folklore, religion, rhymes, fairytales, songs and culture generally, are - it now appears - what determines much about the media. The story of the American pilot, shot down in Bosnia in May 1995, resonated so powerfully in the US media not only because of its political echoes of downed pilots lost in Vietnam, but because it was about homecoming. And is not the South African story - in part at least - also really about home-coming as well, a Mayibuye iAfrika? Does the media therefore not play the role of a St Bernard, not in the RDP brandewyn sense, but in the sense of rescuing us from the drifts of anomie and bringing us home, time and time again, to our familiar cultural identities?

It is these kind of human narratives - and one can point to other near-primordial topics as well, like tragedy, courage, betrayal, the supernatural - all with strong roots in culture and the psyche, that seem to be the unconscious, unrecognised business of media. The quality of these narratives is a topic for another lecture; suffice it to say here that sometimes these frames are misleading, sometimes they are coloured by reactionary culture - how many stories confirm the stereotype that blacks cannot govern?⁽⁸⁾ But the point is that whether desired or despised, these stories give sense. They tell who,

what, where, when, and crucially why and how.

And now, to return to the question of the political role of newspapers, what political sense can electronic publishing contribute to the stock of human understanding? Many media can contribute narratives. What are the prospects for the electronic press to play a particular watchdog function - something of a different, more specific, order than that of providing general cultural frameworks for information?

In some ways, our old watchdog function is made redundant by the Internet. As governments worldwide are finding, the Internet - unlike the mass media before it - is not the kind of medium that lends itself to central control (see Wavell, 1995:15; Vadon, 1995:9; Shenon, 1995:1). South Africa's watchdogs traditionally have had to spend time in sounding the alarm in regard to government attacks on them. Internet publishers have a lot less to worry about.

Internet publishers, of course, can still act as watchdogs vis-a-vis government abuses in realms other than press freedom. Some of this work can be done by an electronic surveillance system, independently of electronic newspapers. Search programmes, called Intelligent Agents in the jargon, will trawl the Internet and pick out what's needed to keep an eye on governments. The Internet can mobilise constituencies beyond media to bark like a watchdog - even, ironically, on behalf of the classic newspaper watchdogs. Examples of this

are the following e-mail from the Media Institute of Southern Africa, and an extract from the electronic **Mail & Guardian**.

"ACTION ALERT - SOUTH AFRICA, SEPTEMBER 15, 1995,
ATTORNEY GENERAL SUES PAPER

THE Attorney General of KwaZulu-Natal region of South Africa, Tim McNally, is suing the Weekly Mail & Guardian (M&G) newspaper for R250 000 over reports published by the paper last month detailing criticism of his handing of investigations into hit squad activities."

Web Feet Bruce Cohen

August 25 1995

Revenge of the Net

I felt the wrath of the Internet this week -- a sampling of the way the information highway is reshaping journalism.

An article I wrote last week about Pallo Jordan's IRC chat on the green paper on telecommunications included a despatch from one of our correspondents concerning the moderator of the discussion, "Beamjack".

It turns out that our correspondent was wrong. The anger of the local Net community, however, was turned on me and I received numerous "flames".

This instant reaction, beamed directly at me via my email address (and probably on some news groups and listservs), reflects a powerful trend facing the global media fraternity, one which has been the subject of much discussion on the Net's journalism forums: the price of being wired is accessibility -- and accountability.

Journalists can longer hide behind the pages of their papers. If our copy is inaccurate or misleading, we can be instantly and easily challenged by readers directly or in the Net's massive public domain.

Bluntly, we are no longer the gatekeepers of information. The floodgates have been opened

Time magazine felt the enormous power this Net democracy recently when it's now-notorious Cyberporn article launched an avalanche of angry reaction across the information highway that it simply could not ignore.

The Fourth Estate is being watched by the Fifth Estate -- the Internet community. And it's a good thing.

Comments and queries to wmail@is.co.za

The role works the other way round, too, however. Electronic newspapers will find a niche checking the information available on the Internet, scrutinising who supplies it, why and whether it can be trusted (Vasterman and Verwey, 1994:11). The point is that newspapers are not just any conveyers of narrative. They are not merely Lollipop Ladies shepherding people safely across the information highway. We are talking about the press as an institution with potential, at least, to function as an independent watchdog, on behalf of assorted publics and against the abuse of power - especially governmental abuses.

