Jan. 22-23

Lansing, Michigan

Holiday Inn South - $91 single/double

(517) 694-8123 to reserve a room

Feb. 5-6

Columbus, Ohio

Adam's Mark - $115 single/double

(614) 228-5050 to reserve a room

Feb. 26-27

Springfield, Illinois

Hilton – $78 single/double

1-800-HILTONS to reserve a room

March 4-5

Madison, Wisconsin

Sessions at the Wisconsin State Journal

Holiday Inn – $69 – (608) 244-4703

March 25-26

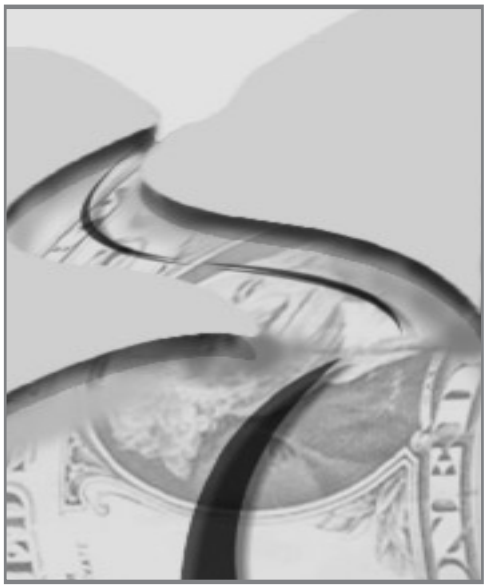
Indianapolis, Indiana

Radisson - $109 single/double

(317) 236-2512 to reserve a room

The Money Trail:

Tracking Campaign Cash



For more information and a registration form, visit www.ire.org or complete this form and send it to IRE, c/o Money Trail, 138 Neff Annex, The Missouri School of Journalism, Columbia, Mo., 65211. Questions – Call 573-882-1982

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

_____

City, State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Email: _____

Knowing how to truly analyze campaign contributions and grasp the political cash flow has become as essential to basic election coverage as having candidates' home phone numbers.

Investigative Reporters and Editors is offering a series of campaign finance workshops that combine expert tips on tracking money in politics with IRE's renowned hands-on computer-assisted reporting training. The Joyce Foundation is helping fund these jam-packed two-day sessions known as "The Money Trail: Tracking Campaign Cash."

The Saturday-Sunday workshops come to the Midwest states first. Each workshop will be tailored to the state we're in. Most of Saturday will be panels and demonstrations featuring experts on federal campaign money from the D.C.-based Center for Responsive Politics and local experts on state-level contributions. We'll also show reporters how to trace the flow of soft money from D.C. into their states and what the states are doing with it.

The remaining session will be hands-on CAR training using federal and state-level data. CAR training will include: analyzing databases; using spreadsheets to crunch numbers; importing contribution data off the Web; joining databases (such as contribution data to state contract data) to find links between who earns state business and who funds state politicos. Reporters will leave with tons of story ideas and the skills to research them.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome to the new IRE Journal

We have been busily rethinking and redesigning this magazine to deliver the most useful information we can. The Journal always has been known for highlighting the techniques that make the best reporting and writing stand out. As we enter the new millennium, we are sharpening the magazine's focus on winning journalism and our presentation of this great work.

Designers Wendy Gray and Kerrie Kirtland worked tirelessly to help with this new look – and new standard. We hope it shows.

While much work has gone into this new effort, we want a dynamic magazine that is constantly improving. We need reader suggestions for that.

Please drop us a line and let us know:
– Does the design work for you?
– Do you approve of the content?
– What suggestions do you have for changing either?
– Which stories or features appealed to you the most?
– Do you have a specific story or feature idea for a future issue?

E-mail your thoughts to journal@ire.org or send to The IRE Journal, Missouri School of Journalism, 138 Neff Annex, Columbia, Mo. 65211.

Len Bruzzese
IRE Deputy Director
(and director of publications)

Cover story page 18
Governor Christine Todd Whitman speaks during a press conference during which the governor announced the new State Police Uniform Crime Statistics at the Hightstown Homes in Hightstown.

Cover photo by
Noah Addis, The Star-Ledger

THE IRE JOURNAL

VOLUME 23 | NUMBER 1

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Six years, going on seven

BRANT HOUSTON

In February 1994, I began working at IRE as managing director of the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting (NICAR). The small offices of IRE and NICAR were off a hallway that snaked through the basement of the Missouri School of Journalism. There were seven full-time employees, two of us spending most of our time away, teaching seminars around the U.S. A few graduate and undergraduate students helped keep everything running, including our conferences, the resource center, and a growing database library.

Despite its modest appearances, IRE had already entered an era of tremendous expansion. The 1993 budget totaled a half-million dollars, a 66 percent increase over 1992. Upping the number of conferences from three to five and getting donations totaling $34,000 had fueled the increase. And waiting in the bank for 1994 was a $225,000 Freedom Forum grant to jumpstart NICAR, a joint program of IRE and the journalism school.

IRE's expansion

Today IRE and NICAR are spread over 3,000 square feet in an annex of the school that used to serve as the newsroom for the school's paper. Last year's budget for IRE and NICAR was more than $1.3 million. The full-time staff is slightly bigger – only 10. But it's bolstered by more than 20 graduate and undergraduate students and several part-time contractors. The annual number of large conferences is three, but IRE now holds 40 or more workshops a year, where before there were, at most, a handful. Since 1994, more than 14,000 journalists have taken part in our training and conferences.

In 1996, IRE's Resource Center went on the Web . It now offers abstracts on more than 15,000 print and broadcast stories and at least 1,000 tipsheets stored at the center. The Web also allows us to offer specialized pages on beats and other topics and links to other useful sites. The database library now offers several dozen government databases and provides educational assistance to more than 100 news organizations a year.

Also in 1996, IRE began its Mexico project, a four-year effort that succeeded in helping Mexican journalists launch their own IRE-like organization.

In 1997, we added the Campaign Finance Information Center, a Web-oriented training and database division to help journalists decipher the influence of money on elections. This past year we started a program for small- to medium-sized news organizations, in which we offer workshops and follow-up training.

The reasons for the changes at IRE are threefold:

1. a strong desire to share more of our expertise and values
2. a vigorous pursuit of grants from foundations for appropriate programs
3. an increased demand from the profession for practical training, particularly in computer-assisted reporting.

The results from these efforts have been beneficial in more ways than we ever expected. We collaborate with more journalists and organizations, we have become diverse, we offer many more services to our members and we reach out to more foreign journalists who we expect to work with more closely in the coming years.

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Brant Houston is executive director of IRE and the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting. He can be reached through e-mail at brant@ire.org or by calling 573-882-2042.

Brent Johnson fund will assist grad students

The Brent Johnson Memorial Scholarship now has more than $12,500 and is expected to be permanently endowed soon. The scholarship was established last spring in honor of Johnson, a 27-year-old student at the Missouri School of Journalism who died in April of cardiac arrest. It will be awarded to a graduate student at the university who works in the IRE offices, as did Johnson.

Besides requests for donations from IRE members through publications and listservs, some of Johnson's friends at the school ran in the fall LaSalle Banks Chicago Marathon to raise money for the scholarship fund. Much of the money came through per-mile pledges.

IRE maintains an account for this fund and is accepting tax-deductible donations. Send checks to the Brent Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o IRE, 138 Neff Annex, Missouri School of Journalism, Columbia, Mo., 65211.

Workshops scheduled to track campaign cash

IRE is offering a series of campaign finance workshops that combine expert tips on tracking money in politics with IRE's renowned computer-assisted reporting training for a jam-packed two-day session entitled: "The Money Trail: Tracking Campaign Cash."

Sessions are tailored to the state where they are held. Federal and local experts in state-level campaign finance serve as panelists. Each panel is followed by hands-on CAR training using federal and state-level data to hunt for the trends and loopholes panelists note.

Reporters will learn how to track the flow of soft money from D.C. to their states and watch how it is disbursed. Reporters will learn how to match state contract data to state contribution data and will take with them the federal and state-level data they used to find stories during the workshops.

Already scheduled:

Jan 22-23 – Lansing, Mich.
Feb. 5-6 – Columbus, Ohio
Feb. 26-27 – Springfield, Ill.
Mar. 4-5 – Madison, Wisc.
March 25-26 – Indianapolis, Ind.
April 15-16 – Minneapolis, Minn.

APBnews.com will fund Internet fellows in NYC

APBnews.com, an online news organization covering crime, justice and safety news, has announced funding of three Internet fellowships to IRE's 2000 National Conference. The conference will be held June 1-4 in New York and will mark IRE's 25th anniversary.

"In addition to being committed to reporting, we're also dedicated to advancing the standards of online journalism," said Mark Sauter, COO of APB Online, Inc. "That's why APBnews.com is proud to support IRE, and we encourage online journalists from around the country to attend IRE 2000."

The fellowships will cover registration, travel and lodging for a college student, a college instructor and an online professional. Details on the fellowships and an application form are available at www.ire.org or by calling 573-882-2042.

CAR boot camp training for newsroom managers

Following the success of the first Editor Boot Camp last year, IRE has scheduled a 2000 camp on Feb. 24-26. This streamlined version of IRE's successful computer-assisted reporting boot camp is aimed at newsroom managers. This includes top editors or news directors, managing editors, AMEs, assignment editors and other editors directing reporters.

The three-day session will teach editors the things they need to know to make CAR successful in their newsrooms. They'll experience just enough hands-on work to understand what their reporters are tackling and what more is possible. They'll also hear from other editors who have been there before them, and not only survived, but flourished. Included is information on negotiating for electronic records without turning to a lawyer right away.

Fees are based on a sliding scale related to newsroom size. Editors can register via www.ire.org and can call Len Bruzzese for more details at 573-882-2042.

Latest boat registrations available in data library

IRE and NICAR's Database Library has updated its dataset on boat registrations through June 30, 1999. This database, the U.S. Coast Guard's Marine Safety Information System, contains information on commercial and recreational vessels.

The dataset is available for the entire United States at a cost of $60 for small news organizations, $80 for those between 50,000 and 100,000 ciculation. (or 25-50 market) and $100 for large newsroom. More information is available on the NICAR Web site, www.nicar.org/data, or by calling 573-884-7711.

MEMBER NEWS

Alex Berenson has left TheStreet.com, where he covered media and entertainment companies, to join *The New York Times* as a financial markets reporter. ■ **Scott Brooks** has left his position as investigative producer at WSOC-TV in Charlotte, N.C. to join WAAV-Radio in Wilmington, N.C. as a reporter-anchor. ■ **Deborah Crowe**, former managing editor of the *Forum Community News* in Castro Valley, Calif., is the new online editor at Contra Costa Newspapers in Walnut Creek, Calif. ■ **Manuel De La Rosa** has joined start-up newscast and Fox-affiliate KKFX-TV in the Santa Barbara market as a general assignment reporter. He will be based in Santa Maria, covering the northern part of the market. ■ **Jennifer LaFleur** moved from the *San Jose Mercury News*, where she was database editor for four years, to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* as computer-assisted reporting editor. ■ Former IRE staff member **Larry Lee**, 41, was found stabbed to death Dec. 28 in his Guatemala apartment. He was reporting for BridgeNews, a financial wire service, mostly covering the coffee market. His death remains under investigation, but there is no way to tell at this time whether the killing was related to Lee's reporting. ■ **Carrie Miller** has joined the staff of the *Gainesville Sun* in Gainesville, Fla., where she will cover the University of Florida. Miller was a projects reporter at *Manhattan Mercury* in Manhattan, Kan., before leaving to pursue a Pew Fellowship in International Journalism. ■ **Judy Miller**, IRE president and city editor of *The Miami Herald*, received a Knight Ridder James K. Batten Excellence Award for her leadership and high standards in investigative reporting. Miller has been involved in many of the *Herald's* important news stories of the past decade and is credited by many as the driving force behind the *Herald's* Pulitzer

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 ➢

Send Member News items to Len Bruzzese at len@ire.org and include a phone number for verification.

Digging into history

AP investigates U.S. actions during Korean War

BY MARTHA MENDOZA

In the summer of 1950, in the first weeks of the Korean War, U.S. military forces opened fire on a group of South Korean civilian refugees at a place called No Gun Ri, killing hundreds of men, women and children.

What happened next was equally shocking: Nothing.

Apparently no one in the U.S. military reported the killings. No one investigated them. As years passed, historians remained unaware of what happened. Korean survivors said that when they tried to file a grievance, they met rejection and denial.

That might have been the end of it. But a few years ago, as the political atmosphere in South Korea liberalized, a handful of survivors decided to press their case once more, sending petitions to the U.S. Embassy and, in August 1997, filing a claim for compensation with the South Korean government.

By April 1998, Sang-hun Choe, an Associated Press reporter in Seoul, learned of the Koreans' allegations and wrote a story.

In its official response to the claim, the U.S. Armed Forces Claims Service had said there was no evidence the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division – blamed by the survivors for the killings – was even in the No Gun Ri area at the time.

Tracking down the truth

At AP's New York headquarters, Kevin Noblet, deputy international editor, and my boss, Bob Port, editor of the Special Assignment Team, thought the U.S. response could be double-checked relatively easily.

It was. It didn't check out.

Randy Herschaft, an AP investigative researcher, found through some quick digging that the 1st Cavalry and 25th Infantry divisions were, indeed, in the general area in late July 1950.

Port next sent Herschaft to the U.S. National Archives at College Park, Md., to find what he could about the divisions' activities.

> "Apparently no one in the U.S. military reported the killings. No one investigated them."

The Archives' restrictive rules on access and handling of historical documents make work there tedious and time-consuming. Researching the Korean War was doubly difficult because the declassified military records from those days are scattered and the Archives has no Korean War specialist.

But Herschaft, whose gentle demeanor masks a tenaciousness as an investigator, returned to New York after a few days with a wealth of photocopied documents. His most startling find: orders from American commanders to their units retreating through South Korea to shoot civilians as a defense against disguised enemy soldiers.

A story was taking shape.

In Seoul, Choe – supported by Bureau Chief Reid G. Miller, a Korean War veteran, and News Editor Paul Shin – was deep into his own painstaking work, assembling a chronology of the shootings based on interviews with survivors and victims' relatives and on historical material that provided day-by-day context.

Herschaft and I returned to the National Archives for further comprehensive digging, through hundreds of boxes of unit histories, war diaries, communications logs and other documents, including Air Force records, since the survivors said the killing began with a strafing by U.S. warplanes.

In the main reading area of the Archives, a new and sterile suburban building, copy machines echo and the sound of a dropped pencil can break the silent spell. Sitting in this vast, sunny room, I got caught up in war records in which soldiers were dying, the enemy was advancing and supplies were running out. Handwritten notes, urgent scribbles for help, would fall from the folders onto my lap and remind me where I was.

Mapping U.S. military positions

We returned to New York with hundreds more copies of declassified documents. They included endless notations of map coordinates – the positions of military units, multidigit keys to our search.

We obtained 1950-vintage U.S. Army topographical maps (scale 1:50,000) from the National Archives and the New York Public Library, and I began reconstructing troop movements, to identify units that might have encountered the refugees.

The walls of our small Special Assignment Team office were soon covered with big maps dotted with little stickers, each map representing one day in late July 1950, as I tracked the movements of American units.

We still didn't know whether the South Korean survivors were telling the truth. But more than ever we realized the U.S. military had it wrong when it said the 1st Cavalry Division was not near No Gun Ri.

That was enough to keep me at the maps, for several weeks.

By late May 1998, AP Special Correspondent Charles J. Hanley joined the project, bringing the perspective of a 30-year AP journalist, a Vietnam War veteran and a reporter who has covered conflicts around the world.

We meshed well – Hanley's thoughtfulness

and care in writing; my aggressiveness and insatiable curiosity; Herschaft's resourcefulness and sharp eye; Choe's thoroughness and utter professionalism.

We in New York had not met our Seoulmate in person, but we worked seamlessly together with Choe, via global teleconferences at odd hours, e-mail, faxes and overnight packages.

The mapping finally paid off. We narrowed down to a few U.S. Army battalions those that would have been near No Gun Ri a half-century ago.

Herschaft filed a Freedom of Information Act request with the Army for those units' rosters and morning reports, documents noting companies' locations. He traveled to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis and returned with loads of rosters copied from microfilm, some barely legible.

Finding and interviewing witnesses

Herschaft and I then began the months-long process of tracking down veterans, using a range of resources, including the people-tracking databases AutoTrack, CDB Infotek and Merlin. The Korean War Casualty Database, posted on the Korean War Project's Web site (www.kwp.org), helped us eliminate men who were killed in action, and Social Security Administration death records helped eliminate others.

