


THE IRE JOURNAL

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ABOUT THE COVER

When terrorists hijacked planes on Sept. 11, it was a call to journalists worldwide that one of the biggest stories of our time was unfolding. Jiro Ose of Newsday captured the WTC attack from Brooklyn.

Cover story, pages 18-19

Cover photo by
Jiro Ose, Newsday

Cover design by
Wendy Gray, *The IRE Journal*

THE IRE JOURNAL

VOLUME 25 | NUMBER 1

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MANAGING EDITOR
Anita Bruzzese

ART DIRECTOR
Wendy Gray

SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
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CONTRIBUTING LEGAL EDITOR
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The IRE Journal (ISSN0164-7016) is published six times a year by Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. 138 Neff Annex, Missouri School of Journalism, Columbia, MO 65211, 573-882-2042. E-mail: journal@ire.org. Subscriptions are \$60 in the U.S., \$70 for institutions and those outside the U.S. Periodical postage paid at Columbia, MO. Postmaster: Please send address changes to IRE. USPS #4516708

FROM THE IRE OFFICES

Despite windows closing on public information, steady work continues



BRANT HOUSTON

Despite new secrecy and security hurdles, the 4,000-plus members of this organization are showing they have no intention of retreating from aggressive investigative journalism.

In newsrooms here and abroad, our members are cranking out enterprising stories despite the closing of government Web pages, the secrecy of the military and federal prosecutors, and the ranting by politicians – and even some fellow journalists – that to hold public officials accountable is to be unpatriotic.

Since Sept. 11, IRE members have scrutinized airport security and airline safety, the poor performance of intelligence and relief agencies, the internal disputes of the military and politicians, the narrowing of civil liberties and the threats of bio-terrorism and how the government has handled those threats.

For example, if you go to the IRE Web site, www.ire.org, and look at stories based on FAA safety databases, you will see that numerous newsrooms across the country did public service stories on airport security. Among those probing airport security problems were newsrooms in Anchorage, Dallas, Seattle, Tulsa, Milwaukee, Atlanta, San Diego, Nashville, Asbury Park, Columbus, Ohio, and Charlotte.

In addition, Knight-Ridder ran a nationwide story about how airport security became, and stayed, so flawed and the role lobbyists have played in preventing changes.

The FAA has since closed access to the enforcement data, citing national security reasons. However, the database includes far more than airport security violations; it includes information on hazardous material violations, maintenance problems and many other issues. But rather than make a reasonable, thought-out decision, the FAA simply chose to shut down the whole database and deny the press and the public the right and opportunity to examine the agency's failure to correct violations.

However, the FAA action did not stop the Transportation Department's own inspector general from publicizing continued flaws at airports. Interestingly, the FAA hasn't responded that the inspector general is threatening national security.

Of course, the FAA is not the only agency closing down information intended to ensure public safety. Federal authorities have removed the National Dam Inventory from the Web, saying that it contains dangerous information.

On one count, the authorities are right. There is information throughout the database showing aging, infrequently inspected dams are upstream from communities that have no emergency action plans for evacuation if the dams collapse. News organizations across the country – NBC Dateline did a classic story – have used this database for several years to alert the public to the potential dangers. And some of these dams could collapse on a sunny day without a terrorist attack.

Information from the Office of Pipeline Safety (natural gas pipelines) also has been closed. Fortunately, the *American-Statesman* in Austin did a thorough series this past summer. The paper examined the lax regulation by that office and found the office rarely imposes fines, even when a pipeline explosion leads to death. The paper also found the agency's database underreported leaks from pipelines.

The series, available from the IRE Resource Center, notes: "For decades, the agency hasn't known the precise whereabouts of thousands of miles of pipelines under its jurisdiction."

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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.

Journal strikes gold in magazine competition

The *IRE Journal* was recently selected as a gold winner in the Folio: Editorial Excellence Awards, a magazine industry honor. Recognized as a significant resource for journalists, *The Journal* won the top spot in the publishing/journalism category.

"The strength of *The Journal* is in the willingness of IRE members to share their knowledge and experiences with colleagues," said IRE Deputy Director Len Bruzzese, who serves as the magazine's editor.

Nominees for the Editorial Excellence Awards are evaluated on how well they articulate and adhere to their editorial mission statements. Winners, selected by the industry's leading editors, are determined by comparing the judges' evaluations of how each title fulfills its mission, the quality of its content and, to a lesser extent, its overall design.

IRE launches program to help laid-off colleagues

During this period of continued downsizing in the news industry, IRE has launched a program to help members facing temporary unemployment. The "Help a Colleague" fund offers one-year membership renewals at half-price for members who have been recently laid off and are still unemployed.