This function reinforces the observation that newspapers have always played roles far greater than gleaners, interpreters and disseminators of information. As Chicago Tribune CEO Jack Fuller points out, they have especially played political and social leadership roles (Christopher, 1994: 29). Unless other social institutions - like the church, the schools, business, etc. - take over these critical functions, it seems clear the character of the press will continue long after presses themselves are consigned to museums.

This paper would not be complete if I did not address some remarks to the training of journalists, especially in the context of press freedom and the information age.

The first point here is that journalists need an up-to-date sense of purpose - one that is conscious of opportunities

provided by press freedom, and one that is conscious of technological possibilities without being mesmerised by them. To be future oriented, new journalists require some multi-media competence. According to one commentator, Katherine Fulter, "We won't be just print journalists, or radio journalists, or television journalists. We may well be digital, multimedia journalists" (1993:31). Certainly, a journalist in that situation will need to script a text for suitability for both visual and verbal reading.⁽⁹⁾

These insights have informed our new curriculum where students at second year have a taste of writing, design, photo-journalism, television and radio, before proceeding to specialise in one medium.

Secondly, it is also clear that the emerging job of journalists will require computer research capacity - another dimension we are introducing into our curriculum.⁽¹⁰⁾ News that does no more than quote officials and experts - journalism that distributes information from the top to the bottom of society - is not the future, according to Dutch commentators, Vasterman and Verwey (1994:10). For them, computer-assisted journalism allows reporters to check the information given by officials and to be less dependent on their sources. It pushes investigative reporting to the fore, and it also provides for computer-generated journalism, where a reporter becomes a researcher, producing facts - like trends - upon which officials are asked to comment (Koch, 1994:22).

Along with the new media thus comes the need for enhanced research and analytical skills, and the ability to sift, separate and link levels of information. Our students will increasingly have to think up their stories in various levels of complexity and comprehensiveness. Operating in a world of hypertext will also require a broad liberal arts and scientific knowledge, in order to make the links between information. Here, sadly, our students still have enormous distance to travel, judging by the dismal answers to our compulsory newsawareness tests. And in terms of information presentation, from having traditionally written in an inverted pyramid style, with information presented in order of descending importance, journalists in electronic publishing will have to present the tip of the iceberg, and a route map about how to reach the mass below.

If we are to produce more than reporters, more than unthinking and mechanical robots channelling traffic in the Information Age, i.e. if we are to produce journalists, then we have to teach far more than technical skills. This is not always welcomed by industry or by students. But we are arrogant enough to try to lead, rather than simply service, these two markets for our products. We are not simply a journalism department, but a journalism and media studies department, and the two are inseparable for us.

We, like journalism schools based at universities abroad, and unlike journalism training at technical colleges, are always

in dynamic tension over the theory-practice mix: over what should get the greatest emphasis, how and why (see also Fliess, 1994). My view is that the theory and practice should be dialectically linked. Theory - like cultural studies, media economics, film history - can, and should, be fed into practice, whether that practice is a media research project or a community video. Similarly, media practices should be informed by the theory, and should inform and develop that theory as well. We need to investigate the idea of senior student internships in industry, which count for part of the degree, and which are an occasion for marrying theory and practice in a fulltime dedicated and professional environment.

Likewise, the notion of recognising journalism teaching staff as multi-faceted is vital: we need university acknowledgement of those staff who publish in the mass or community media as well as in the academic journals, of those who spend time liaising with industry and community in mutually beneficial programmes, as well as those more oriented to conventional academic research and teaching. We have staff who are mainly theoreticians and researchers, others with a more practical media bent, and a healthy degree of overlap in most instances. That is the strength and essence of this department.

Our journalism-media studies linkage and practice-theory linkage are distinct, if related, concerns. Much could be said about them, but for this lecture, what is important to highlight is that both gain extra currency in the age of

democracy and information.