As names and phone numbers built up, Hanley and I began the calls – cold calls to aging veterans from a few battalions. We began with enlisted men, saving the officers for later.

We identified ourselves, explained what we were working on, and let the vets talk. And we chalked up one lengthy interview after another, all dead ends but all useful in understanding the warfront scene in mid-1950.

Finally, on our 34th interview, I found a man who said he witnessed what happened at No Gun Ri.

His detail was convincing. But it wasn't until 15 interviews later that we hit another. Finally we began to zero in – on the 7th Cavalry Regiment's 2nd Battalion. We found more and more men out there, in Kentucky, in Kansas, in Michigan, who were willing to talk, about Korean civilians trapped under the same railroad trestle, in the same time period, under the machine guns of their battalion.

"I remember firing at people to clear it

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31 ➢

RESOURCES

Associated Press (www.wire. ap.org)

To see the entire AP story, including video, documents, maps, graphics and more, go to wire.ap.org and search for No Gun Ri.

Harry S Truman Library and Museum (www.trumanlibrary.org) Independence, MO

The collection includes Truman's personal papers, as well as White House administration papers records from his presidency. Korean War documents include copies of State and Defense Department documents relating to the Korean War, made and sent to the White House at the request of President Truman.

Korean War Project (www.kwp.org)

One feature of this Korean War Web site is the Korean War Casualty Database, which allows users to type in any name and find out if they died during the war, and if so, when and under which unit.

National Personnel Records Center Military Personnel Records (nara.gov/regional/mpr.html) St. Louis, MO

This is the repository of millions of military personnel, health, and medical records of discharged and deceased veterans of all services during the 20th century. The center also stores medical treatment records of retirees from all services, as well as records for dependent and other persons treated at Naval medical facilities. Rosters of units from the Korean War are stored on microfilm. The public has access to certain military service information without the veteran's authorization including service number, rank, dates of service, awards and decorations and city of last known address.

Lexis-Nexis (www.lexis-nexis.com)

LEXIS-NEXIS claims to be the world's largest provider of credible, in-depth information. From legal and government to business and high-tech, products and services provide direct access to an enormous information universe. This is a good place to find references to obscure articles and subjects in legal journals.

U.S. National Archives (www.nara.gov)

The National Archives and Records Administration administers a nationwide network of facilities. At the College Park, Md., facility, records include the cartographic and architectural holdings; the Nixon Presidential Materials; electronic records; motion picture, sound, and video records; the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Collection; still pictures; the Berlin Documents Center microfilm; and textual records from most civilian agencies and military records dating from World War II. There are many declassified Korean War records at College Park which staff are reorganizing for the 50th anniversary of the war.

U.S. Army Military History Institute (carlisle-www.army .mil/usamhi/) Carlisle, Pa.

The institute serves as the primary research facility for the historical study of the US Army. It holds everything from war diaries to telephone logs dating back to the Revolutionary War. Korean War-era information includes Army manuals and regulations that would have been distributed to troops, reconnaissance intelligence reports, memos from generals, United Nations command reports and combat information bulletins.

Westlaw (www.westlaw.com)

Westlaw is a legal and business research tool, very useful for finding citations and references to articles in legal journals. The online source also offers case law and statutory material, legal texts, information from news sources and some public records.

"Hollow Promises"

Project planning keeps *The Columbus Dispatch* on trail to government's Appalachia failures

By Doug Haddix

In September 1998, Jesse Jackson and Jerry Falwell, two Baptist ministers at polar ends of the political spectrum, joined forces to lead a march of 2,500 people in Nelsonville, Ohio.

Their shared cause: persistent poverty in Appalachia.

The bizarre alignment of the stars made an impression in the newsroom of *The Columbus Dispatch*. For a variety of reasons, Appalachia once more had hit the radar screen nationally. Prominent activists realized that the people of the region, which encompasses 406 counties in 13 states, had again been left behind as much of the nation enjoyed unprecedented prosperity.

One year later, *The Dispatch* published a five-day investigative series, "Appalachia: Hollow Promises."

The newspaper's investigation into the federal Appalachian Regional Commission found that billions of tax dollars dedicated to helping struggling residents had missed their mark in the core of the impoverished region. Instead, because of pork-barrel politics and the agency's allocation structure set by Congress, relatively prosperous counties continue to reap millions of dollars from the commission.

Photo: The ColumbusDispatch

Living conditions in the 406 counties within 13 states that comprise the Appalachia region offer a significant contrast to the unprecedented prosperity enjoyed by much of the nation. Billions of tax dollars dedicated to helping the region have missed their mark to due to pork-barrel politics and misallocation to prosperous areas within the region.

The agency, created in 1965 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, has distributed an inflation-adjusted $16.4 billion across a region slicing through 13 states from New York to Mississippi.

The Dispatch had several reasons for investigating Appalachia. The newspaper, with a circulation of 250,000 daily and 384,000 Sunday, reaches 21 of Ohio's 29 Appalachian counties. One in four Columbus residents has first- or second-generation ties to Appalachia. In addition, most readers care about what happens to their tax dollars.

The genesis of the project – from conception to birth and beyond – taught us many lessons, which apply in newsrooms of any size.

As a new arrival at *The Dispatch*, I wanted to get a sense of what topics interested the staff. So I solicited project ideas in late 1998 and drafted a "ballot" to let the staff vote on three dozen suggestions. Appalachia finished first. That didn't guarantee its selection as a major project, but it helped tip the scales.

Like many other project ideas, the broad topic of Appalachia needed focus – a laser beam instead of a spotlight. In February 1999, brainstorming sessions open to the entire staff elicited worthwhile suggestions and provided important historical context. Among the many ideas offered was this gem, buried in my notes from one of the sessions: Follow the money. Has it made a difference? Has there been waste? Have there been boondoggles? What about corruption? Who really has benefited the most from the billions poured into the region? Why are so many counties still trapped in poverty after all that money and after seven or eight years of a national economic expansion?

That approach, in essence, ultimately became the narrow focus of "Hollow Promises." At the time, however, it had competition from other worthy contenders, such as environmental abuses and exploitation of workers.

Early in the process, the team decided that the project had to pass a four-point litmus test: It had to have an investigative edge, break new ground, affect everyday people and offer real opportunity for change.

The four reporters on "Hollow Promises" – Roger Alford, Mark Ferenchik, Rita Price and Jill Riepenhoff – spent weeks studying Appalachia. They benefited tremendously from being assigned full time to the project without the distractions and demands of their regular beats. Their supervisors, City Editor Mark Ellis and State Editor Alan Miller, offered their full

Photo: Doral Chenoweth III | The Columbus Dispatch

After tinkering with the battery cables, Anna Gabbard prepares to drive to one of the four tobacco fields she and her husband Kenny cultivate. They are living in her old beauty shop building until their new home is built. Their previous home was destroyed recently by fire, for which the local fire department charged them $500 to extingush. They live in rural Owsley County, Kentucky, south of Booneville.

support to the project despite the temporary loss of two reporters apiece.

Dedicated project time, for instance, enabled several of the reporters to spend two weeks poring through the Appalachian Regional Commission's archives, housed at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. A librarian told them that no one else had ever looked through the extensive collection. The boxes of documents shed light on the agency's inner workings, especially during the early 1980s when President Reagan tried to abolish the commission. Among other records, the reporters also examined dozens and dozens of applications for questionable projects – paperwork that the agency had to retrieve from a warehouse near Washington, D.C.

A golden moment for the team came when Ferenchik asked for electronic spending records of all commission grants since its creation in 1965. An ARC official called the request "unprecedented." From that point, the team realized that new ground would be broken.

That ground, however, proved hard to plow. The commission delayed the release of the computer records by weeks, using the maximum 20 working days provided under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act. The data, provided in Microsoft Excel format on a CD-ROM, had 173 columns of information for more than 22,000 grants. The file required significant cleaning, adding weeks to the process.

Once cleaned, the financial information had to be converted to constant 1998 dollars to account for inflation since 1965. (For a thorough look at different inflation calculators, take a look at a NASA site on the Internet: www.jsc.nasa.gov/bu2/inflate.html)

Without a written plan, a project risks flying apart at the seams. A flexible battle plan helps the team stay focused and unified. Time spent hammering out a creative, workable strategy will be time saved later in the process.

For "Hollow Promises," we followed up on several strategy sessions at the newspaper with an all-day retreat at my house in early May. The mission: to craft a final plan based on the research and reporting of the previous two months. Away from the ever-present distractions of the newsroom, four reporters and three editors hashed out possible approaches and structures. In retrospect, a photographer and graphic artist should have been included.

Shortly after the full-day retreat, I set a deadline of Friday the 13th (of August) – an easy one to remember.

Reporters followed the data to find key places and people to bring their stories to life. Where had the Appalachian commission spent a lot of money? Very little money? Money on

CONTINUED ON PAGE 30 ➢

PROJECT PLANNING

Idea

- Become an expert on the topic through full-immersion research, using your newspaper's library, Lexis-Nexis, the Internet, journals and other sources.
- Search the IRE Resource Center to see what other journalists have done.
- Check early on the availability of records and data, as well as access to them in paper or computer form.

Research

- Seek input from as many people as possible.
- Hold brainstorming sessions on how to narrow a broad topic.
- Resist the temptation to settle quickly on a good-but-not-spectacular angle.

Battle plan

- Draft a flexible story budget.
- Include potential photos and graphics as soon as possible.
- Set a reasonable-but-firm deadline for stories, photos and graphics.

Reporting and writing

- Think creatively to find a person or place to tell a larger story.
- Work closely with photographers from the outset.
- Write key scenes, background, dialogue and descriptions as you report.

Editing

- Reporters should build in time for several drafts and revisions.
- Deadlines must be met to give editors, copy editors and page designers time to do high-quality work.

Reaction and followups

- If you ask, they'll react.
- Use list serves to spread the word about the project to specialized audiences.
- Have at least one solid follow-up story planned immediately after the series; pursue others as warranted.

Mismanaged care

Newsday finds dangerous doctors on directories of New York's top HMOs

BY THOMAS MAIER

When managed care swept through American medicine in the 1990s, insurers promised to lower costs and raise quality standards. "You can feel confident choosing a doctor for you and your family from our extensive network of physicians," vowed Aetna U.S. Healthcare, the nation's largest HMO, in this year's directory to customers.

Much of the HMO controversy has focused on the industry's denial of care while trying to lower costs – such as mandating 24-hour maternity stays or refusing medical treatments. But examining managed care's basic promise to improve health quality has remained elusive for reporters, mainly because so much key information has been kept secret or has been virtually impossible to access.

However, using some innovative search techniques on the Internet – along with an important court challenge won by the newspaper and *The New York Times*, which opened up a huge and previously confidential database – *Newsday* was able this year to take a hard look at managed care's claim of providing high-quality doctors to its millions of customers.

The six-part series, called "Managed Care & Doctors: The Broken Promise," found dozens of troubled doctors listed this year by the top managed care insurers serving New York City, Long Island and statewide. In all, *Newsday* found 132 doctors disciplined for serious – sometimes fatal – medical wrongdoing were listed on the directories of New York's top managed care insurers with no warning to customers.

For more details on finding medical databases, checkout the January-February issue of *Uplink*, the newsletter of NICAR.

Some had been disciplined for sexually molesting patients, substance abuse or stealing from government insurance programs. But the vast majority was found guilty of some form of previous medical mistreatment, severe enough so that 40 had their licenses suspended. Several insurers even listed doctors who had lost their licenses because of state revocation.

In Aetna U.S. Healthcare's case, for example, *Newsday* found that it listed 59 state-disciplined doctors, including six whose licenses were revoked by medical authorities. These six were still being listed as "accepting new patients."

Using these same techniques, *Newsday* also conducted a search among HMOs in five states – California, Illinois, Texas, New Jersey and Massachusetts – and found a similar pattern in which state-disciplined doctors were offered to managed care customers with no mention of their past troubles.

> "We found that $110 million was paid by Medicaid and Medicare for medical care overseen by doctors after they had been disciplined by state authorities."

You can use some of these same techniques – along with traditional shoe-leather reporting and record-digging – to examine the local HMOs in your community on the issue of doctor quality. Indeed, one of the best friends you may have in this investigation can be the search engines found on the new Internet Web sites run by the managed care industry itself.

Ironically, *Newsday* relied on the insurer's own Web site directories to find out information that would have been nearly impossible to find otherwise. With the Internet's rise in recent years, major insurers have established Web sites with search engines that make it possible to find an individual doctor among the thousands of physicians in their networks. (Most traditional paperback directories don't have a central alphabetized listing of doctors.)

So, we (that is, I and team of editorial clerks and interns) spent four months using the insurer's search engines and compared names to a list of disciplined doctors taken from a state health department Web site. (The names of doctors disciplined prior to 1994 had to be first obtained on paper using a Freedom of Information request because they're not available on the state's Web site.)

Newsday also did a similar online search concerning the board certification status of doctors offered by these managed care insurers. Several doctors claimed they were "board certified" or were "board eligible" but there were no records of this when the newspaper checked the Web site of the American Board of Medical Specialties, which has its own search engine where the names of all board certified doctors can be found.

Another central part of the story relied on computer-assisted reporting, using a database that contains millions of hospital records, including 135,000 just about the doctors examined in the series. One of most crucial steps in this process was just gaining access to previously secret information in this database.

In June 1998, *Newsday* and *The New York Times* won a joint lawsuit in which New York state's highest court ordered state health officials to turn over information identifying specific doctors, hospitals and insurers from a huge database. (The database is called the Statewide Planning & Research Cooperative System. The SPARCS cooridnator can be reached at 518-473-8144.) For more than a decade, the state had collected this information on virtually all admissions by hospitals and their patients – information that is used in part to evaluate the quality of care provided by health facilities and individual doctors.

For this project, *Newsday* used this database to trace the money flow of tax dollars to disciplined doctors in managed care. In all, with computer analysis by Richard Dalton and David Ewalt, we found that $110 million was paid by Medicaid and Medicare for medical care overseen by doctors after they had been disciplined by state authorities.

It was a classic one hand not knowing what the other was doing: at the same time state authorities were alerting the public about wrongdoing by these doctors on its Web site, the government was rewarding them with millions of taxpayer-funded medical care dollars. The research also showed these troubled doctors had seen more than 17,000 elderly, sick and handicapped patients – New York's most

vulnerable medical population – since their state disciplinary actions.

Not every state has a computerized hospital-reporting database, but you can check with your state health authorities and, if it exists, you can file an FOIA request or even a lawsuit if necessary to gain access to it.

Database analysis and online searching of Internet sites provided the framework for much of the series, but basic old-fashioned reporting helped bring to life many of the stories of the patients and disciplined doctors.

For each of the 132 disciplined doctors we found in managed care, *Newsday* sent a Freedom of Information request to New York State Health Department officials, seeking a complete set of state disciplinary records and hearing transcripts. There were also plenty of days spent in courthouses on Long Island and in New York City, pulling malpractice lawsuit records and talking with dozens of patients, lawyers and health care experts.

We made every effort to contact the doctors mentioned in this series, seeking their comments and sending letters to all 132 doctors. It's wrong to think doctors may not want to talk; about 10 percent contacted by *Newsday* offered some kind of comment. In one case, a doctor even offered *Newsday* a letter clearing his name which he claimed was signed by Gov. George Pataki. But when the newspaper checked with Pataki, the governor insisted the letter was a phony. State Police are now conducting a criminal probe into the matter.

For reporters interested in health care, the new Internet reporting techniques of online searching and advanced database reporting can illuminate many previously dark areas of medicine. The estimated $250 billion-a-year managed care business – one of the world's largest industries – isn't going to take your questions lightly. It spends millions in advertising to promote claims of quality, and companies don't necessarily want reporters casting doubt on them.

As the national debate turns to improving HMO quality, some insurers are already talking about making greater efforts to live up to their promises of high standards for their doctors. But reporters can use these newly emerging tools to let the public know just how far these insurers have to go to make these promises real.

Thomas Maier, a Newsday reporter since 1984, has been investigating medical topics for years and is the author of "Dr. Spock: An American Life" (1998, Harcourt Brace).

Hidden Dangers

Airlines and Hazmat

BY ELIZABETH MARCHAK

In 1996, the Federal Aviation Administration promised to change the way it oversaw aviation, including the problem that was believed to have caused the May 11, 1996 ValuJet crash – hazardous materials.

In March 1997, the FAA started issuing press releases when the agency proposed fines of $50,000 or more for HazMat violations.

Meanwhile, there were tips from sources that the FAA's press releases didn't tell the whole story. One person offered as proof an internal document which laid out some FAA officials' interpretation about enforcing HazMat training laws. Fifteen months after the crash, the document said, the FAA's Southern Region was still at odds with the rest of the agency's enforcement officials about whether airlines that didn't carry hazardous materials even needed to train their workers to recognize the stuff.