To help a fellow member remain active in the organization, IRE members can contribute \$25 to the newly established fund. A \$50 donation will support two colleagues, etc.

"We're happy to get this program going during this time of layoffs in our profession," said Brant Houston, IRE's executive director. "After all, helping a colleague has always been the point of IRE."

To make a contribution to the "Help a Colleague" fund or to apply for membership assistance, contact membership coordinator John Green at jgreen@ire.org or 573-882-2772. The unemployment status of each applicant will be verified. The program is for membership renewals only.

National CAR conference adds terror-related panels

The National Computer-Assisted Reporting Conference, set for March 14-17 in Philadelphia, will be held at the Doubletree Philadelphia.

Along with the already-planned beat-related

panels and hands-on classes on databases, spreadsheets, Internet research, mapping and statistical analysis, special sessions will be added to focus on terrorism, aviation safety and other heightened reader-viewer concerns.

To register for the conference, visit www.ire.org/training/philly or call IRE at 573-882-2042. For hotel reservations, call 215-893-1600 and ask for the IRE or NICAR room block.

Strong member showing in Casey Center awards

The Casey Journalism Center on Children and Families has recognized several IRE members for distinguished reporting on disadvantaged children and their families.

The 2001 Casey Medals for Meritorious Journalism were awarded to:

- **Jack Kresnak** of the *Detroit Free Press* for "Murder by Neglect," an in-depth look at Michigan's child welfare system (winner, large circulation dailies).
- **Mary Hargrove** of the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* and **Curtis Krueger** of the *St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times*. Hargrove was recognized for her contribution to a series on child pornography in Arkansas, and Krueger for his statistical look at prosecution rates for minors. (runners-up, large circulation dailies).
- **William Rabb** and his team from the *Mobile (Ala.) Register* for "The Dental Divide," a series that examined the lack of access to dental care among children in Alabama (winner, mid-sized dailies).
- **Jim Kenyon** of the Lebanon, N.H. *Valley News* for his eight-day series about four families struggling to find affordable housing (runner-up, small dailies).
- A team from *The Chicago Reporter*, including IRE members **Mick Dumke**, **Brian Rogal**, **Sarah Karp** and **Elizabeth Duffrin** for "Chicago Matters: Education Matters" (winner, non-dailies).
- **Cornelia Grumman**, the *Chicago Tribune*, for her well-researched columns on issues of child welfare and public policy (editorials/commentary).
- Reporters for *ABC News Primetime Thursday*, including IRE member **Diane Sawyer**, for focusing on family dysfunction in "The Roots of Rage" (runner-up, networks).
- **John Biewen** and **Stephen Smith**, *American Radio Works: Minnesota Public Radio*, for "Jailing the Mentally III" (honorable mention, radio).

MEMBER NEWS

Susan Carney has joined the auto team of *The Detroit News* business desk. She was formerly a reporter for *Automotive News*.

■ **Carol Cole** is now covering state government for the *Oklahoma Gazette*. ■ **Kenneth Conner** has moved from projects editor to deputy Sunday editor for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. ■ Journalism professor **Charles Davis**, executive director of the Freedom of Information Center, received the University of Missouri Provost's Outstanding Junior Faculty Teaching Award. Davis is also a regular contributor to *The IRE Journal* on FOI issues.

■ **Karyn Dest** has joined NBC affiliate WILX-TV in Lansing, Mich. Dest, a general assignment reporter, formerly worked for IRE's Campaign Finance Information Center while a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism.

■ **Linda Dono**, formerly of the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, is now one of three regional editors for Gannett News Service in Washington D.C.

■ After 11 years with *Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Radio*, **Conway Fraser** has moved to *CBC-TV* in Winnipeg. Fraser, who was most recently a national reporter in Toronto, will work as a reporter and producer for *CBC-TV* investigative projects. ■ **J. Christopher Hain**, formerly of the *Lincoln Journal Star*, is now covering county government for *The Palm Beach (Fla.) Post*. ■ **Valerie Kalfrin** is reporting on crime and safety issues for *The Fort Pierce Tribune* and *Port St. Lucie Tribune* in Florida.

■ **James Landers** has joined the faculty of the Department of Journalism and Technical Communication at Colorado State University as an assistant professor specializing in journalism history. ■ **Geneva Overholser**, *Washington Post* columnist and Missouri School of Journalism professor, has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She also serves on the IRE Endowment Advisory Board. Members of the Academy, which was founded in 1770, participate in meetings and non-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35 >

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

ENVIRONMENTAL TIME BOMBS TICK AWAY IN MOST COMMUNITIES

BY MARYJO SYLWESTER
THE IRE JOURNAL

More than 40,000 sites in the United States were identified as contaminated from leaking underground storage tanks last year, despite new regulations that had taken effect a year earlier to stem such leaks.