Who are the skilled and thinking journalists, the amateur high school student project reporters, the electronic newspaper publishers and everyone else all a-publishing on the Internet? Some, and an increasing number, will be South Africans. During 1995, my department put on-line South Africa's first magazine of student writing, as well as the country's first school newspaper (produced by township scholars trained by our senior students). But the majority of people on the Internet are, and will be for a long time to come, middle class white American males.⁽¹¹⁾ Notwithstanding its international reach, electronic journalism will fall into the same historical limitations as South Africa's white watchdogs did, if it is not careful. If our students are to operate in this universe as effective journalists, they need to know the debates about media and cultural imperialism, about cultural studies, communication and development, media and economics and so on.⁽¹²⁾

It is this media studies education that constitutes one of the most significant differences between a reporter and a journalist in the vision of our curriculum. With community radio and Internet access promising every Josephine Soap and Jabu Sithole the power to be a communicator, professionalism in journalism training is underlined. To quote Professor Cole: "We must continue to emphasise the reporting, the writing, the scepticism and the ethics, to draw out the inquiring mind, to prepare students for a journalism that demands the old skills

as well as the new, more than it ever did." (Cole 1995:9).

I would like to underline the point about ethics, and add the key value upon which journalistic ethics are ultimately based: the value placed on the watchdog mindset.

There is a new global community growing out there, one that makes the space and territory of different media, notably one which is punted as "702land", look contrived.⁽¹³⁾ This new cyber-community, linked of course to masses of real communities, will need, in its diverse populations, professional journalists and electronic newspapers as watchdogs. At the same time, journalists, whether they work as freelancers on the information highway, as employees for electronic publishers, or work for themselves as one-person publishers, will not have special status.

A long-standing cartoon about the Internet shows two dogs conversing. Says the one to other: "the great thing about accessing the 'Net is that no one knows you're a dog". This is precisely the challenge facing newspapers and journalists in danger of losing their unique historical identity under the dual pressures of a new democracy and a new Information Age.

To be recognised as a watchdog, in whatever medium, is never automatic. It helps if you have pedigree (not least one from Rhodes) but even then, your credibility has to be continuously earned. You earn it through the craft and consciousness of

your communication. It is these characteristics that I hope to stress as I pursue the honour of being professor in this institution.

Can we help an old watchdog learn the new tricks required for democracy and the information age? Watch this space.

Endnotes to Part One.

1. Naturally, the watchdog metaphor highlights only one dimension of the media: a political one. We should not forget Althusser's phrase that in electing some problems, a paradigm (or what he called a problematic) thereby elides others (1971:113). By electing the watchdog focus, we elide emphases like the role of the media as educator or entertainer. But I think it quite legitimate to concentrate on the watchdog aspect, because the media - like few other social institutions - has a profound political significance.

2. Terminology drawn from feudalism conveys the same outlook. This is the fourth estate role of the press, attributed to Edmund Burke: "There are three estates in Parliament, but in the reporters' gallery yonder sits a fourth state more important than they all. It is not a figure of speech or a witty saying; it is a literal fact, very momentous to us in these times". (cited in Donohue et al, 1995:118).

3. C Wright Mills saw the press as being "at the disposal of the elites of wealth and power" and so have many leftwing-inclined analysts (1956:315, cited in Donohue et al, 1995:120).

4. In a rather ironic twist to the dog metaphor, Chris Tipler - the tough man brought in to shake up the Argus company when its new owner took over last year - was dubbed the "Rottweiler" in anticipation of his savaging - not the government on behalf of the public, but the staff of that august company.

5. The Sunday Times' redoubtable Ken Owen has taken same approach in several polemics in his column. Owen has also correctly observed that the full history of the South African press has yet to be written. While, indeed we hope to attract him as a visiting scholar to Rhodes in 1998 to attempt exactly this, as exponent of the Potter position, he will need to take a step back and evaluate the thesis more rigorously.

6. "In hindsight, it may be seen that the English-language press was the major and irreplaceable force in keeping alive the values of democrats during a prolonged and debilitating siege. ... Without their presence, no advocacy journals, no 'alternative press', few extra-parliamentary opposition organisations could have existed in the republic. Had the mainstream press surrendered at any time, all opposition voices would have gone underground as they did in Poland and other communist states." (Tyson, 1993:406). (See also Jackson, 1993:7).