With the disparity between the FAA's press releases and my newly-acquired internal document, I turned to the data. I was spurred on by Congressional testimony that said passenger airlines accounted for 60 percent of the cargo flown on airplanes.

Ten months later, on Jan. 17-18, 1999, we published a two-part series called "Safety on Hold: The hidden dangers in airline cargo."

The data

We made extensive use of two government databases. I examined 20 years' worth of FAA enforcement data, studying trends by violator, frequency, charge, year, region, FAA office and resolution. My findings filled one of those fat, three-ring binders.

The data showed the FAA's enforcement peaked in the six months following the much-publicized crash, assessing $3.2 million in fines for the whole year. In 1997 and for the first half of 1998, the number of violations and the fines decreased.

Then I spent several more weeks studying HazMat reports to DOT's Research and Special Programs Administration.

RSPA's data, provided by IRE and NICAR on a CD-ROM (call Database Library, 573-884-7711), is in tables which cannot all be linked because of the comments field.

But some data can be linked if the record numbers from the main table are linked to the table with the comment field.

I did this to track down airlines' reports, which gave me anecdotes and information about all the efforts the airlines make to contain leaks and spills.

Meanwhile, the number of HazMat reports of spills and leaks had increased 623 percent for the decade through June 1998, far outstripping the growth in cargo and way ahead of other transportation modes for the same 10-year period.

But the data my editors found most interesting was how enforcement varied among the nine FAA regions. In other words, it was cheaper to break the law in the Southern Region – Atlanta, Miami and Memphis – than in the Northwest Mountain Region's cities like Seattle.

The data showed airlines with the highest number of HazMat violations – like Federal Express – didn't pay the most fines.

Showing readers

Like all project reporters, I was dreaming of that full-page color graphic. In August, after spending almost four months in front of a computer screen, I met with Jim Owens, our graphic whiz, who immediately grasped the idea of using a cutaway diagram of an airplane to explain HazMat to our readers.

We chose a Boeing 737 to depict the world's most widely used commercial jet, because we were focusing on problems with passenger airlines.

The RSPA database gave us all kinds of examples of HazMat incidents and accidents on passenger airlines – like chain saws in the overhead compartments and a leaky container of rubber cement that glued passenger luggage to the walls of the cargo bay. Owens was intrigued by the possibilities.

When I began to interview people for the story, no one in the industry had any idea what

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17 ➢

From Watergate to Monicagate

Books reveal investigative mindsets

BY STEVE WEINBERG

The most important reason I track investigative/explanatory books by journalists year-in, year-out is the most obvious reason: I want to learn as much as possible about the topics of those books. During 1999, I paid special attention to books about wrongful convictions and the overall behavior of prosecutors, because those are the topics I am researching most heavily. That meant I read three books on the 1999 list with extra care – those by Edward Humes, Janet Malcolm and Joe Jackson/William E. Burke Jr. I sure am glad I did.

There is another reason, though, that I track books by journalists every year: From time to time, books come along in which the journalists place themselves at the center of whatever they are investigating, sharing along the way their reporting techniques, ethical decision-making and overall thought processes.

Twenty-five years ago, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein pretty much invented a new book genre when they wrote All the President's Men. Sure, investigative journalists had recounted their exposes before, but usually as a small part of mostly inconsequential full-life memoirs – inconsequential because journalists are, after all, outsiders who rarely know anything first-hand and are often misled by their sources.

Now here was *The Washington Post* duo putting themselves immodestly at the center of a political corruption tale reaching into the Richard Nixon White House.

During 1999, Michael Isikoff, a *Washington Post* alumnus turned *Newsweek* reporter, brought the Woodward-Bernstein genre full circle with his first-person account of another investigation that reached into the White House. The official subject of Isikoff's book Uncovering Clinton (it could have been aptly titled All the President's Women) is presidential character, or the lack of it. But the book is very much about the same subject as All the President's Men – an investigative project, as it unfolds in unexpected directions with the investigative journalist at center stage. The subtitle: A Reporter's Story, is not ambiguous.

Based on careful readings of Isikoff, Woodward/Bernstein and those who did such books in between, a lot can be learned by journalists about the practice of journalism from the accounts. Uncovering Clinton, All the President's Men and the lesser-known accounts that constitute the genre are unintentional textbooks.

Lessons about journalists' relationships with their sources are especially noteworthy in the Isikoff and Woodward/Bernstein books because of the high stakes. There are 25 years between the two accounts, but the lessons regarding cultivating sources, following paper trails and wrestling with ethical dilemmas are timeless.

For example, in explaning his tactics while trying to gain access to tapes with conversations between Linda Tripp and Monica Lewinsky, Isikoff writes, "It is the way reporters operate: We threaten, we cajole, we feign sympathy." There are many instances in the book showing Isikoff concerned about sources' feelings. The concern, however, is frequently a means to a worthy end. After all, many of those sources are women who seem to have been abused by a powerful man named Bill Clinton.

In All the President's Men, Bob Woodward starts the deception early, right after the initial court appearance of the Watergate building burglars. Trying to learn more about burglar James McCord, Woodward reaches an acquaintance named Harlan A. Westrell. It is quickly obvious to Woodward that Westrell has no knowledge of McCord's arrest at that point. So when Westrell wonders why a *Washington Post* reporter would be asking questions about McCord, Woodward says "simply that he was seeking information for a possible story. Westrell seemed flattered and provided some information.…"

As the scandal unfolds, Woodward and Bernstein want to interview sources in their homes. "They always identified themselves

Photo: Red Blocher | The Kansas City Star

Michael Isikoff speaks at '99 IRE National Conference in Kansas City.

immediately as reporters for *The Washington Post,* but the approach that seemed to work best was less than straightforward: A friend at the committee told us that you were disturbed by some of the things you saw going on there, that you would be a good person to talk to ... that you were absolutely straight and honest and didn't know quite what to do; we understand the problem – you believe in the president and don't want to do anything that would seem disloyal. Woodward could say that he was a registered Republican; Bernstein could argue a sincere antipathy for the politics of both parties."

Scoopery is about skills on the paper trails as well as cultivation of human sources. As Isikoff is checking out Paula Jones' account, he interviews one of Jones' lawyers. Any evidence of other women complaining about Clinton's overtures would be welcome, Isikoff says. The lawyer suddenly remembers an anonymous telephone call he had received from a woman about an alleged sexual harassment incident involving Clinton. The next day, the lawyer digs out his notes for Isikoff. What those notes reveal starts Isikoff down a paper trail that many reporters would not have known how to follow.

Here is some of what the caller had said: She and her husband had helped raise money for Clinton in 1992. She later worked at the White House, first as a volunteer in the social office, then as a secretarial assistant in the White House counsel's office. By November 1993, her marriage in trouble, the woman said she visited Clinton about a permanent job. During that visit inside the White House, Clinton kissed the woman, then touched her in inappropriate places without her consent. The very next day, the woman said, her husband committed suicide. She mentioned references to the death in something called the *Guarino Report* and another publication called *The Clinton Chronicles*. Before hanging up, the woman told Jones' lawyer that thanks to her connections, during 1995 she had traveled to Jakarta and Copenhagen as part of State Department delegations.

The woman had never called back, and Jones' lawyer had not yet tried to find her. Isikoff decides to begin with the *Guarino Report*, published by an Arkansas businessman interested in Clinton conspiracy theories. Unsure where to find the publication, Isikoff calls a journalist friend working on a *New York Times Magazine* piece about Clinton haters. That journalist happens to have an issue of the *Guarino Report* on his desk, so sends it to Isikoff. In a summary of 56 persons who had died supposedly because of Clinton's plotting, Isikoff stops at number 20, Ed Willey – key details of his death match the litany related by the anonymous female caller.

Turning to the Federal Staff Directory, a privately published annual reference book, Isikoff finds the name Kathleen Willey in the 1994 edition. He gives the name to a *Newsweek* librarian, who within minutes locates Willey's address and telephone number in publicly available databases.

Using White House public records, Isikoff discovers Willey had sent Clinton a tie as a

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 1999

The past year showed no shortage of investigative/explanatory books written by journalists. Here is the annual list compiled by The IRE Journal of such books published in the United States. The 1999 list is as complete as humanly possible.

If you know of any books omitted, please contact Steve Weinberg by calling 573-882-5468, e-mailing him at joursw@showme .missouri.edu or sending a fax to 573-882-5431.

A

- Joel Achenbach
  Captured by Aliens: The Search for Life and Truth in a Very Large Universe
  (Simon & Schuster)
- Len Ackland
  Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West
  (University of New Mexico Press)
- Joan Acocella
  Creating Hysteria: Women and the Myth of Multiple Personality Disorder
  (Jossey-Bass)
- Teri Agins
  The End of Fashion: The Mass Marketing of the Clothing Business
  (Morrow)
- Kent Allard
  The Mad Chopper [true crime]
  (Pinnacle)
- George Anastasia
  The Summer Wind: Thomas Capano and the Murder of Anne Marie Fahey
  (HarperCollins)
- Scott Anderson
  The Man Who Tried to Save the World: The Dangerous Life and Mysterious Disappearance of Fred Cuny
  (Doubleday)
- Paul Andrews
  How the Web Was Won: Microsoft From Windows to the Web
  (Broadway Books)
- John-Manuel Andriote
  Victory Deferred: How AIDS Changed Gay Life in America
  (University of Chicago Press)
- John Annerino
  Dead in Their Tracks: Crossing America's Desert Borderlands
  (Four Walls, Eight Windows)

B

- Vickie Bane
  Dr. Laura Schlesinger: The Unauthorized Biography
  (St. Martin's)
- Bill Barnhart and Gene Schlickman
  Kerner: The Conflict of Intangible Rights
  (University of Illinois Press)
- Paul Barrett
  The Good Black: A True Story of Race in America
  (Dutton)
- Cris Barrish and Peter Meyer
  Fatal Embrace: The Inside Story of the Thomas Capano-Anne Marie Fahey Murder Case
  (St. Martin's)
- Thomas A. Bass
  The Predictors: How a Band of Maverick Physicists Used Chaos Theory to Trade Their Way to a Fortune on Wall Street
  (Holt)
- Lisa Belkin
  Show Me a Hero: A Tale of Murder, Suicide, Race and Redemption
  (Little, Brown)
- James Bovard
  Freedom in Chains: The Rise of the State and the Demise of the Citizen
  (St. Martin's)
- Mark Bowden
  Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War
  (Atlantic Monthly Press)
- Jo-el Glenn Brenner
  The Emperors of Chocolate: Inside the Secret World of Hershey and Mars
  (Random House)
- Marie Brenner
  On the Border: A Murder in the Family
  (Crown)
- Gretchen Brinck
  The Boy Next Door [true crime]
  (Pinnacle)
- Chip Brown
  Afterwards, You're a Genius: Faith, Medicine and the Metaphysics of Healing
  (Riverhead/Putnam)
- John A. Byrne
  Chainsaw: The Notorious Career of Al Dunlap in the Era of Profit-at-Any-Price
  (Harper Business)

C

- Carey, Richard Adams
  Against the Tide: The Fate of the New England Fishermen
  (Houghton Mifflin)
- Peter Carrels
  Uphill Against Water: The Great Dakota Water War
  (University of Nebraska Press)
- Douglas Century
  Street Kingdom: Five Years Inside the Franklin Avenue Posse
  (Warner)
- Sally Chew
  A Fatal Lie: A True Story of Betrayal and Murder in the New South
  (St. Martin's)

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 1999

- Dudley Clendinen and Adam Nagourney
  Out for Good: The Struggle to Build a Gay Rights Movement in America
  (Simon & Schuster)
- Adam Clymer
  Edward M. Kennedy
  (Morrow)
- Andrew Cockburn and Patrick Cockburn
  Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein
  (HarperCollins)
- Richard E. Cohen
  Rostenkowski
  (Ivan Dee)
- O. Casey Corr
  Money From Thin Air: The Story of Craig McCaw, the Visionary Who Invented the Cell Phone Industry, and His Next Billion-Dollar Idea
  (Times Business Books)
- Kieran Crowley
  Buried Alive [true crime]
  (St. Martin's)

D

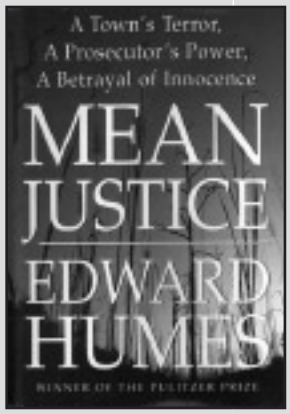
- Barbara Davis
  Precious Angels [true crime]
  (Onyx)
- Cornelia Dean
  Against the Tide: The Battle for America's Beaches
  (Columbia University Press)
- Solange DeSantis
  Life on the Line: One Woman's Tale of Work, Sweat and Survival
  (Doubleday)
- James Dickerson
  North to Canada: Men and Women Against the Vietnam War
  (Praeger)
- Julian Dibbell
  My Tiny Life: Crime and Passion in a Virtual World
  (Owl/Holt)
- Michael Dobbs
  Madeleine Albright: A Twentieth-Century Odyssey
  (Holt)
- Dusko Doder and Louise Branson
  Milosevic: Portrait of a Tyrant
  (Free Press)
- Gary Dorsey
  Silicon Sky: How One Small Start-Up Went Over the Top to Beat the Big Boys Into Satellite Heaven
  (Perseus)
- Elizabeth Drew
  The Corruption of American Politics: What Went Wrong and Why
  (Birch Lane)
- Michael Drummond
  Renegades of the Empire: How Three Software Warriors Started a Revolution Behind the Walls of Fortress Microsoft
  (Crown)

E

- Ken Englade
  Everybody's Best Friend: A True Story of a Marriage That Ended in Murder
  (St. Martin's)
- Karl Evanzz
  The Messenger: The Rise and Fall of Elijah Muhammad
  (Pantheon)

F

- Glenn Frankel
  Rivonia's Children
  (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Susan Faludi
  Stiffed: The Betrayal of the American Man
  (Morrow)
- Caroline Fraser
  God's Perfect Child: Living and Dying in the Christian Science Church
  (Holt)



- Ian Frazier
  On the Rez
  (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Bryn Freedman and William Knoedelseder
  In Eddie's Name: One Family's Triumph Over Tragedy
  (Faber & Faber)
- Mark Fritz
  Lost on Earth: Nomads of the New World
  (Little, Brown)

G

- Alan Green and the Center for Public Integrity
  Animal Underworld: Inside America's Black Market for Rare and Exotic Species
  (Public Affairs Press)

H

- Martin L. Gross
  The Conspiracy of Ignorance: The Failure of American Public Schools
  (HarperCollins)
- David Halberstam
  Playing for Keeps: Michael Jordan and the World He Made
  (Random House)
- Timothy Harper
  Moscow Madness: Crime, Corruption and One Man's Pursuit of Profit in the New Russia
  (McGraw-Hill)
- Adrian Havill
  The Mother, the Son and the Socialite [true crime]
  (St. Martin's)
- Alex Heard
  Apocalypse Pretty Soon: Travels in End-Time America
  (Norton)
- Mark Hertsgaard
  Earth Odyssey: Around the World in Search of Our Environmental Future
  (Broadway)
- Michael Hiltzik
  Dealers of Lightning: Xerox PARC and the Dawn of the Computer Age
  (HarperBusiness)
- John Horgan
  The Undiscovered Mind
  (Free Press)
- Miriam Horn
  Rebels in White Gloves: Coming of Age With the Wellesley Class of '69
  (Times Books)
- Karen Houppert
  The Curse: Confronting the Last Unmentionable Taboo, Menstruation
  (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)
- Edward Humes
  Mean Justice: A Town's Terror, a Prosecutor's Power, a Betrayal of Innocence
  (Simon & Schuster)

I

- Michael Isikoff
  Uncovering Clinton
  (Crown)

gift on May 3, 1993; wrote a condolence note after Vince Foster's death; called to say happy birthday; suggested he vacation in Vail, Colo., later in the year while she would be there (Aug. 4, 1993); and sent him a novel she had enjoyed (Oct. 12, 1993). Isikoff also finds a note from Clinton to one of his assistants that he wanted Willey's Vail telephone number. Later, Isikoff uses the papers of Lloyd Bentsen, donated at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Austin, Texas, to verify that the former Treasury Department secretary had been waiting outside Clinton's office when Willey emerged that day, just as Willey said Bentsen had been.