Some of these sites have contaminated drinking water supplies with cancer-causing benzene and other chemicals; others have damaged groundwater and soil. Cleaning up the mess will cost millions of dollars – including taxpayer money.

All that is on top of the more than 400,000 sites previously found to be contaminated and the billions of dollars spent on cleanup and

prevention in the past decade.

Despite these stark figures, news about underground storage tanks rarely makes the front page or the evening newscast. At the time I started looking at the issue in early 2000, a few news organizations were reporting on a related topic: water contamination from a fuel-additive called MTBE that was leaking from these tanks. The bigger story, however, was that these tanks were leaking in the first place.

I stumbled upon the story during a casual conversation with my neighbor – an environmental engineer who cleaned up tank sites in Missouri. In telling me about his job, my neighbor bemoaned the lack of effective regulations and state oversight. I proposed a story to *The Kansas City Star* saying the federal and state regulations that had taken full effect in December 1998 were failing in Missouri. I teamed up with *The Star's* environment writer, Michael Mansur, to strengthen and broaden my findings to the entire country.

Our story reported that tanks continue to leak in astounding numbers despite the new regulations and a significant reduction in the number of tanks being used. In some states, more leaks were reported after the laws took effect than before. We found that faulty leak detection, flawed technology and inadequate oversight by state regulators have fueled the problem. A few weeks later, the General Accounting Office issued a report (GAO-01-464) saying the same thing.

Hidden problems

The first underground storage tank law was enacted in 1984, requiring tank owners to register their tanks with the state. Two years later, Congress created The Leaking Underground Storage Tank Trust Fund with a gas tax to help pay for state programs to oversee and pay for spill cleanups.

Then in 1988, the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act set up laws designed to reduce the number of leaks – the leading cause of groundwater contamination at the time. A series of regulations took effect over the subsequent decade, including a ban on bare steel tanks and requirements for leak detection, overspill protection, corrosion protection and proof that owners have financial responsibility to pay for potential leak cleanups. By December 23, 1998, all tanks were required to meet all of the new regulations. The EPA granted authority to enforce these regulations to state agencies.

In Missouri, the state law simply mirrors the federal law. Other states enacted more stringent regulations. For example, Florida requires all tanks to be enclosed in concrete – called secondary containment – to prevent leaks from escaping into the environment. Other states, such as Kansas, prohibit fuel delivery to tanks that don't meet the state regulations.

Most states also created an insurance fund to help pay for cleanups. Typically these are funded with a gas tax and premiums paid by tank owners. Owners could get money to clean up contamination from their insured tanks. Many states also opened up the funds for contaminated sites that were no longer being used.

The laws have, without doubt, brought significant improvements to the environment, partly because they prompted thousands of site owners to remove old tanks and clean up contamination that had previously sat idle. State regulators were deluged in 1998 and early 1999 with reports of contaminated sites – many of which had come from bare steel tanks that had been rusting in the ground for dozens of years.

But even in the first few months of scratching the surface of this story, we knew there were hidden problems. The picture wasn't as rosy as state regulators and the tank industry made it sound when they boasted of more than 90 percent compliance with the new laws.

Finding documentation

To document the problems, we started with databases kept by the Missouri and Kansas state environmental agencies. These databases included registration records for all tanks, reports of contaminated sites, inspection records and enforcement actions for uncooperative violators.

All states, except Idaho, have a state program that most likely maintains such a database. Most often the state program is housed within the environmental agency. In a couple of states, they can be found with the fire marshal or commerce

RESOURCES

The Kansas City Star story is available from the IRE Resource Center, story No. 17723, by calling 573-882-3364.

Useful Web sites:

EPA Storage Tanks Web site:
www.epa.gov/swerst1/

Links to state tank agency Web sites:
www.epa.gov/swerst1/states/stateurl.htm

Corrective Action Measures reports (semi-annual) to the EPA: See some of the basic data in PDF tables at the EPA Web site:
www.epa.gov/swerst1/cat/camarchv.htm

GAO Report, May 4, 2001:
www.gao.gov (Search archives for GAO-01-464.)

Association of State and Territorial Solid Waste Management Officials:
www.astswmo.org/tanks.htm

EPA Report to Congress and other reports:
www.epa.gov/swerst1/pubs/index.htm#rtc

EPA-funded study by the UC-Davis:
<http://cee.engr.ucdavis.edu/faculty/young/lstudy/lstudy.htm>



An 8,000-gallon leaking tank is removed from a closed gas station in Independence, Mo.

equipment causing leaks, and cases of contractors doing faulty work.