7. Potter writes: "The English Press increasingly became identified with those interests to which it gave expression. ... Once the English ceased to be major opponents, the English Press became a more serious opposition, which at times represented the interests of non-Whites. In Nationalist eyes

the English Press became not a fourth estate but a fifth column" (1975:207).

8. Nationalist Government actions against the press saw continuous prosecutions and imprisonments of journalists. To mention just three cases: There was the seminal conviction against the Rand Daily Mail for its expose of prison conditions in 1965; the jailings of journalists for refusing to reveal their sources - continuing up to the 1994 trial of Beeld reporter Andries Cornelissen, who spurned a Criminal Amendment Act Section 205 subpoena; the detention for more than a year of the current chief executive of the SABC, Zwelakhe Sisulu while editor of the New Nation.

9. Interestingly, however, to the extent that one may use the argument of government reaction to claim a watchdog role, the opposite may be proved. The Government, Potter points out, could have silenced the English Press altogether, but did not. Why? Because, she says, it was a White Press, not a serious threat, and part of White democracy. Finally, it was a "responsible" press, which attacked the rules of the political game, but never flouted them or encouraged others to do so. (1975:207/8).

10. The ANC Youth League had this to say: "While noting the role played by the media in the fight against apartheid, the (ANC- GB) NEC pointed out that, just like all other institutions of white domination have to change, the media has to accept that up to now it is by and large representative of the old establishment and in fact continues to expound its values in a number of ways. This has to change." (Daily Dispatch, 6/9/94).

11. Potter claimed that "the English-language Press gave recognition to all groups in the society despite its sectional bias. As Black South Africans had no means of articulating their interests or communicating their claims, they were effectively not a part of the political system at all. But by representing non-White interests as they saw them, the English Press forced an entry for the non-White into the political system." (1975:207). The key words here are "as they saw them". In the liberationist perspective, the press, far from playing the role of opposition, is branded as having shared interests in maintaining white supremacy.

12. "People who called our organisations terrorist groups still control the main media," points out Thami Mazwai (Sowetan, 5/6/95). "The media, which in the not so distant past, called the ANC terrorists from President Nelson Mandela down, have found ways of fighting the progressive direction the country is taking," says MP Titus Mafolo, former editor of The Eye community newspaper. (15/6/95, Sowetan).

13. Gordon Jackson, in his book Breaking Story, writes: "white ownership and control was one strike against the English Press' credibility." (1993:37).

14. An alternative to the donkey is the guard dog. Donahue et al (1995:115) distinguish the guard dog metaphor from the watch dog - the former suggesting "that the media perform as a sentry not for the community as a whole, but for those particular groups who have the power and influence to create and control their own security systems."

15. The parallel leg of the system was the Repressive State Apparatus, abbreviated - appropriately in this country - to the initials RSA.

16. P Eric Louw took this approach in an analysis published in 1983.

17. According to Donohue et al (1995:122), the occasional tendency to turn on one of the masters in a pluralistic power structure and yet protect their house is fundamental to the guard dog conception of media.

18. For an exception to this, however, see Collinge (1989:70): "The deeply contradictory nature of the commercial media makes it difficult to settle for the stereotypical label of victim or villain."

19. This is probably to be expected: internationally, many revolutionary movements and governments see the mass media not as a separate institution, but as a tool to achieve goals of the revolution (Pierce, 1979:123).

20. East Cape "RDP" MEC, Smuts Ngonyama, for instance argues that the media should give good news as much as coverage as bad news in order to promote peace, stability and general harmony (EPH, 2/6/95). MP Titus Mafolo criticises the press in arguing that "the Government, elected by the majority of the people, should communicate the important RDP projects which affluent Press editors do not find newsworthy." More accusatory, the Black Editors Forum declares that "(t)he media's control and focus is dominated by forces hostile to the main component of the Government of National Unity" (Sowetan, 29/5/95). It continues: "We cannot let the 'media mafia' get away with consciously and unconsciously trying to compromise black political organisations which might allow FW de Klerk to spring back as a knight in shining armour because black governance has supposedly failed." (Sowetan, 5/6/95).