Speaking of paper trails, Isikoff uses them wisely later in his investigation, while checking out the political influence of Monica Lewinsky's political patron, a substantial contributor to the Democratic Party. He had supposedly showered Hillary Clinton with gifts. Isikoff requests forms from the U.S. Office of Government Ethics. Senior executive branch officials are supposed to inform that agency of gifts valued at more than $100. Isikoff finds lots of filled-out forms, but none relating to Hillary Clinton. The Clintons, he learns, had invoked a loophole to disclosure regarding spouses of officeholders. "…It was the position of the White House lawyers that such gifts had nothing to do with the fact that she happened to be married to the president of the United States."

All the President's Men is also filled with reporting tips. As soon as Bernstein learns the suspicious break-in had occurred in the Watergate building, he starts calling the types of potential sources reporters too frequently ignore, the people without offices – desk clerks, bellmen, maids in the housekeeping department, waiters in the restaurant. As for Woodward, instead of sitting in the office, he visits the courthouse for the preliminary hearing, a type of proceeding reporters too often pass up. Once there, Woodward is not passive. Instead, Woodward asks a well-dressed man about the reason for his attendance at the hearing. When the man responds evasively, Woodward refuses to quit asking questions. The answers Woodward finally elicits help move the story forward. After the case moves to a grand jury, Woodward's in-person persistence leads him to a courthouse clerk who allows a look through that year's grand jury files. Lo and behold, there are the names of the Watergate grand jurors. The clerk had told Woodward that no notetaking would be allowed, and the clerk is watching Woodward carefully. So Woodward starts

memorizing the names. He excuses himself to use the men's room, where he writes the memorized information in his notebook before returning to the filing cabinet to memorize additional names until he knows all 23.

During the reporting, Isikoff, Woodward and Bernstein find themselves faced with ethical decisions unlike any they had ever encountered. Isikoff's revolve mostly around an oft-asked question: Where to draw the line about reporting the private conduct of a public figure. When Linda Tripp tells Isikoff about what appears to be consensual sex between Monica Lewinsky and Clinton, the journalist feels ambivalent about following that trail. Eventually, Isikoff concludes Clinton's serial indiscretions ought to be reported, given that they occurred in the White House, sometimes while the president had important policy decisions to make. Furthermore, they "required routine, repetitive and reflexive lies … Lying, engaged in often enough, can have a corrosive effect."

The more Isikoff learns, the more convinced he becomes about the need for exposure of Clinton's sexual behavior: "This was not Watergate – nor did I ever imagine that it was. But that doesn't mean it wasn't right to undertake the enterprise. Presidents ought not be permitted to deceive the public. Clinton did so repeatedly and brazenly."

Bernstein in All the President's Men finds himself wondering about ethics as he tries to track down normally private long-distance telephone calls by using his sources inside the Bell system. "He was always reluctant to use them to get information about calls because of the ethical questions involved in breaching confidentiality of a person's telephone records. It was a problem he had never resolved in his mind. Why, as a reporter, was he entitled to have access to personal and financial records when such disclosure would outrage him if he were subjected to a similar inquiry by investigators?"

Valuable lessons derived from Uncovering Clinton and All the President's Men could continue for many pages. No other books from this genre are as well-known, and few if any combine such a significant topic with so much instructional material. But they are all worth reading.

Steve Weinberg is a senior contributing editor to The IRE Journal, a professor at the Missouri School of Journalism and former executive director of IRE.

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 1999

J

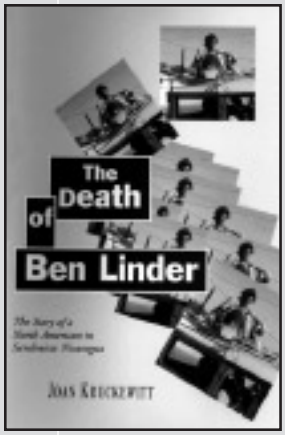
- Joe Jackson and William E. Burke Jr. **Dead Run: America's Only Mass Escape From Death Row and the Retribution That Followed** (Times Books)
- Aphrodite Jones **The Embrace: A True Vampire Story** (Pocket)

K

- David Kaplan **The Silicon Boys and Their Valley of Dreams** (Morrow)
- Brian Karem **Above the Law** [true crime] (Pinnacle/Kensington)
- Stephen Keating **Cutthroat: High Stakes and Killer Moves on the Electronic Frontier** (Johnson Books)
- John Kelly **Three on the Edge** [clinical drug trials] (Bantam)
- Ronald Kessler **The Season: Inside Palm Beach, America's Richest Society** (HarperCollins)
- Tracy Kidder **Hometown** (Random House)
- Jeffrey Kluger **Journey Beyond Selene: Remarkable Expeditions Past Our Moon and to the Ends of the Solar System** (Simon & Schuster)
- John O. Koehler **Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police** (Westview/HarperCollins)
- Joan Kruckewitt **The Death of Ben Linder: The Story of a North American in Nicaragua** (Seven Stories Press)

L

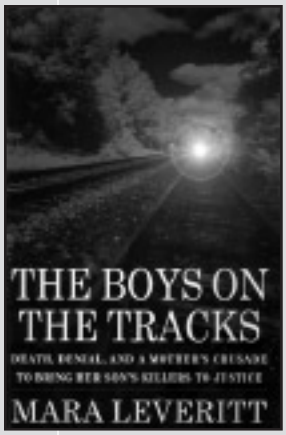
- Nicholas Lemann **The Big Test: The Secret History of the American Meritocracy** (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Mara Leveritt **The Boys on the Tracks: Death, Denial and a Mother's Crusade to Bring Her Son's Killers to Justice** (Dunne/St. Martin's)
- Itamar Levin **The Last Deposit: Swiss Banks and Holocaust Victims' Accounts** (Praeger)
- Joshua Levine **The Rise and Fall of the House of Barneys: A Family Tale of Chutzpah, Glory and Greed** (Morrow)
- Michael Lewis **The New New Thing: A Silicon Valley Story** (Norton)
- James B. Lieber **Rats in the Grain: The Dirty Tricks of the Supermarket to the World – Archer Daniels Midland** (Four Walls, Eight Windows)



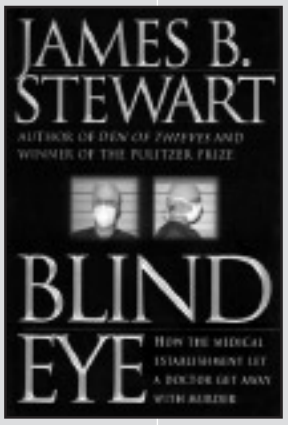
- Jon R. Luoma **The Hidden Forest: The Biography of an Ecosystem** (Holt)

M

- John N. Maclean **Fire on the Mountain: The True Story of the South Canyon Fire** (Morrow)
- Myra MacPherson **She Came to Live Out Loud: An Inspiring Family Journey Through Illness, Loss and Grief** (Scribner)
- Janet Malcolm **The Crime of Sheila McGough** (Knopf)
- Dan Malone and Howard Swindle **America's Condemned: Death Row Inmates in Their Own Words** (Andrews McMeel)
- Michael S. Malone **Infinite Loop: How Apple, the World's Most Insanely Great Computer Company, Went Insane** (Doubleday/Currency)
- James Mann **About Face** [U.S.-China relations] (Knopf)
- David Maraniss **When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi** (Simon & Schuster)



INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 1999



- James T. McElroy
  We've Got Spirit [cheerleading]
  (Simon & Schuster)
- James L. Merriner
  Mr. Chairman: Power in Dan Rostenkowski's America
  (Southern Illinois University Press)
- Gregory J. Millman
  The Day Traders: The Untold Story of the Extreme Investors and How They Changed Wall Street Forever
  (Times Books)
- Joyce Milton
  The First Partner: Hillary Rodham Clinton
  (Morrow)
- Pat Milton
  In the Blink of an Eye: The Inside Story of the FBI's Investigation of TWA Flight 800
  (Random House)
- Bill Minutaglio
  First Son: George W. Bush and the Bush Family Dynasty
  (Times Books)
- Fred Moody
  The Visionary Position: The Inside Story of the Digital Dreamers Who Are Making Virtual Reality a Reality
  (Times Business/ Random House)
- Doug Most
  Always in Our Hearts: The Story of Amy Grossberg, Brian Peterson and the Baby They Didn't Want
  (Record Books)
- Suzanne Muchnic
  Odd Man In: Norton Simon and the Pursuit of Culture
  (University of California Press)

N

- Hank Nuwer
  Wrongs of Passage: Fraternities, Sororities, Hazing and Binge Drinking
  (Indiana University Press)

O

- Michael Orey
  Assuming the Risk: The Mavericks, Their Lawyers and the Whistleblowers Who Beat Big Tobacco
  (Little, Brown)
- Susan Orlean
  The Orchid Thief
  (Random House)
- Maureen Orth
  Vulgar Favors: Andrew Cunanan, Gianni Versace and the Largest Failed Manhunt in U.S. History
  (Delacorte)
- Richard N. Ostling and Joan K. Ostling
  Mormon America: The Power and the Promise
  (Harper San Francisco)

P

- Thomas Petzinger Jr.
  The New Pioneers: The Men and Women Who Are Transforming the Workplace and Marketplace
  (Simon & Schuster)
- Larry Platt
  Keepin' It Real: A Turbulent Season at the Crossroads With the National Basketball Association
  (Avon)
- Lisa Pulitzer
  A Woman Scorned [true crime]
  (St. Martin's)

R

- Richard Rhodes
  Why They Kill: The Discoveries of a Maverick Criminologist
  (Knopf)
- Gary Rivlin
  The Plot to Get Bill Gates
  (Times Business Books)
- Hilary Rosenberg
  A Traitor to His Class: Robert A.G. Monks and the Battle to Change Corporate America
  (Wiley)
- Ann Rule
  And Never Let Her Go: Thomas Capano, Deadly Seducer
  (Simon & Schuster)

S

- Michael S. Sanders
  The Yard: Building a Destroyer at the Bath Iron Works
  (HarperCollins)
- James Schefter
  The Race: The Uncensored Story of How America Beat Russia to the Moon
  (Doubleday)
- Gitta Sereny
  Cries Unheard: Why Children Kill – the Story of Mary Bell
  (Holt/Metropolitan)
- Bob Shacochis
  The Immaculate Invasion [Haiti]
  (Viking)
- Michael Shapiro
  Solomon's Sword: Two Families and the Children the State Took Away
  (Times Books)
- Richard Shenkman
  Presidential Ambition
  (HarperCollins)
- Martha Shirk, Neil Bennett and Larry Aber
  Lives on the Line: American Families and the Struggle to Make Ends Meet
  (Westview)
- Amity Shlaes
  The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It
  (Random House)
- Tom Shroder
  Old Souls: T he Scientific Evidence for Past Lives
  (Simon & Schuster)
- Seth Shulman
  Owning the Future [science-technology ownership battles]
  (Houghton Mifflin)
- Roger Simon
  A Public Affair: Bill Clinton's Allies and Enemies and the Price They Paid
  (Times Books)
- Stephen Singular
  Presumed Guilty [JonBenet Ramsey case]
  (New Millenium)
- Carlton Smith
  Death in Texas [true crime]
  (St. Martin's)
- Carlton Smith,
  Murder at Yosemite
  (St. Martin's)
- Sally Bedell Smith
  Diana in Search of Herself: Portrait of a Troubled Princess
  (Times Books)
- Karen Southwick
  High Noon: The Inside Story of Scott McNealy and the Rise of Sun Microsystems
  (Wiley)
- Patricia Springer
  Mail Order Murder [true crime]
  (Pinnacle)
- Beverly Peterson Stearns and Stephen C. Stearns
  Watching, From the Edge of Extinction [endangered species]
  (Yale University Press)
- James B. Stewart
  Blind Eye [dangerous doctors]
  (Simon & Schuster)
- Michael Stone
  Gangbusters: How a Street-Tough, Elite Homicide Unit Took Down New York's Most Dangerous Gang
  (Doubleday)
- Ray Suarez
  The Old Neighborhood: What We Lost in the Great Suburban Migration 1966-1999
  (Free Press)

T

- Gordon Thomas
  Gideon's Spies: The Secret History of the Mossad
  (St. Martin's)
- Charles Thompson
  A Glimpse of Hell: The Explosion of the USS Iowa and Its Coverup
  (Norton)
- Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones
  The Trust: The Private and Powerful Family Behind the New York Times
  (Little, Brown)
- Joseph Trento
  The Boys From Berlin: The Secret History of the CIA (Roberts Rinehart)

W

- Eileen Welsome
  The Plutonium Files: America's Secret Medical Experiments in the Cold War
  (Delacorte)
- Jules Witcover
  No Way to Pick a President
  (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Michelle Wucker
  Why the Cocks Fight: Dominicans, Haitians and the Struggle for Hispaniola
  (Hill and Wang)

Z

- Bob Zelnick
  Gore: A Political Life
  (Regnery)

Houston Column

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4 ➢

The last six years have not been without disputes, debates and uncertainties. After all, IRE is an organization of fiercely passionate journalists. The most debilitating conflict – whether to move in 1996 to the University of Maryland or stay at Missouri – divided and discouraged some of our most loyal members. By the time the feelings had begun to settle down in late 1996, our membership had dropped to its 1990s short-lived low of 3,000. Happily, we begin this century with more than 4,000 members.

Thinking ahead

We also are aware that we need a future with financial stability – a stability based on a solid endowment. Since 1993 the endowment has grown from $323,000 to $500,000, primarily through investment income, but we need an endowment of several million dollars to ensure that basic programs will be funded for the long run.

Our initial request in December for support from the membership for the endowment was remarkable and encouraging. More than 70 members donated $10,000 in a two-week period. That kind of grass-roots response makes it much easier for us to seek large donations and to look forward to kicking off our endowment drive at our National Conference in New York, June 1-4.

But what has not changed at IRE?

I joined IRE as a member at a 1979 Boston conference when I was working for a small daily outside that city. I found myself among independent journalists who cared deeply about their stories and the profession. They were journalists who were willing to help each other; to set aside the competitive instincts and share their knowledge with their equals and their younger colleagues; to listen and sympathize; to aid each other in getting better jobs; and to work hard at producing the stories that really mattered.

In this job, I don't get to spend as much time visiting with my fellow members. I'm often too busy arranging and worrying about the details of the conference. Yet every time I pause, I find – no matter how many more people attend or how many more panels or speakers we have or how many programs we are running - that I am still among the kind of journalists I first met in Boston.

And that's what IRE is truly about.

Hidden Dangers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11 ➢

I was talking about. No one at any of the airlines wanted to talk to me about the FAA's enforcement policies.

I kept calling Sen. John McCain, chairman of the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee, hoping for an interview.

After three months, his staff told me he was turning my findings over to the DOT's Inspector General.

The DOT/OIG and the General Accounting Office had done audits that at least in part dealt with the FAA's oversight of HazMat. I kept an eye on them and discovered that the FAA was redacting information about HazMat from some reports.

After the ValuJet crash, the FAA quietly got Congress to change FAA regulations, giving the Director of Civil Aviation Security, who also oversees HazMat, broader powers to withhold information from the public. Why was this happening? I really wanted to know. To my surprise, both the DOT/OIG and the GAO had plenty to say, and they said it on the record.

New angle

This was a whole new angle to the story – secrecy. It worked nicely with what become the main story for day two: The FAA has done little to educate the flying public about the dangers of HazMat.

My interview with the FAA, which took a month to set up, was pretty contentious. A senior FAA official chided me for focusing on the airlines instead of the shippers.

I argued my questions and my focus were fair because the individual airlines, which weren't all properly training their employees, had the largest numbers of violations.

The official looked confused. Then an FAA data guru, on hand for the interview, very quietly agreed I was right.

By tracking computerized enforcement action, I had also found many companies settled fines for less than had been touted in releases.

In one case, a $60,000 proposed fine was settled for $25,000. An FAA official said the practice of bargaining down was routine.

Months of data analysis made this story possible. I was able to show where the FAA's enforcement was the toughest as well as where it was the most lax.

Confronting the agency with its own data, analyzed the way they analyze it, put them in a box. They admitted the problem.

In the April 21, 1999 Federal Register, the FAA published new guidelines to help employees more uniformly enforce the law.

After the series ran, Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, sponsored an amendment to the FAA reauthorization act that required the FAA to report to Congress until the problem is solved.

The results

In October, armed with new documents and updated data, we updated our readers on the FAA's efforts to oversee hazardous materials. The agency issued fewer and smaller fines than any time since 1991, my analysis showed.

The Inspector General's office said the small number of fines was a problem. Meanwhile, the FAA's own documents showed it was quietly trying to gut Wyden's amendment that would make it accountable to Congress.

Wyden's version of the amendment is now in conference committee.