State oversight

We found that the crux of the problem lies with the lack of state oversight. In Missouri, about 35 percent of the tanks actively being used in 2000 had not been inspected in the previous three years.

Everything we read about proper tank operation stressed the importance of state authorities making sure owners were using the complicated equipment properly. The EPA recommends annual inspections. We also relied on inspection records from the EPA's regional office in Kansas City. EPA inspectors had conducted site inspections in several states, especially Missouri, where state regulators couldn't handle the load.

In those records, we discovered a large discrepancy between the "paper compliance" that Missouri relied on and the actual compliance in the field. In Missouri, tank owners reported the status of their tanks and the type of equipment used via registration documents. Very rarely did state inspectors check to make sure what the owners reported on the paper document was accurate.

We found dozens of Missouri sites that were listed in the state database as "upgraded" to meet the regulations, while the EPA records indicated serious violations. State inspection records typically revealed the same problem.

Expanding our reach

To test whether our findings in Missouri and Kansas were true in other states, we asked state regulators in all of the other 48 states to fill out a questionnaire. Of the 18 regulators who responded, half said that most of the leaks in their states had come from upgraded tanks that should not be leaking if they had complied with the federal rules.

We also used data collected by the EPA from semi-annual reports submitted by each of the state programs. This data, posted to the EPA's Web site in PDF documents, lists the cumulative number of leaks, active tanks, closed tanks and sites where the cleanup was completed. Using these numbers in an Excel spreadsheet, we calculated how many leaks were reported in each of the states in the two years after the new regulations compared to the two years just prior. The data, called Corrective Action Measures, are available at www.epa.gov/swerst1/cat/camarchv.htm

We also found a professor at the University of California-Davis and former EPA official

who had been studying the effectiveness of leak detection – one of the earliest regulations to take effect regarding tanks. He had completed a study in California that showed less than 4 percent of all leaks had been found by leak detection methods. Just before we finished our story, the professor announced the findings of his national study. It also showed minimal effectiveness of leak detection – which matched the findings we had from our database and paper records in Missouri and Kansas. The UC-Davis study is available at <http://cee.engr.ucdavis.edu/faculty/young/ldstudy/ld-study.htm>

MaryJo Sylwester, former IRE and NICAR Database Library administrator, conducted this study as part of her master's degree coursework while at the Missouri School of Journalism. She now manages computer-assisted reporting for the Center for Public Integrity in Washington, D.C.

Getting the smaller stories

By MaryJo Sylwester

We tackled the big story – the effectiveness of the regulations – but there are many smaller pieces to this puzzle. You might find a story here that is easier and less time-consuming that needs telling in your state.

- **Insurance funds:** Most states have a gas tax-funded insurance fund that helps clean up contamination from leaking tanks. Tank owners pay premiums to be covered in case their tanks leak, but a large bulk of the cleanup funding comes from a gas tax. Originally, the states planned these funds as temporary measures to make sure sites were cleaned up, with the hope that private insurance companies would take over after the new regulations stemmed the bulk of the leaks. Since the leaks are continuing, a few state funds are starting to run out of money.
- **Inspections:** Focus on the state oversight aspect by studying the inspection system. How many sites do the inspectors visit annually? What's the workload like for the typical inspector? What do the inspectors generally find in terms of compliance with the laws?
- **Equipment:** We found that leak detection and corrosion protection systems were not properly used by some tank owners. Some incorrectly programmed the computer for the leak detection, ignored alarms indicating a leak, or turned off the electricity necessary for corrosion protection. There is also growing evidence nationally that the interior lining in steel tanks is sloughing off, leaving the tank susceptible to corrosion.

departments.

The reports of contaminated sites (usually called the LUST data - for leaking underground storage tanks) and the registration records proved the most useful. The registration records included one record for each tank, listing the type of material it was made from, when it was installed, what type of leak detection equipment was used, whether it met the regulations and other details. The data included tanks no longer in use as well, noting the date they were taken out of service.

The LUST data could be matched up to the registration data to show the type of tanks used at the site when the leak was discovered. We decided to focus on the leaks reported after the federal deadline, Dec. 23, 1998.

The data was incomplete in that it didn't always tell us what we really wanted to know: Were these tanks that leaked "upgraded" to meet the federal regulations or was this just a leak reported many years after it had actually occurred? To find this, we had to dig into paper records.