21. "A slot (on national television - GB) for government to inform people about work that affects the poor will go a long way in speeding up the project of nation building." - Titus Mafolo, MP. Sowetan, 15/6/95.

22. Sowetan political editor, Mathatha Tsedu, for instance, says that his staff can hardly handle what they have, let alone deal with more information. Financial Mail editor Nigel Bruce joins Ken Owen in opposing the Open Democracy bill on the grounds that this particular government gift horse could be a Trojan steed. (See Berger and Clayton, 1995).

23. People - and the press - nowadays complain about the lack of government delivery in the RDP, but let no one forget that what has been delivered is media freedom (Berger, 1995:63). Today, the press enjoys an unparalleled right to communicate, but seems to be slow to take advantage of this. Yet it can be argued that South Africa desperately needs watchdogs to do justice to this formative period of South African democracy.

24. There seems to be a failure to recognise that black journalism graduates are still a minority, and one that is quickly creamed off by rich multinationals seeking public relations personnel. Put nothing in, and you get nothing out, I find myself preaching to assorted editors who phone me seeking black journalism graduates.

25. Another poser facing the watchdogs in the new democratic landscape is the character of their journalism. Gordon Jackson argues that the nonracial and campaigning alternative publications of the 1980s were prototypes for the way the mainstream would change in the 1990s. In some ways he was right, and it is significant that many alternative journalists today - most prominently former South editor Moegsien Williams who now edits the Cape Times - hold top positions in the mainstream. The alternative press's coverage of black politics, and its pioneering of DTP, are now no longer alternative things to do. But campaigning journalism has taken a back seat, even though thanks to the alternatives, there is a broader spread of investigative journalism (which is the equivalent of Bob Martens tablets for our watchdogs, even if the does is still far from sufficient).

27. In terms of the new ideology, money counts, and that means increasing hidden sponsorships in magazines and pressures on newspaper editors to do the same.

28. The IBA similarly states that a public service broadcaster should address people's "needs as citizens primarily, rather than their preference as consumers." (1995:54).

Endnotes to Part Two

1. That may be so in the USA, but less so in South Africa. Here, according to Independent Broadcast Authority (IBA) statistics, for 18% of South Africans, radio is the only mainstream medium to which they have access. More than 50% of rural Africans and the same percentage of African women seldom or never watch television (IBA, 1995:67,70). According to fairly recent readership figures, 95 percent of South Africa's more than nine million rural adults do not read a daily newspaper; 79 percent do not read any magazine (AMPS 1991:6-11). The assumption of the Information Society is that there is too much information to make sense of. But one can equally insist that it is as difficult to make sense of a little bit of information. Quantity is significant, but it is only part of the story. The more important question is quality, and how it is distributed in society. I will come back to this.

2. Nor did the press industry anticipate this fatal outcome when computers began to spread to typesetting, and not even when computers helped with wordprocessing, receiving data, page make-up, graphics, and through scanning capacities rendered process cameras and finally film cameras obsolete. Where will it end? Consider the following article in The Independent, 25/6/95, titled "Kasparov charged up for PC clash". It reads: "Gary Kasparov, the Russian world chess champion, today takes on his most implacable opponent - a computer. ... Last August in London, Kasparov lost the first game and drew the second from a position where some believed the computer had a losing position. Before the match, he said: 'If a computer can beat the world chess champion, a computer can read the best books in the world, can write the best plays and can know everything about history, literature and people.' Afterwards, he refused to speak to the media. The computer was also unavailable for comment." The time will come when that final sentence is not written tongue in cheek.

3. Maybe it is an unfair analogy, but I like to tell the sceptics, the newsprint diehards amongst us, to picture a couple of monks monkeying about their business in a far off monastery some time in the early 16th century. What is this business they're on about? - mass communication; to be precise the laborious process of transcribing copies of the bible, using quill, ink and leather. They're muttering amongst themselves about that damn fellow Gutenberg with his converted wine presses, talking about the decline of standards, deliberating on the need for their craft to defend itself. Bad enough to have mass printing, complains one, these upstarts have done the dirty on velum. But it's all to no avail: the march of progress is irresistible. And it is quickening.