For me the most satisfying part of the story was looking at an issue everyone else had forgotten about or had assumed was under control because of all those FAA press releases. But the best part of all: I used the FAA's own data to do it.

Beth Marchak is a computer projects reporter in the Washington bureau of The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer. She has won numerous awards for her coverage of air safety issues.

TIPSHEETS

Elizabeth Marchak's series, "Safety on hold: Hidden dangers in airline cargo," is available from the IRE Resource Center (story #15476) by visiting the IRE Web site at www.ire.org or by calling the 573-882-3364 .

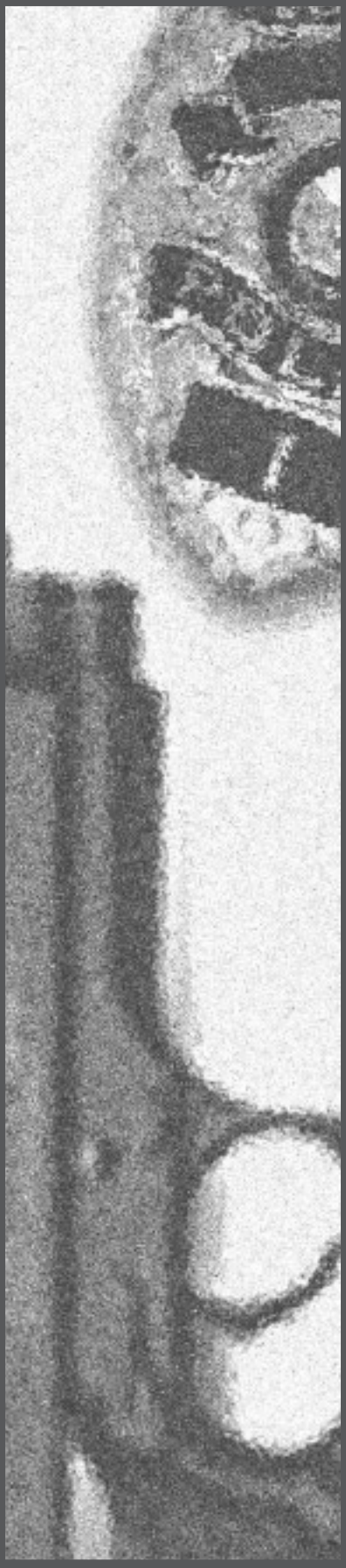
Some useful tipsheets also avaible at the Resource Center:

Tipsheet #987 (1999)
"Environmental Perils: Toxic Chemicals at Home and at Work"

Tipsheet #986 (1999)
"Story Ideas for Environmental, Science, and Health Journalists"

Tipsheet #953 (1999)
"Plane facts: Responsible aviation reporting"

Tipsheet #729 (1997)
"Using aviation safety documents"



POLIC

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There are almost 9 million uniformed police officers and civilian police employees on the public payroll in this country according to the FBI. Their performance, good and bad, has an enormous impact on their communities.

In recent years, some of the hardest hitting investigative news stories have dealt with the sometimes secretive world of law enforcement. This certainly isn't new territory for investigative reporters, but these days it seems we're doing it better.

Journalists all over the country are finding new and innovative ways to expose the shortcomings of their local law enforcement agencies – or the systems in which agencies work. Using paper trails, databases and a lot of old-fashioned pavement pounding, these reporters are bypassing the notorious blue wall of silence and cutting through political smokescreens. In doing so, they expose hidden dangers not only to the public, but also to the officers themselves.

In this issue, we've highlighted just a few to show a range of possibilities. The journalists behind these stories explain the conception, techniques and impact of their work.

Joe Donahue of *The* (Newark) *Star-Ledger* explains how a traffic stop by state troopers on the New Jersey Turnpike turned into an 18-month investigation of the state police and racial profiling. The investigation resulted in over 40 front-page exclusives, the dismissal of the state police superintendent, state and federal investigations and a challenge to an ambitious governor's political career.

Eric Mansfield of Akron's WKYC-TV describes how a tip he received in an elevator evolved into a one-week project that exposed a sometimes life-threatening problem in police deployment. With the help of a spreadsheet, Mansfield was able to identify the misallocation of police resources and manpower as well as the neighborhoods and officers whose well-being it threatened.

Clint Riley details how the Camden-Cherry Hill *Courier-Post* exposed Camden's high-priced police department's failure to protect citizens of one of America's most dangerous and cash-strapped cities. The three-part series resulted in the appointment of the county prosecutor as monitor over the department and the redeployment of officers to better protect the entire city.

And Geoff Dougherty offers an excellent tipsheet on analyzing police staffing.

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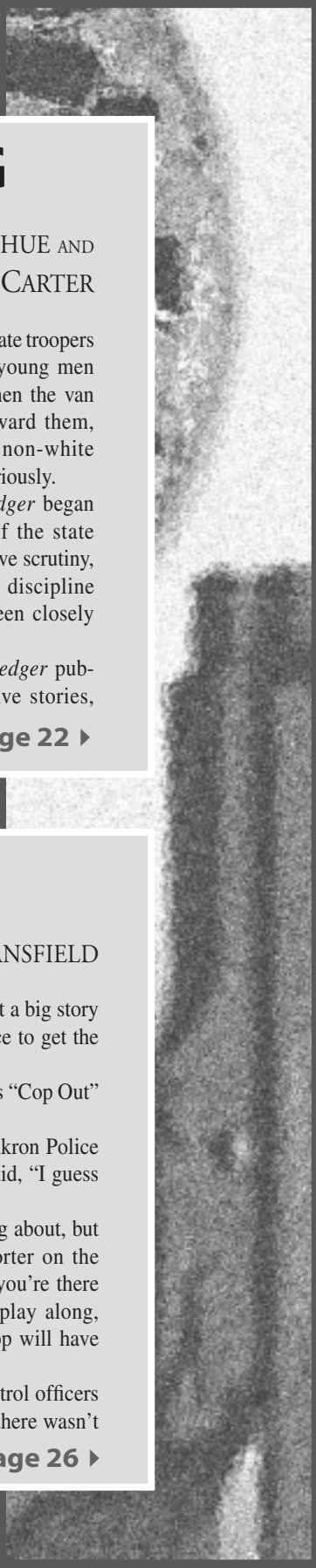

RACIAL PROFILING

By Joe Donohue and Kathy Barrett Carter

In April 23, 1998, two New Jersey state troopers pulled over a van carrying four young men along the New Jersey Turnpike. When the van began rolling slowly backward toward them, the troopers fired 11 shots at the non-white passengers, injuring three of them seriously.

With that incident, *The Star-Ledger* began examining in detail the conduct of the state police, an organization long held above scrutiny, whose records concerning internal discipline and arrest practices have always been closely guarded.

Over an 18-month period, the *Ledger* published more than 40 major exclusive stories,

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COSTLY COPS

By Clint Riley

Camden police Detective Pierre Robinson wasn't just any cop. Newly elected Mayor Milton Milan handpicked the 13-year department veteran to serve on his personal two-man security detail.

Robinson and the mayor were together at all hours. They were rarely seen apart.

Imagine the newsroom buzz in February 1998 when news leaked that federal authorities suspected Robinson gave a banned IntraTec-9 assault pistol to an alleged East Camden drug trafficker charged with running one of the city's most notorious drug markets.

A story linking the mayor's bodyguard to the gun hit the front page within days of federal agents finding the weapon.

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RETIRING FORCE

By Eric Mansfield

I always tell people that if you want a big story out of the cop shop, the best place to get the scoop is the elevator.

That's the way my two-part series "Cop Out" was spawned.

I was riding the elevator at the Akron Police Department when a patrol officer said, "I guess you're here about the big fight."

I had no idea what he was talking about, but often times, when cops see a reporter on the elevator, they immediately assume you're there because of a certain story. If you play along, you can get a scoop because the cop will have anonymity inside the elevator.

The officer told me that a few patrol officers were roughed up in a fight because there wasn't

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COSTLY COPS (CONT.)

BY CLINT RILEY

Photo: Avi Steinhardt | Courier-Post

Pierre Robinson appears in court in Camden. The former police detective said he sold an assault pistol and ammunition to 'JR' Rivera, an alleged drug kingpin.

I set out to write a story about a not-so-scrupulous cop. Six months later, I found myself making the final edits on "Force in Disarray," a three-part series detailing how the Camden Police Department failed to serve New Jersey's poorest and most violent city.

The digging began at Camden City Hall in early March 1998 while following up on the Robinson story. A tip led me to city records that revealed Robinson earned nearly $40,000 in overtime to drive and guard Milan during the mayor's first nine months in office. The records also showed the mayor spent more than $93,000 in nine months for his personal security detail, all from the public coffers of a nearly bankrupt city.

A Sunday story about the high cost of the mayor's security detail appeared immediately. But I knew I had only touched the surface. I wondered how much the other 350 Camden police officers earned if Robinson earned almost $100,000 a year as a personal chauffeur. The answer would not come easily.

Lawyers wrangled for four months over the release of the detailed police payroll records when City Hall refused to hand them over under New Jersey's horrendous public records law. Ultimately, a state Superior Court judge stepped in and ordered city officials to release payroll records and hundreds of pages of related documents to the newspaper.

While the lawyers argued, I covered my daily police beat, talked to city residents and learned more about the inner-workings of the Camden police department.

By the time the payroll records were released, I knew I was no longer writing simply about overtime abuse or police corruption. My new understanding of the police department and my daily experience covering crime in a place one researcher labeled America's second most dangerous city exposed a much bigger story:

POLICING THE POLICE

Why was New Jersey's most dangerous city not being better protected by its high-priced police force?

I spent four days typing police payroll data from 1996, 1997 and the first six months of 1998 into an Excel spreadsheet. (City officials, not required by state law to provide the data on computer disk, released the payroll data in three different paper formats.) I recorded every dime officers and civilian employees received – even down to their uniform allowances. I soon knew plenty of Camden cops were making plenty of money. What I didn't know yet was why.

Law enforcement sources inside and outside the department went over the data with me to point out where an officer's income appeared out of whack or didn't fit the position held on the force. I worked with officers who had a variety of agendas and positions in the department to get a truer picture of what was happening. Most cops didn't know other cops were talking to me.

I spent the majority of the following six weeks interviewing and examining crime reports, state audits, budgets, police union contracts and dusty newspaper clippings on the department from as far back as the 1950s.

Many Camden cops maintained they were a unique breed and could not be compared with their suburban counterparts. On that advice, I talked to criminologists and management experts and studied the work of other respected national researchers on police issues. I also spoke with officers and administrators in more than a dozen New Jersey police departments, including the state's other five urban police departments, to see exactly how Camden stacked up.

Some of what the paper found:

- The Camden Police Department only halfheartedly embraced community policing, despite promises by the mayor and Camden Police Chief William J. Hill that Camden would make a "New York-style comeback'' by using the concept to improve the police department's effectiveness.
- Fewer than 20 officers were routinely assigned to patrol the city of 85,000 at night, less than half of what state auditors recommended two years earlier when Gov. Christine Whitman ordered the police department to change its ways or else.
- Camden police averaged more overtime per officer annually – $3,800 – than officers in any of New Jersey's six urban cities did. Overtime spending went unchecked by police commanders and city hall officials despite an increase in the size of the police force and Camden's bleak financial status.
- Police commanders and city hall officials mismanaged millions in federal and state community policing grant money. Officials

Photo: Tina Markoe | Courier-Post

Officer David Lee stands outside a store on Broadway in Camden, while Officer Julio Malave checks inside.

also could not account for thousands of dollars more received between 1996 and 1998.

Officers earned thousands of dollars in extra overtime through a practice known as "extra-duty policing" by working side security and traffic control jobs, while residents sometimes waited hours for an on-duty officer to respond to a 9-1-1 call.

The most important thing I did while working on the series was walking Camden's streets talking to residents, business owners and civic leaders. They were the people who were there when 42 people were murdered in the city in 1997. They were the people who lived each day in an eight-square-mile patch of land where the violent crime rate was five times the state average. They were the people who many times wanted nothing more than for a cop to show up when they called.

Two weeks after "Force in Disarray" ran, Camden Police Chief William J. Hill unexpectedly announced his retirement, five months shy of reaching his 30th anniversary on the force. A month later, New Jersey Attorney General Peter Vernerio appointed Camden County prosecutor Lee Solomon as a "monitor" over Camden police department operations. The attorney general took the highly unusual action after state investigators uncovered many of the same problems the newspaper found were hampering the city's ability to protect and serve the public.

In January, newly appointed Camden Police Chief Robert Allenbach and the prosecutor redeployed the police force. There are now as many as 102 officers assigned to patrol city streets during peak crime times at night.

February 1999 marked the first full month in nearly nine years when no one was murdered in Camden. And there were only 25 homicides in the city through mid-December, the lowest since 1989; doctors at the regional trauma center report seeing fewer victims of violent crime in the city than in previous years.

One Camden police officer not responding to calls any longer is Pierre Robinson. Robinson quit the police force in November 1998. The former mayoral bodyguard pleaded guilty in state Superior Court in March to selling the banned TEC-9 assault pistol and three 30-round magazines to the alleged drug trafficker for $800.

Robinson is awaiting sentencing. Meanwhile, a federal grand jury continues to investigate connections amoung the mayor, the mob and drug traffickers.

Clint Riley is a criminal justice reporter at the Camden-Cherry Hill Courier-Post. His "Force in Disarray" series won a 1998 IRE Award.

RESOURCES

There are many police-related stories and projects archived in the IRE Resource Center. These are a few notable ones:

"Deadly Force: District Police Lead Nation in Shootings"
The Washington Post, 1998
IRE No. 14926

When the FBI issued its standard release of the Supplementary Homicide Report in 1996, reporter Jo Craven noticed some important information was missing. The code for justifiable homicide by police, "81," never appeared in the circumstance field, suggesting that whole records were missing.

Once Craven obtained those records at The Washington Post, the data suggested that Washington, D.C., police had shot and killed more people per capita than any other large metropolitan police department in the country, including New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit and New Orleans.

The Post assembled an investigative team including Craven, reporters Jeff Leen, David Jackson and Sari Horwitz and editors Rick Atkinson, Marilyn Thompson and Ira Chinoy to verify and explain this phenomenon. In an eight-month investigation, the team scoured court records, interviewed experts and numerous sources, examined police department records and policies and collected or built about 10 databases.

They concluded that D.C. police had shot and killed significantly more people than was typical for big-city police departments. This trend, they found, likely resulted from a number of factors, including an influx of unusually large classes of new officers in 1989 and 1990; reduced training during that period, including firearms training; the replacement of the revolver with a new and sensitive semiautomatic handgun as the department's service weapon; the fact that many officers were not complying with the department's firearms requalification regulations; and problems with how officer shootings were investigated, processed and

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Photo: John O'Boyle | Star-Ledger

Governor Christie Whitman listens as Carson Dunbar, the new superintendent of the State Police, answers questions at a statehouse press conference in Trenton.

RACIAL PROFILING (CONT.)

BY JOE DONOHUE AND KATHY BARRETT CARTER

many of them based on records the state had never before surrendered to a news organization and which they gave up only after a prolonged legal battle.

On April 20, the New Jersey attorney general released a report on the state police admitting that "racial profiling is real, not imagined," the first such admission by any state law enforcement agency in the nation. Racial profiling is the practice of pulling over motorists based on nothing more than the color of their skin.

For investigative journalists, the story seems to teach three things:

1. The need for ferocious perseverance on a wide front – from reporters and editors to lawyers.

Ledger reporters spent several months following dead-end leads and tips about state police conduct, working fruitless stretches of three to four weeks without a day off. The *Ledger's* lawyers battled for eight months to get the critical state police records that helped blow the lid off the story.

2. The importance of dedicating a team of reporters to one story.

Not long after the shootings, editor Jim Willse declared the story the newspaper's top priority. From the outset, two reporters worked the state police story full-time under Trenton Bureau Chief David Tucker. As leads developed the team grew. For one prolonged span, the *Ledger* had eight reporters working the story full-time.

3. The idea that routine requests for the most basic information can lead to remarkable revelations.

In this case, the state's refusal to provide information about traffic stops, arrests, civilian complaints and internal discipline became a beacon for reporters. Each "no" meant that

POLICING THE POLICE

the paper was asking the right questions and hunting in the right places

The first break in the story came two weeks after the shooting. In an interview with Trenton reporter Kathy Barrett Carter, Public Defender Frank Farrell revealed that, at one point, the public defender's office had kept a file on the alleged profiling tendencies of trooper John Hogan, one of the officers involved in the shooting

It would be six months before the next major break. Just days after the shooting, the *Ledger* asked the state police and the attorney general's office for information on turnpike traffic stops as well as arrests broken down by race, age, gender and offense. We also requested the name of the arresting officer.