We looked through hundreds of files in both states, looking for documentation of when the owner either replaced the steel tanks with fiberglass ones, or upgraded the older tanks with an interior lining and corrosion protection. Slowly we were able to document for each LUST site whether the tanks had been upgraded or not at the time the leak was reported. In the paper files we also found narratives of catastrophic equipment failure, improper use and maintenance of tank

BOOKS OF 2001

HEALTHY DIET OF INVESTIGATIVE TOPICS SERVES UP SATISFYING AND HELPFUL HINTS

BY STEVE WEINBERG
THE IRE JOURNAL

Nina Bernstein did not intend to write a 2001 version of Charles Dickens' classic "Bleak House," or even a 2001 version of Jonathan Harr's "A Civil Action" when she started researching the foster care system three decades ago. Her early research led her to a class-action lawsuit filed in New York City with Shirley Wilder as the first-named plaintiff. After immersing herself in the litigation,

Bernstein knew someday she would write the book that became "The Lost Children of Wilder."

As published by Pantheon, it is a reminder of Dickens' fictional Jarndyce case, the litigation that dragged on for so many years nobody could recall why it had been filed in the first place. Bernstein's book also is a reminder of Harr's real-life Massachusetts environmental pollution case – partly because children die awful deaths,

TERRORISM IN PRINT

Books from the last decade that touch on topics of increased importance since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks are included with cover story package on page 32.

partly because it is a litigation thriller populated by numerous unforgettable humans.

Before moving to New York to report for *Newsday* and later *The New York Times*, Bernstein wrote for newspapers in Des Moines and Milwaukee. She published stories about foster care breakdowns over and over, with increasing frustration that so-called reforms rarely changed anything for the better.

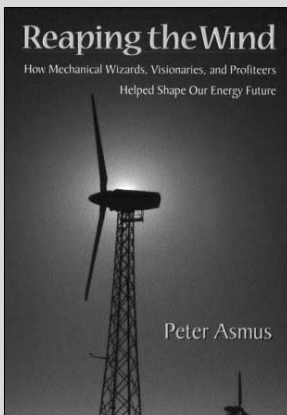
Children left in the homes of negligent or abusive parents would become dysfunctional, if not dead. Maybe the children would have fared better given adequate family counseling, job training and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 2001

Every year, Steve Weinberg does his best to compile this list for *The IRE Journal*. He limits it to books published for the first time during the year 2001, by U.S. publishers, in English, from authors who are primarily journalists.

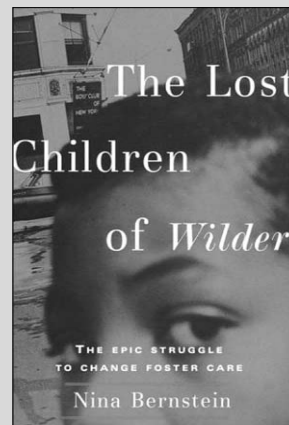
He defines "investigative" and "primarily journalists" broadly during the compilation process. He understands he might have missed some books, too. If you know of any, please let him know via e-mail at weinbergs@missouri.edu or by fax at 573-882-5431.



- A**
- Peter Asmus **Reaping the Wind: How Mechanical Wizards, Visionaries and Profiteers Helped Shape Our Energy Future** (Island Press)
 - Ken Auletta **World War 3.0: Microsoft and Its Enemies** (Random House)

- B**
- Judy Bachrach **The Golden Couple: Tina and Harry and the Worlds They Conquered** (Free Press)
 - Dave Bakke **God Knows His Name: The True Story of John Doe #24** (Southern Illinois University Press)
 - James Bamford **Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency From the Cold War Through the Dawn of a New Century** (Doubleday)
 - David Bank **Breaking Windows: How Bill Gates Fumbled the Future of Microsoft** (Free Press)
 - Jon Bellini **Child's Play** [true crime] (Pinnacle)

- Bill Berkeley **The Graves Are Not Yet Full: Race, Tribe and Power in the Heart of Africa** (Perseus/Basic/New Republic)

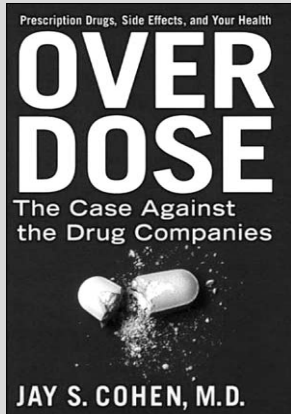


- Nina Bernstein **The Lost Children of Wilder: The Epic Struggle to Change Foster Care** (Pantheon)
- Paul Blustein **The Chastening: Inside the Crisis That Rocked the Global Financial System and Humbled the IMF** (PublicAffairs)
- Mark Bowden **Killing Pablo: The Hunt for the World's Greatest Outlaw** (Atlantic Monthly Press)