4. The interesting thing about CDs is that these devices were not something new, like television was: rather they were simply a technological advance on what up till then had been pretty adequate vinyl discs. CDs captured their markets

because of their better quality sound, and let us not forget, because of their marketing as a status symbol - a fashion accessory for the 1990s. And because of these factors, they won predominant market share despite being more expensive than vinyl records, and despite requiring consumers to invest in new technology to be able to utilise them. The end result with CDs is that, finally, whether you like it or not, you can no longer even buy most of your music on vinyl any more. The industry, combined with the developing tastes of the consumer music market, has worked to render your medium archaic. Thus, a teenager in the 1990s has to hassle parents for mega-buck pocket money to pay for a whole CD; in the 1960s you could buy a host of hit parade highlights issued on Seven-Singles.

5. Commentators like the Poynter Institute's Don Fry (1993), looking at the trend in cellular phones, believe that a time will come when papers (or petrol stations) will give out free electronic receivers as an incentive to customers, and charges will only be levied for the information subscribed to. Says Fry: "You make money on the blades, not the razors."

6. It will not be a news-paper. Staff writer for the **Los Angeles Times**, David Shaw, spells it out: "Newspapers spend an enormous amount of money to gather an enormous amount of information; only a small percentage of that information is actually published - most of it virtually identical for all readers regardless of their varying interests. The information is used only once - printed in tens of thousands of copies, trucked to individual locations, read and thrown away. The next day, the entire process begins anew - and more trees are killed to produce more papers." (1991:13)

7. A press may be an "engineering marvel" argues Roger Fidler, and its expense may have kept competitors out of the industry in the past, but it is now so costly, that it may even become a barrier to exit (1992:24).

8. In this sense, a newspaper publisher is no different to an advertiser: both offer information to consumers only as a means to other ends. The difference is that the publishers uses it as bait to sell the hapless victims onwards; the advertiser seeks to hook the recipient into making a purchase, lifestyle change or similar advertising goal.

9. However, the commercial and gatekeeping challenge posed by their middleman function should not be underestimated by newspapers.

10. The names include American Telephone and Telegraph Co (AT&T), MCI Communications Corp, business information provider and Yellow Pages publishers The Dun and Bradstreet Corp, and financial services groups Citicorp.

11. In the business of selling audiences, these formidable enterprises, like Citicorp's Credit Card business, build mega-databases of clients which they sell to advertisers for

direct mail and other marketing methods that bypass newspapers and retailers (a key staple of newspaper advertising) alike. In South Africa, the biggest circulating medium, the Edgars Club magazine, does exactly the same. It gathers data on its readers and markets this to other retailers. (Intelligence, February, 1995). In combining both sides of the business, AT&T, with double the annual revenue of the total US newspaper business, is advancing a Smart Phone concept and interactive cable systems - offering advertisers not only direct reach but also direct response to highly specific markets. It already has a "personal digital assistant" pager - a kind of souped-up cellphone which offers two way communication, handles personal organising functions, and can send faxes. One consultant predicts some 20 million hand-held wireless reading devices before 2000 (Presstime, 1993:18, August).

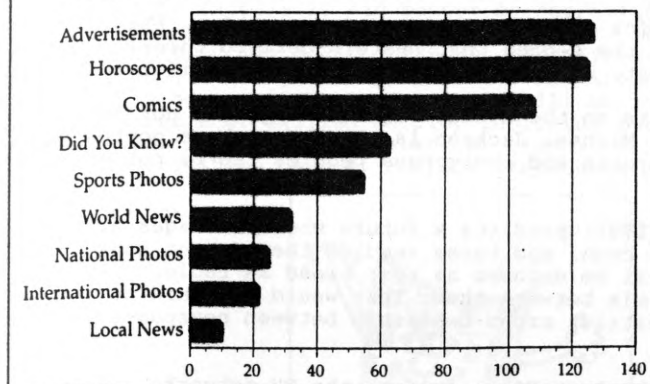
12. Executive editor of the **San Jose Mercury News**, Robert D Ingle said in 1993 that newspapers should network electronically, because it is not in their best interests to wind up "on a network controlled by somebody else with no connection to newspapers [and] without our historic ideas." (presstime, July 1993:36). Until a year ago, it looked like newspapers were losing the race. Today, it is looking different, as I will show later. What Ingle's own company has done has been demonstrated earlier: they designed the Newshound.