The state never directly refused to provide the documents. Instead, it sought to wear down the paper's will with obfuscation, delays and excuses that consumed several months.

For weeks the "matter was under review." For several more weeks, the data was being extracted from the computer. Then for another few weeks, it was on the attorney general's desk, but he was reviewing it to make sure that undercover operations would not be jeopardized. And on it went, with information always just around the corner.

After months of delay, the attorney general's office finally turned over two months of data in a form so obscure that it was unusable.

"That's when we went nuclear," said Tom Curran, AME/Investigations, the editor who had been handling the legal end of the story. Confronted with 21 pages of useless data, the newspaper's lawyer made a final request to the state to turn over the documents, saying the paper was ready to go to court if denied.

Meanwhile on the journalistic front, statehouse reporters met with an unusual array of excuses when they asked the state police and the attorney general for basic information about citizen complaints. The paper wanted to know how many citizen complaints the force had received over a five-year period, and the discipline handed out if any.

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Photo: Vic Yepello | Star-Ledger

State police officers rake the area of 62.8 Southbound of the New Jersey Turnpike in Washington Township for evidence from the incident that occurred on the New Jersey Turnpike where three people were shot.

RESOURCES

tracked by the police department.

The story won the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.

"Downgrading the Offense"
The Philadelphia Inquirer, 1998
IRE No. 15007

In 1997, the Philadelphia Police Department released the underlying crime-by-crime database used to construct the totals sent to the FBI. Reporters at *The Philadelphia Inquirer* noticed several weird trends when they analyzed the data. Car thefts dropped in the beginning of the year, only to boom at the end. Attempted burglaries had all but vanished and the aggravated assault rates were remarkably low compared to murders.

Their curiosity piqued by these trends, Inquirer reporters decided to expand their analysis of the crime data beyond the traditional "most dangerous areas" stories. As they continued to analyze the data, they also began using computer mapping and interviewing former and current police officers and commanders. The newspaper slowly began to uncover the Philadelphia Police Department's long-time culture of downgrading crimes to lessen their workload and improve the image of the city.

As a result of the two-part series, the department withdrew its FBI count figures for 1996, 1997 and the first half of 1998, the city controller's office began auditing crime statistics and the mayor's office is no longer celebrating a drop in crime. Unofficial figures show a 9 percent rise in crime, which Mayor Rendell attributed to the new honesty in reporting, not a crime surge.

"Behind the Badge"
WTHR-TV, Indianapolis, 1998
IRE No. 15264

In response to ongoing disciplinary problems at the Indianapolis Police Department, reporters at WTHR-TV decided to take a systematic look at how violations of rules and regulations were handled by the department. They reviewed the disciplinary records

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Photo: Michael Sypniewski | Star-Ledger

Assemblyman LeRoy J. Jones Jr.; Rev. Reginald Jackson, a minister at the St. Matthews A.M.E. Church in Orange, N.J., and part of the Black Ministers Council, speak to the media asking Gov. Whitman to fire State Police Superintendent Col. Carl Williams.

POLICING THE POLICE

Stories by other papers, most notably *The Philadelphia Inquirer* in 1996, have shown that the manner in which citizen complaints are handled can help illuminate how aggressively police are policing themselves.

The state police responses were bizarre. At first, the agency refused to divulge the information at all. Then it said it did not know how many citizen complaints it had received and refused to count them. Then it changed its response a third time to say the complaints were commingled in a massive logbook with internal or administrative complaints and could not be separated. Finally, when the *Ledge*r offered to send its reporters to headquarters to look through the book, the state police refused to discuss the matter further.

In the absence of even a scintilla of information about state police arrest patterns or its internal discipline, the paper decided that state police stonewalling had become a story in and of itself.

Carter wrote a story about how other states handle complaints, comparing the level of state police secrecy to that of other states. She was assisted by Kenya Mann, who contacted every state police department in America over a six-week period. The story, which appeared on Nov. 11, 1998, revealed that New Jersey's state police agency was among the most secretive and antiquated in handling citizen grievances. Within days, legislation was introduced to modernize procedures and publish for the first time a yearly report on state police conduct.

The resulting outrage and embarrassment over the story widened a growing rift between the state police and the attorney general's office and paved the way for the first release of arrest data.

Finally, on Feb. 9, 1999, Attorney General Peter Verniero began to give in, releasing the first batch of arrest statistics. It was just 200 arrests, but it represented a major breakthrough. The paper ran a page one story reporting that three out of four motorists arrested by state troopers on the turnpike during the first two months of 1997 were minorities.

The release of the data set off a stunning chain reaction of page one stories over the next month. Those stories included:

- The attorney general's announcement that he was now investigating the state police, the first such probe in the 78-year history of the force.
- The disclosure that a federal probe into possible civil rights abuses by state police was also under way.
- State Police Superintendent Carl Williams' admission that he linked drug trafficking to certain minority groups. He was fired by the governor that afternoon.
- The suggestion that one of the troopers in the Turnpike shooting was an open, avowed racist and that state police commanders knew this.
- The discovery that desk clerks in New Jersey hotels were working as informants for a secret state police drug squad, alerting the police when Hispanics, paying in cash, checked into hotels near the Turnpike.
- The revelation that the state police's most vaunted award, The Trooper of the Year Award, had become an incentive for racial profiling.

The *Ledger* followed up the arrest story by filing a civil action in Superior Court, Essex County on Feb. 12. Superior Court Judge Alvin Weiss ordered the state to turn over 12 months of records on Feb. 17, 1999, the largest release of internal arrest data in state police history.

On March 19, 1999, the parties signed a consent decree under which the state agreed to turn over the information no later than April 7, 1999.

The arrest statistics, along with revelations by state and federal investigators and state police troopers themselves, provided a torrent of news stories about the state's most secretive agency.

In a two-part report issued last spring, the state admitted troopers do target minorities on the Turnpike and called for a massive overhaul of the force. A database tracking the way in which state troopers do their jobs, a shakeup of internal affairs and an end of the Trooper of the Year Award were among the changes initiated.

In May, the state agreed to enter into a consent decree with the federal government to eradicate racial profiling from its highways and to eliminate racism within the ranks of the state troopers.

Photo: Frank Digiacomo | Star-Ledger

New Jersey State Police Superintendent Col. Carl Williams responds to questions regarding the black ministers asking him to resign because of alleged racial problems, during a press conference at State Police Headquarters in West Trenton.

Finally in June, the president called for a nationwide crackdown on racial profiling.

By September, John Hogan and James Kenna, the two troopers who opened fire on the van and wounded the unarmed men, were indicted for attempted murder and aggravated assault. Several months earlier they were both charged with falsifying patrol logs to cover up the fact they were stopping a large numbers of minority drivers. They are still awaiting trial.

New Jersey's long denial of racial profiling threatened Gov. Christine Todd Whitman's nomination of Attorney General Peter Verniero to the state Supreme Court and was a factor in Whitman's withdrawal from the U.S. Senate race.

The biggest crisis of her tenure continued in early October, when former police superintendent Carl Williams sued the governor for reverse discrimination.

For revealing confidential case files, Farrell, the public defender, was suspended for five days and is now suing the state.

Kathy Barrett Carter has worked at the Star-Ledger for 18 years, covering the Supreme Court and legal affairs issues. Joe Donohue, an eight-year Star-Ledger veteran, covers the state budget, auto insurance, campaign finance issues and politics.

RESOURCES

of all 1,005 IPD officers, and found several disturbing patterns of behavior.

Twenty-seven officers had 10 or more disciplinary actions on their records; 95 had committed offenses that could constitute ghost employment; and 52 had broken the laws they were paid to enforce. They also found that blacks were disciplined at higher rates than whites. All of this was accomplished by using the IPD's own documents and interviews with officers, police brass and union leaders and victims of the officers' misdeeds.

"Responsive or Not?"
The Columbus Dispatch, 1999
IRE No. 15690

For months the Columbus Police Chief claimed he would need 477 more officers to adequately staff his division based on a formula that multiplied the number of calls for service by the average length of time to handle a call. The chief's credibility was questioned, however, after reporters at *The Columbus Dispatch* found that police had no idea how many more police officers they would need because they had no idea how long their response times were. The division's data on the response times was either missing or misleading.

The *Dispatch* decided to examine the situation by looking at a year's worth of 911 call data to determine if police response time reflected the priority levels police gave the calls. They found that priority levels didn't reflect response times, meaning that calls given top priority weren't always responded to in the least amount of time.

The *Dispatch* found that it could analyze only half of the 911 calls this way because officers often didn't log their arrival time, blaming difficulty in using equipment even though it only involved pushing a button in the cruiser. Union representatives blamed this on the location and reliability of the equipment, but the newspaper found that the fire department, which uses the same equipment, didn't have any problems.

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RETIRING FORCE (CONT.)

By Eric Mansfield

enough backup on duty.

I asked around and found that the fight was no big deal, but the lack of backup certainly was. In fact, several officers told me off the record that they were scared to answer some calls because they couldn't count on enough officers being available for backup.

Veteran officers told me the big problem was retirements. The hiring of new recruits just wasn't keeping up with those calling it quits.

Rather than immediately calling the chief's office and working my way down the food chain, I decided to try an internal approach.

Getting the data

First, I requested shift assignment records for the first 100 days of 1999 and created a spreadsheet for each of the department's five shifts.

> "By doing something the cops didn't – analyzing their shift assignments – I was able to prove the department's claim that "all was well" wasn't true."

The city is divided into 23 patrol sectors and the numbers on the patrol cars correspond to the sectors. In other words, if an officer was assigned to car 4, his responsibility would be to patrol sector 4 for the entire shift.

POLICING THE POLICE

The city handed me 821 pages of records claiming the cops didn't computerize their assignments. That was a big clue. If the city didn't track its assignments, than supervisors would have no clue as to its patrolling tendencies.

After 20 meticulous hours of entering data, the calculations were astonishing. Two sectors of town were almost completely ignored. These were neighborhoods with homes, businesses and banks, but rarely police patrols. The data also showed a significant lack of sergeants to supervise the officers.

Although the department set aside four extra "sector" cars to do nothing but back up officers in trouble or fill in for officers who get tied up on a long call, the spreadsheets showed that more than 90 percent of the time, all four sector cars sat empty.

I still needed faces and anecdotes to make this story sing. Eventually, a police lieutenant admitted the patrol division was short by more than 50 officers. They were trying to cover for the shortage by assigning multiple sectors to some patrols and even having volunteer "reserve" officers answer 911 calls. Although these volunteers had completed academy training, they had little if any experience answering emergency calls and were usually on unpaid status.

The ultimate anecdote fell right in my lap.

A woman's body was found in the trunk of her car. She'd been raped and murdered. Even though police released a picture and description of the victim the day after she disappeared, her car wasn't found for six days. As it turned out, the killer dumped the car in plain view but in one of the two neighborhoods we were about to spotlight as rarely being patrolled.

We later learned that on the second day she was missing, an officer found her car and called dispatch with the license plate number. However, the missing person's report hadn't been entered into police computers yet because – you guessed it – not enough cops to do the paperwork. The officer put a parking ticket on the windshield and left.

Anticipating the police response

I anticipated the city would argue that the two neighborhoods I was claiming were being neglected just didn't have a lot of crime. I obtained a copy of the department's annual report which indicated the opposite. The department's own crime statistics showed several other sectors with lower crime rates which were still being patrolled more than 90 percent of the time. I added soundbites with people living in those sectors to reinforce that the two communities being ignored did indeed want patrols.

I took a chance with an old-fashioned tape

recorder. I set it right next to my police scanner to record hours and hours of police dispatch traffic. I ended up with a great soundbite from a police lieutenant. He was turning down calls before his shift even hit the street claiming he was at minimum staffing levels.

To add depth to the series, I obtained a database of all police officers and calculated that nearly 100 of Akron's 460 active officers were eligible to retire by the end of 2000. That meant the police shortage would be getting worse.

After we hit air, Akron's mayor opted to re-assign 21 officers from specialty units to the patrol division. He also agreed to hire a new class of 26 officers at a price tag of nearly $800,000 by the end of 1999.

Had I opted to just call the chief and ask about the number of cops on the beat, I would have been told that the department was only a few officers short of the maximum of 506. By doing something the cops didn't – analyzing their shift assignments – I was able to prove the department's claim that "all was well" wasn't true.

"Cop Out" wasn't extremely popular with the officers, but it did give them a pat on the back. Even though the patrol division was short more than 50 cops, no one was complaining about slow response time.

My advice to anyone contemplating a similar story would be to keep your research simple. When building a spreadsheet, type a "1" when the car was used and leave it blank when the car sat empty. That will make the calculations easy.

Find allies in the patrol division to explain how the department really works. In Akron, there was sector 9 and a sector 9-A, and at times, shifts would overlap coverage so a sector was being patrolled even though it didn't always look that way on paper.

And remember, don't discount the elevator at the cop shop. It really works.

Eric Mansfield is chief of the Akron-Canton bureau for WKYC-TV in Cleveland.

RESOURCES

"Police Keeping Cash Intended for Education"
The Kansas City Star, 1999
IRE No. 15481

Karen Dillon of *The Kansas City Star* investigated the ways in which Missouri police circumvent a law requiring money seized in drug cases be turned over to public school districts, and kept the money for themselves.

Dillon discovered how police regularly turned the money over to federal agencies not subject to the state law, who kept a portion for themselves and returned the rest to the police. She also revealed the ways in which the police managed to keep most of the paper trail closed to the public and various proposals by lawyers and state legislators to get the money to the schools.

ANALYZING POLICE STAFFING

By Geoff Dougherty

Studying police staffing is one of the most critical things you can do in evaluating your local law enforcement agencies. Understaffed police departments can get people killed; overstaffed departments waste a huge amount of money. Personnel is the most significant cost in running a police department, and ensuring that managers spend that money wisely should be a key part of our jobs.

• If your police department doesn't have professional crime analysts, don't believe anything the chief says about staffing needs. Determining how many officers a community needs is a complex, data-driven task that isn't covered in the curriculum at the police academy.

• Don't believe anything you hear from the folks piloting the police cars. Even police managers acknowledge that the busiest shifts are the ones most likely to stick in the minds of street cops, leading to false claims about how strapped the department is.

• Don't equate lots of numbers with good information. Crime rates, response times, deputies per 1,000 citizens – they're all important measurements, but NOT measurements of how under- or over- staffed a law enforcement agency is.

• Do look at the department's staffing and compare it to the busiest patrol areas and peak call times – both by time of day and day of week. Sometimes tradition, union rules or incompetence mean the most cops aren't working when or where most calls come in.

• Find out if the local cops have a community policing program designed to address problems at addresses or areas with high rates of repeat business. These problem addresses can account for a substantial chunk of a department's call volume and waste a lot of time for officers.

• The most effective measure of police staffing is "committed time" – the percentage of a shift that an officer can be expected to spend on citizen-generated calls for service.

• Experts offer this rule of thumb: About a third of an officer's time should be spent answering citizen calls for service. Another third should go to routine patrol, community policing, traffic stops and other discretionary police activities. The final third is allotted to administrative time, including report writing, training and court testimony.

• Remember that a response time is actually more than one number. It's the time it takes a call-taker to find out where the emergency is, plus the time it takes for a dispatcher to call a patrol car, plus the time it takes for the cop to drive to the scene. Delay in any one of those phases can lead to long response times.

• Expect dirty data. Expect that you will have to do some programming to clean it, and then some more to arrive at the bottom line about staffing and response times.

• Seek out the experts. One place to find them is at consulting firms. Deloitte & Touche, Abt Associates and Booz Allen are a few that have been extensively involved in police management projects.

Geoff Doughterty of The St. Petersburg Times wrote this tipsheet for the 1999 national NICAR conference in Boston where he was a panelist on in-depth crime reporting.

Dogged determination

Remembering Jerry Uhrhammer: One of IRE's Desert Rats

BY DANA BOTTORFF

In the early 1980s, the powers that ran *The* (Eugene) *Register-Guard* became uncomfortable with what their own reporter was writing about a scandal involving the University of Oregon football team.

As the publisher nearly kicked the argumentative reporter out of his office one day, he snarled: "What I hate is that I know those damn Huskies (Oregon's arch rivals at the University of Washington) are doing the same kind of stuff, but they don't have Uhrhammer up there investigating them."

Jerry Uhrhammer was that kind of journalist – one whose tenacity and willingness to challenge authority sometimes startled even his own colleagues, but whose conscientious dedication to the truth placed him among the best and most trusted of investigative reporters.

Jerry died Dec. 11, 1999, at age 66, following open-heart surgery to repair an aortic aneurysm. He had suffered a stroke in October, at which time the aneurysm was discovered.