- Tyler Bridges **Bad Bet on the Bayou: The Rise of Gambling in Louisiana and the Fall of Governor Edwin Edwards** (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Victoria Bruce **No Apparent Danger: The True Story of Volcanic Disaster at Galeras and Nevado de Ruiz** (HarperCollins)
- Matthew Brzezinski **Casino Moscow: A Tale of Greed and Adventure on Capitalism's Wildest Frontier** (Free Press)
- Elinor Burkett **Another Planet: A Year in the Life of a Suburban High School** (HarperCollins)
- William E. Burrows **By Any Means Necessary: America's Secret Air War in the Cold War** (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)
- Daniel Charles **Lords of the Harvest: Biotech, Big Money and the Future of Food** (Perseus)
- James R. Chiles **Inviting Disaster: Lessons From the Edge of Technology** (Harper Business)

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 2001

- F. Richard Ciccone
Royko: A Life in Print
(Public Affairs)



- Jay S. Cohen
Over Dose: The Case Against the Drug Companies
(Tarcher)
- Jon Cohen
Shots in the Dark: The Wayward Search for an AIDS Vaccine
(Norton)
- Benjamin Mark Cole
The Pied Pipers of Wall Street: How Analysts Sell You Down the River
(Bloomberg)
- Deborah Cramer
Great Waters: An Atlantic Passage
(Norton)
- Ann Crittenden
The Price of Motherhood: Why Motherhood Is the Most Important – and Least Valued – Job in America
(Holt/Metropolitan)
- Charles R. Cross
Heavier Than Heaven: A Biography of Kurt Cobain
(Hyperion)
- D**
- Osha Gray Davidson
Fire in the Turtle House: The Green Sea Turtle and the Fate of the Ocean
(PublicAffairs)
- Elaine Grudin Denholtz
The Zaddik: The Battle for a Boy's Soul
(Prometheus)

- Sally Denton and Roger Morris
The Money and the Power: The Making of Las Vegas and Its Hold on America, 1947-2000
(Knopf)

- Mark Dowie
American Foundations: An Investigative History
(MIT Press)

- Joe Drape
The Race for the Triple Crown
(Atlantic Monthly Press)

E

- Barbara Ehrenreich
Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in Boom-Time America
(Metropolitan Books)

- Kim Isaac Eisler
Revenge of the Pequots: How a Small Native American Tribe Created the World's Most Profitable Casino
(Simon & Schuster)

F

- James Fallows
Free Flight: From Airline Hell to a New Age of Travel
(PublicAffairs)

- John A. Farrell
Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century
(Little, Brown)

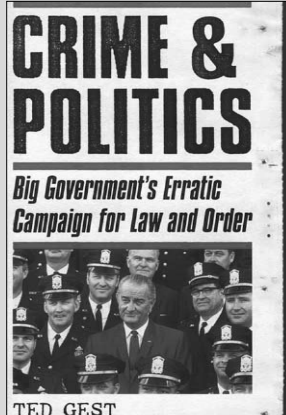
- Stephen Franklin
Three Strikes: Labor's Heartland Losses and What They Mean for Working Americans
(Guilford)

- Jill Andresky Fraser
White-Collar Sweatshop: The Deterioration of Work and Its Rewards in Corporate America
(Norton)

G

- Barbara Garson
Money Makes the World Go Round: One Investor Tracks Her Cash Through the Global Economy, From Brooklyn to Bangkok and Back
(Viking)

- Jeff German
Murder in Sin City
(Avon)



- Ted Gest
Crime and Politics: Big Government's Erratic Campaign for Law and Order
(Oxford University Press)
- Steve Giegerich
Body of Knowledge: One Semester of Gross Anatomy, the Gateway to Becoming a Doctor
(Scribner)
- John Glatt
Internet Slave Master [true crime]
(St. Martin's)
- Daniel Glick
Powder Burn: Arson, Money and Mystery on Vail Mountain
(PublicAffairs)
- Patricia Goldstone
Making the World Safe for Tourism
(Yale University Press)
- Philip Gourevitch
A Cold Case
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux)



- Bradley Graham
Hit to Kill: The New Battle Over Shielding America From Missile Attack
(PublicAffairs)

- Daniel S. Greenberg
Science, Money and Politics: Political Triumph and Ethical Erosion
(University of Chicago Press)

- Jeff Greenfield
Oh, Waiter! One Order of Crow: Inside the Strangest Presidential Election Finish in American History
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H

- David Halberstam
War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals
(Scribner)