13. Whatever the size, the point is that electronic newspapers - whether portable or not - are something new. Just as mountain bikes reinvented the bicycle as a fashion accessory, and cellular phones have become a definitive status symbol, so the new electronic paper has the potential to win over parts of youth markets that conventional newspapers have been unable to reach. Not least because, according to Don Fry (1993), the tablets will also have Nintendo games that come with them. Teenagers and kids will no longer regard newspapers as snooze-papers (or as sleeping dogs, if we recall our canine metaphors for a moment).

According to one writer, both conventional print and passive TV are less and less attractive to children who want something interactive. (Oppenheimer, 1993:35). If he is right, then the electronic paper, with its interactivity, will appeal - in the US at least - to young people in a way that all the NiE schemes in the world have not succeeded in doing. This in fact is the experience of one paper, the **Digital Missourian**. In its experimental phase, it was given to a classroom sixth-grade American pupils. "The kids were just intrigued with the whole nature of the Digital Missourian - the interactivity, the colours, the graphics - by the medium itself, the way the information was delivered," said developer Jeff Adams (Terrell, 1992: 20). The results of this trial, recorded by the newspaper programme itself, and presented on the next page are fascinating (chart source: Presstime, September 1992:20):

DIGITAL MISSOURIAN: WHAT STUDENTS READ

Total Minutes Spent on Each Section Over a Three-Week Period



14. Fidler said that paper will decline after the turn of the century, and within two to three decades electronic publishing will overtake print. He also said sometimes, however, it would take till the end of the decade to penetrate the general consumer market (Christopher, 1994:28) And in 1992, he said a popular, portable electronic newspaper was about five years away (Markoff, 1992). On another occasion he predicted it would be available and affordable within seven to 10 years, for as little as \$200.

15. In 1989, there were 42 papers with audiotext and online capabilities, in April 1995 there were 3200 and growing. (Wilson, 1995:17)

16. The different levels of information are connected through hypertext links. As George Gilber (n.d.:148) argues, the effect is that newspapers can combine the best features of daily journalism with the best qualities of speciality magazines. "The front pages and shallower levels of the system will still function like a streamlined newspaper, which readers can browse, search and explore as they do a conventional paper without thrashing about through the pages. The deeper levels will function like magazines, focussing on business, technology, lifestyles, sports, religion or art." (ibid.)

17. There is a danger of people becoming extremely narrow under these conditions, but the reality is that they are already doing an enormous range of pre-screening and selecting from the mass of information currently thrust upon them. Some arguments in the debate predict the growth of individuality as against a sense of local common community is likely to be reinforced. Others argue that the Daily Me is, far from being an introspective self-centred phenomenon, a Daily Planet - an membership of diverse global communities - of unprecedented proportions.

Endnotes to Part Three

1. In South Africa with its low media consumption, this is probably not to the degree that Western-derived theories might otherwise suggest, even if it still probably significant.

2. Child abuse is on the social and media agenda, not least because of what Michael Jackson is alleged to have gotten up to. The rain forests and indigenous peoples can be put down to Sting.

3. Negroponte (1995) predicts a future where messages are sent out in multiple code, and those sending them do not know whether they will be decoded as text, read as radio, viewed as TV, or as some mix between them. That would put paid to the IBA's bid to restrict cross-ownership between newspapers and radio stations.

4. Already in the last US elections, the TV networks lost out to viewers preferring the unmediated coverage of campaign meetings offered by C-Span.

5. Commentator Don Peppers says: "in an age of two-way communications, your readers can become your contributors, and there are a lot more readers than contributors in the current architecture of publishing" (1994:9). He is right, but there is also no reason why readers should only contribute to an institution controlled by someone else.