Whether he was reporting improprieties in a college football program, real estate fraud or shoddy work by his own colleagues, Jerry pursued his work with an unflagging dedication to exposing wrongdoing. But the aggressiveness with which he approached his work belied a gentle, warm and deeply caring personality.

Jerry's journalism career began in 1953 while he was a student at the University of Minnesota. His year of writing news copy for WCCO Radio in Minneapolis was a springboard to a career that spanned 46 award-winning years, including 25 years with *The Register-Guard* and freelance projects for *The New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, 60 Minutes and Oregon Public Broadcasting.

An early member and, later, Board president of Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc., Jerry is perhaps best remembered as a "Desert Rat," one of 38 journalists from across the nation who participated in The Arizona Project in 1976.

He carried to Arizona that sense of moral outrage and dogged determination that characterized his career as an investigative reporter. He initially intended to stay in Phoenix for two weeks, but got a last-minute OK from *The Register-Guard* to stay longer. He eventually returned home, but after a while was back in Arizona. Jerry's constant phone calls to the airline to change his reservations became a running joke among the Desert Rats. He just couldn't leave until the job was done – and done right.

> "In the early days of IRE, I told Jerry Uhrhammer that an organization run by reporters would never last. Jerry persisted, recruiting volunteers (like me), running conference after conference, writing long mission statements. And look at IRE today."
>
> **◆ Joe Rigert, former IRE president and chairman**

After several years as a news reporter and sports editor early in his career, Jerry found in investigative reporting not only a venue for his tireless talents, but also a multitude of colleagues whose support, admiration and friendship would sustain him for many years.

Never one to compromise his principles or his commitment to journalism as he believed it should be practiced, Jerry found himself at odds with newsroom managers whose shifting agendas allowed little time or budget for his kind of reporting. Like the stories he pursued, internal newsroom struggles became another challenge to which he would apply his persistence and determination.

> "A fellow reporter, after months of working with Uhrhammer on an investigation, said plaintively, 'But Jerry, WHY are we gathering all this stuff?' But Jerry turned out the best-researched copy in the paper."
>
> **◆ Don Bishoff, Register-Guard columnist, 1960-99**

In 1982, after 23 straight years at Eugene and at a point in life where most would have been content to coast for a few years, Jerry uprooted and pursued an investigative reporting opportunity at the *The* (Riverside, Calif.) *Press-Enterprise*. He would eventually move on from there to join the *Pittsburgh Press* and, later, *The* (Tacoma) *News-Tribune*, enhancing his reputation among friends and colleagues as a singularly dedicated, if itinerant, investigative reporter.

Everywhere he worked, he won recognition, awards and the admiration of colleagues. Few have ever known a journalist with so much sustained enthusiasm for his job over the years as Jerry. For him, newspapering was as much about the fun and excitement of the pursuit of a story as seeing it in print.

The Arizona Project and his later presidency of IRE were two of the proudest moments of Jerry's career, and in both he found the opportunity to mentor young journalists. His enthusiasm for teaching younger reporters never dimmed, nor did his exuberance when he was learning something new at a workshop or over a late-night beer. Many of those who crossed Jerry's path learned as much from him about dedication, commitment, discipline and fairness – qualities that Jerry exemplified – as they did about reporting.

Jerry never shirked fighting the good fight (be it for open government access or against some proposed IRE action he considered nutty), even at the expense of tilting at windmills.

Jerry's deep love and dedication to his family – wife Jackie and children John, Jo-Anne and Michael – was apparent to all who knew him, never more so than when he and Jackie, after several moves around the country, again moved to be near Jo-Anne after the tragic death of her husband.

Those who spent time with Jerry may long carry the memory of his unforgettable face - bearing a more-than-passing resemblance to Doonesbury's "Uncle Duke" – for two distinct expressions. One is that eagle eye, the laser-like expression of intense interest that would cross his face the moment he learned a tantalizing fact.

The other is his smile, a smile that seemed to rise from a place deep within and cover his entire face. It was a smile of complete joy, worn by a man who gave joy, warmth and deep, lasting friendship to so many.

Those who knew Jerry will miss him. IRE extends its condolences to Jackie, John, Jo-Anne and Michael, and Jerry's grandchildren, Kelsey, Tyler and Jacqueline.

Dana Bottorff worked with Jerry Uhrhammer at The Press-Enterprise and maintained a friendship ever since. She is now a partner in Anadon Communications, living in Sharon, Mass.

Electronic rights

Freelancers win in landmark copyright case, but know contract negotiations are key

BY KATE MILLER

The latest ruling in a landmark case involving electronic reproduction rights of freelanced works resulted in a courtroom victory for freelance writers, but the impact of the ruling on their work remains unclear.

The lawsuit

On Sept. 24, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit unanimously ruled in Tasini v. New York Times Co. that electronic rights were retained by freelance writers under the Copyright Act of 1976 even when included in reproductions of entire collective works. A lower court ruling in 1997 had decided that works reproduced within the entire original collection were only "revisions" and did not infringe upon copyrights.

The ruling was the culmination of a six-year legal battle pitting six freelance writers against five of the biggest names in publishing: The New York Times, Inc.; Newsday, Inc.; The Time Inc. Magazine Co.; Mead Data Central Corp.; and University Microfilms International.

At the heart of the case was a disagreement over the very nature of electronic reproductions.

"The suit initially started because we really did need a re-definition of copyright law in the electronic information age," said freelancer and plaintiff Mary Kay Blakely.

But what began as a search for truth developed into a bitter dispute over money between freelancers and print publishers engaging in electronic publishing. Jonathan Tasini, president of the National Writers Union and a plaintiff in the case, said the fight has only intensified in recent years as the popularity of electronic publishing has increased among consumers and publishers.

"You're talking about millions of dollars that aren't going to freelancers, whether because media companies are outright stealing work from writers, which this decision proves, or they are forcing writers to sign all-rights contracts and basically saying 'we're not going to pay you,'" Tasini said.

The ruling

As a result of the ruling, publishers must now pay freelance writers a portion of any profit they receive from electronic reproductions. Despite the publishers' vow to fight on, the NWU has set up a clearinghouse to help freelancers collect due payments. Just how much they should receive has yet to be determined.

"That's what the writers and the union are really going to have to sit down and figure out," Blakely said. "If anyone has collected money from the sale of these works to the databases,

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NEGOTIATING

Ownership rights of freelanced work still ultimately reside in the contract. We asked freelancer organizations and experienced freelancers for advice on how to get the best deal. Their advice:

Network

IRE, the National Writers Union, the Society of Professional Journalists and press clubs all provide excellent opportunities for networking with experienced freelancers. Find out what sort of deals they're getting and how they got them. Knowing the concessions that publishers have made in the past can help immensely in future negotiations.

All contracts are negotiable

The National Writers Union advises that freelancers have the most negotiating power when a contract is first offered. Freelancers should be knowledgeable but not obnoxious. The goal is to get as many of the things the freelancer wants without forcing the publisher or client to break off negotiations when backed into a corner.

Know what you want

Develop a negotiating strategy. The NWU recommends dividing the things you want into four categories:

1. The things you absolutely cannot live with.
2. The things you absolutely cannot live without.
3. The things you would like, but can give up without much pain.
4. The things you would give up only in exchange for something else.

Read the contract carefully

Make sure you understand all of the contract clauses and how they relate to you before you sign anything. Limit the time you sign away ownership rights. Few people could have foreseen the explosive growth of the Internet in the last 10 years. Publishers may not be making much money in electronic publishing today, but who knows what riches the next decade may bring. Putting an expiration date on ownership rights allows freelancers to renegotiate or resell their works for its increased value down the road.

"Hollow Promises"

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surprising or questionable projects? Staying on the money trail kept the project focused.

In somewhat of a departure for The *Dispatch*, the newspaper decided not to stop at the state border – decided against focusing on Appalachian Ohio as a microcosm of the region. That required a significant financial commitment to pay for trips to Kentucky, West Virginia, Maryland and South Carolina.

The team decided to limit the number of voices in each story so that readers would get to know a lot about one central character instead of quick sketches of dozens of sources. To ensure enough space for large photos, each inside color page had no more than 45 inches of text. The emphasis on one key person in most of the stories gave reporters and photographers the ability to drill deep into one life – one that told the bigger story of that part of Appalachia.

The reporters learned that if they wrote as they reported – instead of waiting to write after months of research and interviews – they had an easier time crafting their stories. Their articles had livelier description, detail, dialogue.

Happily, all four reporters met the scary deadline of Friday the 13th. That August day marked the kickoff of the phase that most reporters dread: layers of editing with seemingly endless questions, requests for revisions, efforts to trim precious words.

A thorough editing process, however, becomes all the more crucial when a project involves more than one reporter. Consistency in quality and content becomes a top priority. As projects editor, I tackled the copy first. Then it moved to Assistant Managing Editor Mary Lynn Plageman, then to copy editor Rob Messinger. The managing editor/news, Ben Marrison, read all of the stories carefully, too. Although painful and frustrating at times for everyone, the multilayered editing produced stories that became stronger each step of the way.

Make it easy for readers to share their views of the project via e-mail, telephone, fax and letter. The *Dispatch* ran such contact information all five days of the Appalachia series. Response came swiftly from central and southern Ohio but also from as far away as California, thanks to the Web. Readers often provide leads for follow-up stories and other valuable information. A posting on a list serve of Appalachian scholars also generated a lot of thoughtful responses.

The power of an investigative series often plays out in subsequent coverage. Ohio Gov. Bob Taft acted quickly after publication of the series in requesting that the federal agency review its spending policies to see whether ways can be developed to get more money to the neediest communities. Once a 28-page series reprint was produced, the newspaper sent copies to every member of Congress, where the true power for change lies.

As the series neared publication, an Appalachian Regional Commission official taunted one of the reporters, arguing that regardless of what the investigation found, interest in it would "go away in a few days."

The challenge is to prove smug bureaucrats wrong, to uphold the role of watchdog far beyond the final frosty mug at the Thank-God-It's-Over project party.

Doug Haddix is projects editor of The Columbus Dispatch in Ohio.

Photos: Chris Russell | The Columbus Dispatch

Sandy Allan (above) wipes sweat from her brow after returning to her home. Her youngest son (right) plays on the muddy lane that leads to their mobile home in the hollows of McDowell County, West Virginia.

Korean War

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7 ➢

out," said one. "The order came to fire," said another.

The interviews were far from easy.

Some of these men, in their 60s and 70s, clearly felt a need to unburden themselves, but even they could be a challenge, requiring follow-up calls or in-person visits before they opened up. Others who we believed were there didn't want to talk at all. Others were simply cryptic or terse. "I know I was there," was about all one would say when asked about No Gun Ri.

We eventually learned that many, probably most, of the ex-GIs remained scarred psychologically by what they saw or participated in over three days in late July 1950.

Choe, meanwhile, was amassing detailed accounts in individual interviews with 24 Korean survivors. Small, chilling facts began to match on two sides of the Pacific. Both veterans and Koreans told of deadly ricochets of bullets under the trestle, of survivors hiding behind stacks of bodies, of screams of women and children echoing in the concrete tunnels.

We had pinned down the core story. We eventually had more than two dozen veterans acknowledging that it had happened, and about half of those were strong sources, discussing it in detail on the record. But there was plenty more work to do.

Port sent us back to the National Archives, to double-check the files and look for more, to ensure we hadn't missed something on the shootings and to collect more information on Army operations.

At the Truman Library in Independence, Mo., Herschaft reviewed 8th Army records and other high-level documents. At the U.S. Army Military History Institute in Carlisle, Pa., he found relevant Army manuals and regulations from 1950, and 37 boxes of notes from the Army's official Korean War historian.

From law school libraries, Herschaft got information about the laws of war in effect at the time, and about Army courts-martial that did take place in Korea – dealing with the usual run of common crimes, nothing large-scale like No Gun Ri. The Lexis-Nexis and Westlaw databases produced law-review articles relating to war crimes. We educated ourselves about the Vietnam War's My Lai massacre.

Some research was just a subway ride away: 1950 magazines and obscure books on the Korean War at the New York Public Library, and transcripts of U.S. Senate hearings on Korean War atrocities at Columbia University's library. (Atrocities, we learned, were defined only as acts committed by the North Korean and Chinese enemy.)

All in all, Herschaft made more than 50 trips to public and university libraries. He checked U.S. and European newspapers from those days, and consulted every available bibliography and index to periodical literature to confirm such a massacre was never reported. In Seoul, meanwhile, Choe determined that it had been reported in August 1950 by the North Korean press, articles that never circulated in the West. He obtained copies.

> "Both veterans and Koreans told of deadly ricochets of bullets under the trestle, of survivors hiding behind stacks of bodies, of screams of women and children echoing in the concrete tunnels."

The interviewing never really stopped.

In all, Choe conducted close to 100, not just with survivors and victims' relatives, but also with Korean historians and other helpful sources.

On the U.S. side, we did more than 220 interviews, including multiple sessions with some veterans and scores of dead-end conversations with men who turned out to have been miles away from No Gun Ri. Our calls also eventually branched out beyond the 7th Cavalry as we learned of other incidents in which South Korean refugees were killed. Besides veterans, we talked to American historians and other experts, including law-of-war specialists in Geneva, Switzerland, at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, and elsewhere.

The important interview work wrapped up with a series of cross-country trips with AP Television News – producer Steve Fluty and cameraman Bill Gorman – to videotape ex-GIs and their accounts. Survivor interviews were similarly taped in Korea by APTN Seoul producer Julie Kim and cameraman Jai Moon. The recordings were also the basis for the AP Radio Network's report. AP photographer Y.J. Ahn also worked on the No Gun Ri project.

As we worked through the months, AP Photos editor Madge Stager in New York assigned photographers – including Ahn in Korea – to make pictures of veterans and survivors, and assembled archival photos to illustrate the story. One major discovery at the National Archives: shots from 1950 showing Army engineers setting charges on a highway bridge before it was blown up as refugees crossed, killing many. The bridge blowing figured highly in our "other incidents" story.

AP Graphics artist Tonia Cowan, meanwhile, prepared an information-packed graphic detailing the day-by-day steps toward bloodshed at No Gun Ri.

And AP Multimedia, in an all-out effort to tell the full story, designed a No Gun Ri site for our "The WIRE" web page complete with video, documents, maps and more, to provide solid back-up to our print stories on the AP wire.

On Sept. 29, 1999, we published the first story, "The Bridge At No Gun Ri." Two weeks later, we followed up with the piece on other refugee killings in the war's early days, including bridge blowings.

The project's impact

The stories ran on newspaper front pages around the world, and were headlined by major TV networks. Within a day, President Clinton ordered the Pentagon to investigate No Gun Ri "as thoroughly and as quickly as possible." South Korea's government also began an investigation.

The greatest impact has been on the South Korean survivors, whose hopes had sunk after their compensation claim was rejected on a technicality in 1998.

The night after the story broke, one of the older survivors telephoned Choe.

"I don't have many days to live," he said. "In my will, I will tell generations of my offspring to remember what the AP has done for my family."

Martha Mendoza was part of The Associated Press team – three reporters and a researcher – who investigated and reported on the killings of South Korean civilians by U.S. troops in the Korean War.

Databases and footwork

The Record shows state licenses criminals to care for sick and elderly

BY ROBERT GEBELOFF

Reporters at *The Record* (Hackensack, N.J.) had been collecting evidence of problems in the home health care industry for some time. With all trends pointing to a growing demand for home health services, we knew the topic was ripe for exploration.

What we didn't realize was how little state regulators seemed to know about the problem, and how long potential solutions had been ignored.

We had dozens of anecdotes about how difficult it was to find quality home care for sick and elderly relatives. Some had gone through dozens of aides before finally finding reliable help. Others had to fire aides after discovering they'd stolen valuables.

What elevated the idea into a nine-month investigation, however, was when reporters Tom Zambito and Mary Jo Layton sought the perspective of the state's Division of Consumer Affairs.

The reporters were told that New Jersey, a state with more than 40,000 licensed home health aides and more than 200,000 home health patients, had only disciplined 10 aides for misconduct in all of 1998.

This just didn't seem to jibe with evidence gathered through interviews with police and agency sources, who insisted that problems with home health aides were rampant in our area. So we decided a major component of our investigation would be to quantify misbehavior by health aides.

Our plan: Take a computer database of licensed aides and cross it with a database of criminals.

It sounded nice and easy at the story meeting, but executing the plan became a major challenge. Eventually, a handful of other reporters had to be pulled into the fray, to sift through paper and to track down interview subjects. Government agencies were reluctant to give us the data, and some of it came on a disk but not in anything resembling database format.