- Joseph T. Hallinan
Going Up the River: Travels in a Prison Nation
(Random House)

- Christopher Hallowell
Holding Back the Sea: The Struggle for America's Natural Legacy on the Gulf Coast
(HarperCollins)

- Charles J. Hanley, Sang-Hun Choe and Martha Mendoza
The Bridge at No Gun Ri: A Hidden Nightmare From the Korean War
(Holt)

- Beth Harpaz
The Girls in the Van: Covering Hillary
(St. Martin's)

- David Harris
Shooting the Moon [Manuel Noriega case]
(Little, Brown)

- Matthew Hart
Diamond: A Journey to the Heart of an Obsession
(Walker)

- Adrian Havill
Born Evil [true crime]
(St. Martin's)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

food assistance. But the budgets of governments, churches and charities rarely contained enough money for such a sensible approach.

As a result, many families lost their children. Unfortunately, Bernstein observed, children separated from their biological families would far too frequently end up inside government-run or government-approved private homes where negligence and abuse turned out to be the norm. The children suffered just as much as before, at a much higher cost to taxpayers. If those children managed to survive until reaching the age of consent, they frequently became criminals or public assistance recipients. In turn, they were more likely to parent children who later entered the broken foster care system themselves.

Searching for Wilder

Bernstein wanted to understand the unending cycle at its most fundamental. In 1990, while at *Newsday*, she thought she had found the vehicle: The lawsuit conceived by a public interest lawyer named Marcia Robinson Lowry. Filed in 1973,

the lawsuit challenged New York City's practice of sending almost all its foster care money to private, mostly church-affiliated foster care agencies. Catholic foster care agencies would tend to give Catholic children preferential treatment. Jewish foster care agencies would tend to favor Jewish placements. Protestant children in need, especially African-American Protestant children such as Shirley Wilder, age 13, had to fend for themselves in a dysfunctional family, or end up warehoused in a government-run institution.

Lowry and a few idealistic, angry colleagues believed the system served most children poorly because it placed them according to religion and convenience rather than according to their individual needs.

By 1990, Bernstein realized as she worked her way through 17 years worth of court filings, Lowry's fierce lawyering had succeeded in partially dismantling the New York system, and had prompted other locales to rethink their foster-care placements. But nobody had found enough money, will, qualified social workers and well-intentioned foster home providers to create a

significantly better alternative.

As she read the documents, Bernstein became especially curious about Wilder. What grabbed Bernstein's attention most acutely was this: In 1974, the 14-year-old Shirley had given birth to a son, Lamont, who had ended up in foster care himself. Where was Lamont? Bernstein wondered. How had he been treated by the system altered because of the lawsuit bearing his mother's name? Where was Shirley herself? Did son and mother even know each other's whereabouts?

Finding answers to those questions became the backbone of Bernstein's reporting; the answers themselves drove the narrative when she began writing the book that any investigative journalist should find worthy of study.

Fast Food Nation

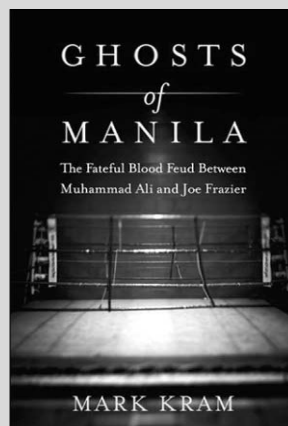
Freelance journalist Eric Schlosser started his investigation of the fast food world on assignment for *Rolling Stone* magazine, then expanded his research into the book "Fast Food Nation: The Dark Side of the All-American Meal." Schlosser

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INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 2001

- Adrian Havill
The Spy Who Stayed Out in the Cold: The Secret Life of Accused Double Agent Robert Hanssen (St. Martin's)
- John Heilemann
Pride Before the Fall: The Trials of Bill Gates and the End of the Microsoft Era (Harper Business)
- David Helvarg
Blue Frontier: Saving America's Living Seas (Freeman)
- Ed Hinton
Daytona: From the Birth of Speed to the Death of the Man in Black (Warner)
- Christopher Hitchens
The Trial of Henry Kissinger (Verso)
- Mark Huband
The Skull Beneath the Skin: Africa After the Cold War (Westview)
- J**
- Haynes Johnson
The Best of Times: America in the Clinton Years (Harcourt)