6. Or children's magazines like that featured on the next page - or literally hundreds of others on the Internet.

7. According to Gilder, "the ultimate reason that the newspapers will prevail in the Information Age is that they are better than anyone else at collecting, editing, filtering and presenting real information, and they are allying with the computer juggernaut to do it." (nd.:149; See also Fidler 1992:24; Christopher, 1994:28; Markoff, 1992).

8. Often these narratives are proscribed and patterned by people in power. Thus, "more than 70 per cent of the stories in the (United States - GB) nation's principal newspapers are based on the statements and quotes of government officials," writes Koch (1990:175). This pattern is underpinned by news conventions which give rise to a special narrative structure and sources, according to Koch. The end result, in his view, is to make the fourth estate a partner rather than an adversary of government (ibid:177). There is some validity here, though for the purposes of this discussion, I am focussing upon the role of media in communicating narrative, rather than the character of the narratives themselves.

9. Asks professor Stephen D Isaacs of Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, who will research, collect and display the coming "combination of video, text, photographs, graphics, voice and who knows what else"?. Will it, he asks, "be

computer wizards? Cyberspace entrepreneurs? Librarians?". He answers: "The fact is it had better be journalists... people steeped in a tradition of journalistic goals, of public service and of commitment" (1995:50). The title of his article is, pointedly, "The gatekeepers or the barbarians?" Things are unlikely to be as stark. Rather there will be collaboration between a range of skilled people, including animators, film-producers and camera-operators, graphic artists, information systems people, computer specialists and so on.

Illustration for note 6:



Kids newspaper making its debut!

Hey kids!

Be sure to check out the **Columbia Missourian** on **Fridays**, for the great issues of miniMO, a newspaper just for kids!

Just like any other paper, you'll find articles about stuff you are interested in: sports, games, comics, jokes, and of course, news. In the first issue there are some submissions from some fourth graders in Columbia, and we hope to have lots of submissions from kids of all ages in future issues.

You can send in anything you want -- stories, jokes, games, poems, black-and-white artwork -- and we'll try to print it. You can even sign up to be a Student of the Week or Athlete of the Week! Or maybe your pet will be featured as the Pet of the Week!

We called the newspaper miniMO because it is a mini version of the Missourian, and MO is the abbreviation for Missouri. You'll find miniMO in the Missourian every Friday through the end of the school year.

And because this is your paper, you can also send in letters to the editor to voice your opinion on things. Adults can talk back to the editor in the regular Missourian, so you should be able to talk to the editor too. And if there's something you'd like us to write about, you can tell us that, too. There are three ways you can talk back to us:

- You can write us at: miniMO, Columbia Missourian, P.O. Box 917, 301 S. Ninth St., Columbia, MO 65205.
- Or you can call our voice mailbox at 882-5739.
- Or you can even send us e-mail on the Internet at this address: c620715@mizzou1.missouri.edu

We hope you'll get the miniMO each week and have fun reading it and seeing people you know in it -- maybe even yourself!

10. As the Poynter Institute's Nora Paul says, "Together, primary and secondary sources add up to good research. Today's reporter, making the leap from mere observer of events to analyst and interpreter of those events, needs access to secondary sources." (1994:36). Computer research capacity empowers journalists to gather such secondary information - as an extremely powerful complement to primary information.

11. As with Hollywood films, California has conquered global culture on the Net. It is no coincidence that the leading cult magazine on the Internet, HotWired, is located there. It is also not fortuitous that a South African best needs to access the Net in the morning when the Americans are still asleep and cyber-jams are accordingly diminished. And as we increasingly adopt Windows 95, so we will find Bill Gates's software channeling our Internet access via his corporation's gates and gatekeepers.

12. Even more broadly, to quote Everette E Dennis: "A university graduate who has no concept of the role of communication in society, of freedom of expression, how to use the media to stay informed and so on, is not an educated person prepared for society today. (1989:7). That is the non-negotiable starting point for students who want to graduate with a Rhodes journalism degree.

13. According to Nicholas Negroponte, "(t)he true value of a networking is less about information and more about community. The information superhighway is more than a shortcut to every book in the Library of Congress. It is creating a totally new, global social fabric."

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