Once we got beyond that hurdle, there were other obstacles. Our data was missing complete date of birth and address information. That meant we had to send reporters to courthouses throughout the state to retrieve the missing data from the paper records.

Even this proved to be more difficult than it sounds. Some court clerks balked at the notion of pulling numerous files for us, and we faced delays. Meanwhile, we were frustrated in many cases to learn that the missing data was not in court records. We couldn't make a connection between numerous cases and aides.

But we did confirm dozens of cases, more than 100 in all. And what we found made all the effort worthwhile.

One licensed aide had been arrested six times on drug, armed robbery and assault charges. She told court officials she smoked marijuana every day for 15 years. Yet her certification to care for people in their homes was renewed in 1999 and is valid through 2001.

We also turned up an aide who had been ordered to repay $15,000 stolen from an elderly woman. We discovered she's paying off her restitution with money earned taking care of other sick and elderly people, an irony sanctioned by the state, which recently renewed her home health license.

Another aide locked an Alzheimer's patient in her car on a sweltering August day last year while she cared for another patient. She's now under court supervision, yet her license is still good through 2001. And when we tracked her down, she was still serving patients in Bergen County.

And this is just what we found. Law enforcement sources gave us numerous other cases, including the one we chose to lead the project.

Alvest O'Neill Williams was such a notorious cat burglar that *The Record* had actually published a crime feature about him in the early 1980s. In fact, Williams had quite a file in our morgue.

As it turned out, Williams had a rap sheet featuring 11 criminal convictions since 1962.

We didn't publish the names of every criminal we found, choosing instead to focus on the most striking cases. We also wanted to see if the criminals we had identified were active as caregivers.

In one case, a reporter was tailing one of our subjects to see if she was going to work in the home of an elderly person. The aide realized she was being followed and managed to shake the reporter on her tail. Suddenly, the subject reappeared on foot, banging on the window of the reporter's car. The reporter was startled and a bit frightened, but got the interview.

While we spent a lot of time and resources tracking down criminals working in the home health field, we were careful not to let the project become an analysis into the character of certain home health aides.

While the anecdotes certainly gave the story life and made it a fascinating read, we made sure the focus remained on the system that licenses criminals to care for society's most vulnerable.

So in addition to compiling this rogue's gallery of licensed aides, we also spent considerable time searching for an explanation of why this is happening. Many states had adopted criminal background checks for licensed aides in the early 1990s – why not New Jersey?

New Jersey finally did enact criminal background checks shortly after we began working on the project, in fact, but we discovered that the proposal had foundered for an entire decade.

Lawmakers who had initially supported the idea told us that pressure from home health care agencies, nursing homes and hospitals – people who didn't want to pay to background their workforce – had defeated the proposal.

We followed the money. In the decade it took the bill to become law, companies in these industries, their employees, and their political action committees gave more than $1.5 million to 269 legislators and party organizations. During the same period, the industries' political action committees paid another $1.5 million to lobbyists.

Moreover, we discovered that New Jersey's new law contained a major loophole – aides certified before the law passed were exempted from background checks.

As of this writing, there are four bills pending in the New Jersey Legislature directly related to our coverage of the home health industry, and the loophole is being closed.

Robert Gebeloff is the manager of computer-assisted reporting for The Record in Hackensack, N.J.

Electronic rights

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29 ➢

writers should get some of that money. If the entire newspaper is sold and I have one column, how much money is that one column worth?"

According to *The New York Times'* assistant general counsel George Freeman, such discussions are a bit premature.

"The notion that we're going to have to pay huge amounts of money is ill thought out," he said. "We don't intend to pay them."

Freeman said that if the ruling ultimately stands, *The New York Times* will delete the electronic records from the various databases. It is a solution, he said, that is bad for everyone.

"I think it's a lose-lose situation. I think it's ultimately something that the freelancers don't want because it means they're no longer associated with *The New York Times*," he said. "It hurts researchers because it creates gaps in the historical record."

Blakely agrees that deleting pieces of the historical record is harmful to future research and said that is not what freelancers want. What they do want, she said, is fair compensation for their contributions to the historical record.

"It's a David and Goliath case, and no one expected David to win. Now they're saying 'OK, you may have won but it sure isn't going to earn you any more money,'" she said. "The battle is not over."

Limitations of the decision

If publishers are forced to pay anything, it will for the most part be only for works originally published prior to the mid-1990s. The latest Tasini ruling does nothing to prevent publishers from issuing the all-rights contracts that have proliferated since the beginning of this case. Publishers such as *Newsday* and The *New York Times* have had ownership of electronic rights in their standard contracts since 1995.

University of Missouri Journalism Professor Charles N. Davis, himself a freelancer, warns against creating a false sense of empowerment based on the ruling.

"The ruling says that freelancers have the right to demand reproductive rights, but the publisher doesn't have to hire them," he explained.

Kate Miller is a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism and an editorial intern for The IRE Journal.

GUEST COLUMN

Don't overlook the obvious in search for the smoking gun

ALYSIA TATE

I had pictured smoking guns and opening envelopes stamped "classified." Someday, I imagined, they'd make a movie about my big expose. At 26, I haven't completely abandoned those dreams. But the stories I've done in my short time as an investigative reporter – two of them, in particular – have taught me the job involves more than mysterious reports, background sources and crunching numbers. It doesn't pay, I've learned, to overlook the obvious.

When one of my editors asked this spring if I'd take a look at the city's summer jobs program for teens, it was easy to say yes. It would be a nice break for me, a young African-American woman, from covering middle-aged, male politicians. The federal jobs program had provided minimum-wage employment to about 15,000 low-income youth the year before. This, I figured, would be fun.

I was wrong. What I thought would be a straightforward story on a fairly basic government initiative ended up becoming my most complex project to date. I had to navigate a maze of red tape that took months to understand. I had to press officials, both in Chicago and Washington, D.C., about why the effort didn't seem to reach those most in need. I was frustrated, to say the least.

Someone suggested I call another bureaucrat, one that had run the program under President Jimmy Carter. My talk with him changed the entire story. No one, he told me – government officials included – had ever really believed the program would help teens in the long run. Primarily, he said, the initiative began to get black teenagers off the streets in the '60s. Over the next few weeks, I would learn that in the 40 years the program had been run, no government study had proven its effectiveness and no journalist – in Chicago, at least – had assessed it.

Talking to the teens with the jobs verified the difficulties. Rebecca Smith, 16, who planted flowers on a hot July day at the Ida B. Wells public housing development on Chicago's South Side, told me that "the only nice part is getting paid." While she didn't represent every teen, her comments proved there were still problems with the program.

Next, I investigated another unsolved problem: the lack of mental health services in one of Chicago's black neighborhoods, the South Side community of Englewood. The scene of the murder of an 11-year-old girl a year before, and home to two boys, 7 and 8, who were wrongly charged in the killing, Englewood has had more than its share of tragedies over the years. The case drew national attention, and lately leaders had been promising millions in infrastructure improvements.

But it wasn't until I talked with the people of Englewood that I understood a story which hadn't been told. Living with violence, I learned, takes a tremendous toll on them. The fact that they can function – work, go to school, raise families – I realized, leads many living outside their neighborhood to assume they have been unaffected. I had assumed it myself, to a degree.

Listening to peoples' stories, I understood how wrong I was. A high school senior described what it was like to have to watch her back all the time. A teenage guy said the killing made him so angry, beating someone up seemed like the only way to get it off his chest.

For four months, I attended community meetings and other events, and talked with dozens of residents. I learned that Englewood's people were not getting much outside assistance to help them recover from the trauma around them. In the meantime, to their credit, they had continued their lives, worked for positive change and looked out for each other. But they needed – and wanted – much more help. "If we don't deal with the problems the people are facing," one local political told me, "we are going to face the same problems every 20 years when the buildings fall down."

So as a relative newcomer to the business, I learned that some of the most important, most compelling stories come from everyday things and everyday people. They don't appear as glamorous as the smoking guns. But they shed light on the things that affect people too often considered the least human, the least important.

I consider myself lucky for learning them so early in the game. More veteran reporters, I hope, will heed them as well.

Alysia Tate covers politics and government for The Chicago Reporter, a monthly investigative non-profit that focuses on race and poverty issues in the metropolitan area. The stories Tate mentions can be found at www.chicagoreporter.com.

Congressional travel

Tracking those all-expenses-paid trips

BY DEREK WILLIS AND JACKIE KOSZCZUK

In the past decade, Congress has tried to distance itself from some of the perks of lawmaking, especially gifts from lobbyists. The law on Capitol Hill is that members and staff members can't accept gifts such as meals and baseball tickets that exceed $100 a year per donor – a relatively paltry sum by most standards.

But that doesn't stop officials from taking trips to Hawaii, Switzerland and Las Vegas on the tabs of corporations and special interests who often have an interest in influencing legislation. An exemption in the law allows private travel as long as it is related to "official duties" and is not paid for by lobbyists.

In an effort to examine the link between these privately-financed trips and legislation, *Congressional Quarterly* looked at the travel records of leading members of Congress and their staffs. We found that private interests spent nearly $3 million on 2,042 trips for committee chairmen, ranking members and key staffers between January 1998 and May 1999.

How it started

We had been looking for alternate sources of data on Congress, and while other organizations have examined travel records before, most excluded staff travel from their analyses. We decided to include staffers because they often specialize in certain areas and because some top aides are nearly as powerful in shaping legislation as the members themselves.

Travel records are stored in two places on Capitol Hill: the Senate's Public Records office, in the Hart Office Building, and the House Legislative Resource Center, in the Cannon Office Building. Lawmakers and staffers fill out one of two basic forms, but early on we discovered that each body differed in its organization of the records. In the Senate, we obtained travel records for 1998 on microfilm for $20, but they were arranged alphabetically by the last name of the person who traveled. That made the process of ensuring that we had every record for each of the lawmakers that we wanted difficult.

The House did not offer microfilm but grouped records by member and included staffers with the member they worked for. Neither body had the records available electronically, and no plans are in place for that to happen, despite the fact that travelers often download the form off a House Web site and fill it out by hand. Instead of paying photocopying fees for most of the remaining records, I took a portable scanner to the Capitol and scanned in the forms.

We did the data entry ourselves, with help from two members of CQ's research staff. The research staff also helped fact-check a percentage of the records before publication to avoid any mistakes. Creating the Microsoft Access database of trips took about five weeks, although none of us worked on the project full-time during that period.

The data was fairly clean, although we encountered several forms filled out improperly and some that neglected to mention basic information about the trip, including the destination and time span. We answered those questions by contacting the traveler. After the input process, we added several fields to calculate the length of each trip and the total cost, since the forms break it down to several categories.

Reporting the story

Analyzing the data was much faster: we were interested in seeing which lawmakers and their staffs traveled the most, or what foreign destination was most popular. For the story, we tried to focus on aspects of the trips that would link travel and legislation, and to describe details of junkets to Palm Springs, Calif.; Las Vegas; and Cape Cod, Mass.

We also produced several charts for the story that listed the leading destinations and top sponsors of travel, among other things. Internet search engines such as Northern Light (www.nlsearch.com) were helpful in gleaning more information about some of the leading sponsors, including Taiwan's main business lobby, the Chinese National Association of Industry & Commerce.

What we found was that some staffers spent more than 30 days on all-expenses-paid trips during the 17-month period, and that several groups had penchants for taking key members and their staffs to exotic destinations in the thick of winter: recycling seminars in Key West, aviation conferences in Hawaii and telecommunications roundtables in Palm Springs.

The story also found that despite the ban on lobbyist-paid travel, most of the groups that sponsored trips concentrated on members who headed a committee or subcommittee with jurisdiction over their industries. The Nuclear Energy Institute, for example, paid for seven trips by Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, and his staff. Murkowski heads the Senate Energy panel.

As with campaign finance stories, examples of direct quid pro quo, where a trip was traded in exchange for beneficial legislation, were scarce. Instead, we chose to shine a light on the loophole that allows organizations lobbying Congress to pay for members and staffers to travel for free, and show just how friendly the skies can be when you work on Capitol Hill.

Derek Willis can be reached by e-mail at dwillis@cq.com. Jackie Koszczuk can be reached by e-mail at jkoszczuk@cq.com

TIPSHEETS

For more information on lobbying, check out the following tipsheets from the IRE Resource Center:

Tipsheet No. 923
Lobbyists and local elections, from the 1999 National Computer-Assisted Reporting Conference.

Tipsheet No. 827
Uncovering the secrets of campaign finance and lobbyists, from the 1998 National Computer-Assisted Reporting Conference.

Tipsheet No. 116
A one-page source list of government offices to contact for lobbying activities information.

MEMBER NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Prize-winning series on voter fraud in the 1997 mayoral election. Miller is also president of IRE's Board of Directors. ■ **Bill Ruberry** has left the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* to start a technology consulting firm. The new firm, Luminat Technologies, specializes in Web/intranet development and database management for businesses, including news organizations. ■ **Polly Saltonstall** of *The Standard Times* in New Bedford, Mass., earned honorable mention in the Nancy Dickerson Whitehead Awards for excellence in reporting on drug and alcohol issues. The occasional series, "Rush to Nowhere: Heroin, Cocaine and Communities," is still running. ■ **Amy Schatz** is now a banking and personal finance reporter at the *Austin American-Statesman*. ■ **David Slade** left the *Scranton Times* after four years to join the *Morning Call* in Allentown, Pa. ■ **Mark Tapscott** is the new manager of media programs at the Heritage Foundation's Center for Media and Public Policy. Prior to accepting this position, he was managing editor with *The Journal Newspapers*, the suburban Washington, D.C., dailies, for four years. ■ **Mark W. Tatge** is now an investigative reporter at the Chicago bureau of *The Wall Street Journal*. He leaves *The* (Cleveland) *Plain Dealer* after nine years as an investigative reporter in its statehouse bureau. ■ **Don Walker** is now a member of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel's* newest beat - sports-business. Walker will cover "wherever the worlds of sports and business intersect." He has been at the *Sentinel* for 20 years. ■ **David Wren** has moved to the *Rocky Mountain News* where he is the new associate business editor. He leaves the *Sun News* in Myrtle Beach after eight years. ■ **Jim Willse**, editor of *The Star-Ledger* in Newark, N.J. will receive the George Beveridge Editor of the Year award for his paper's coverage of racial profiling by the New Jersey State Police. The award will be given by The National Press Foundation in February.

IRE SERVICES

INVESTIGATIVE REPORTERS AND EDITORS, INC. is a grassroots nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the quality of investigative reporting within the field of journalism. IRE was formed in 1975 with the intent of creating a networking tool and a forum in which journalists from across the country could raise questions and exchange ideas. IRE provides educational services to reporters, editors and others interested in investigative reporting and works to maintain high professional standards.

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Contact: Noemi Ramirez, noemi@ire.org, 573-882-3364

DATABASE LIBRARY – Administered by IRE and the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting. The library has copies of many government databases, and makes them available to news organizations at or below actual cost. Analysis services are available on these databases, as is help in deciphering records you obtain yourself.
Contact: Jason Grotto, jason@nicar.org, 573-884-7711

CAMPAIGN FINANCE INFORMATION CENTER – Administered by IRE and the National Institute of Computer-Assisted Reporting. It's dedicated to helping journalists uncover the campaign money trail. State campaign finance data is collected from across the nation, cleaned and made available to journalists. A search engine allows reporters to track political cash flow across several states in federal and state races.
Contact: Cindy Eberting, cindy@ire.org, 573-882-1982

ON-THE-ROAD TRAINING – As a top promoter of journalism education, IRE offers loads of training opportunities throughout the year. Possibilities rangefrom national conferences and regional workshops to weeklong bootcamps and on-site newsroom training. Costs are on a sliding scale and fellowships are available to many of the events.
Contact: Tom McGinty, tmcginty@nicar.org, 573-882-3320

Publications

THE IRE JOURNAL – Published six times a year and contains journalist profiles, how-to stories, reviews, investigative ideas and backgrounding tips. The Journal also provides members with the latest news on upcoming events and training opportunities from IRE and NICAR.
Contact: Len Bruzzese, len@ire.org, 573-882-2042

UPLINK – Monthly newsletter by IRE and NICAR on computer-assisted reporting. Often, Uplink stories are written after reporters have had particular success using data to investigate stories. The columns include valuable information on advanced database techniques as well as success stories written by newly trained CAR reporters.
Contact: Mary Jo Sylwester, maryjo@nicar.org, 573-884-7711

REPORTER.ORG – A collection of Web-based resources for journalists, journalism educators and others. Discounted Web hosting and services like, mailing list management and site development, are provided to other nonprofit journalism organizations.
Contact: Ted Peterson, ted@nicar.org, 573-884-7321

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