- K**
- Marvin Kalb
One Scandalous Story: Clinton, Lewinsky and 13 Days That Tarnished American Journalism (Free Press)
- David A. Kaplan
The Accidental President: How 413 Lawyers, 9 Supreme Court Justices, and 5,963,110 (Give or Take a Few) Floridians Landed George W. Bush in the White House (Morrow)
- Brian Karem
Innocent Victims [true crime] (Pinnacle)
- Gary C. King
An Early Grave [true crime] (St. Martin's)
- Stephen Kinzer
Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds (FSG)
- G. Bruce Knecht
The Proving Ground: The Inside Story of the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Race (Little, Brown)
- Kevin Krajick
Barren Lands: An Epic Search for Diamonds in the North American Arctic (Freeman)



- Mark Kram
Ghosts of Manila: The Fateful Blood Feud Between Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier (HarperCollins)

- L**
- Bill Lambrecht
Dinner at the New Gene Cafe: How Genetic Engineering Is Changing What We Eat, How We Live and the Global Politics of Food (St. Martin's)

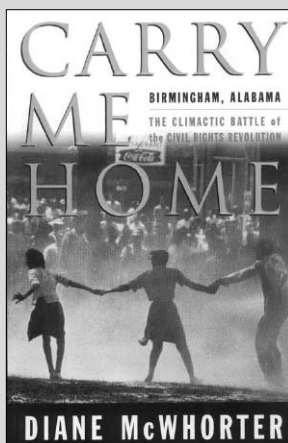
- Daniel Lazare
America's Undeclared War: What's Killing Our Cities and How We Can Stop It (Harcourt)
- Mark Leibovich
The New Imperialists: How Five Restless Kids Grew Up to Virtually Rule Your World (Prentice Hall)
- Steven Levy
Crypto: When the Code Rebels Beat the Government – Saving Privacy in the Digital Age (Viking)
- Charles Lewis, Bill Allison and the Center for Public Integrity
The Cheating of America: How Tax Avoidance and Evasion by the Super Rich Are Costing the Country Billions – and What You Can Do About It (Morrow)
- Steve Lohr
Go To: The Story of the Math Majors, Bridge Players, Chess Wizards, Maverick Scientists and Iconoclasts – the Programmers Who Created the Software Revolution (Basic)

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 2001

- Janet Lowe
Welch: An American Icon
(Wiley)

M

- Ivan Maisel and Kelly Whiteside
A War in Dixie [college football]
(HarperCollins)
- Ruben Martinez
Crossing Over: A Mexican Family on the Migrant Trail
(Metropolitan)
- Kati Marton
Hidden Power: Presidential Marriages That Shaped Our Recent History
(Pantheon)
- Dary Matera
A Cry for Character: How a Group of Students Cleaned Up Their Rowdy School
(Prentice Hall)
- Martin Mayer
The Fed: The Inside Story of How the World's Most Powerful Financial Institution Drives the Markets
(Free Press)
- Dennis McDougal
Privileged Son: Otis Chandler and the Rise and Fall of the Los Angeles Times Dynasty
(Perseus)

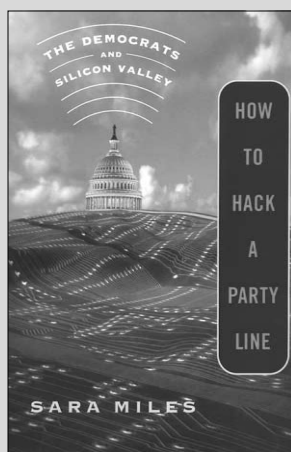


- Diane McWhorter
Carry Me Home: Birmingham, Alabama – The Climactic Battle of the Civil Rights Revolution
(Simon & Schuster)
- Joe Menzer
The Wild Ride: A History of NASCAR
(Simon & Schuster)

- Martin Merzer and the Miami Herald staff
Democracy Held Hostage
(St. Martin's)

- Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck
American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing
(ReganBooks)

- Dana Milbank
Smashmouth: Two Years in the Gutter With Al Gore and George W. Bush
(Basic)



- Sara Miles
How to Hack a Party Line
(Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

- Judith Miller, William Broad and Stephen Engelberg
Germs: The Ultimate Weapon
(Simon & Schuster)

- Chad Millman
The Odds: One Season, Three Gamblers and the Death of Their Las Vegas
(PublicAffairs)

- Leigh Montville
At the Altar of Speed [Dale Earnhardt Sr. biography]
(Doubleday)

- P.H. Mullen
Gold in the Water: The Extraordinary Pursuit of the Olympic Dream
(St. Martin's)

- Alicia Mundy
Dispensing With the Truth: The Victims, the Drug Companies, and the Dramatic Story Behind the Battle Over Fen-Phen
(St. Martin's)

- Joyce Murdoch and Deb Price
Courting Justice: Gay Men and Lesbians Versus the Supreme Court
(Basic Books)

N

- James Neff
The Wrong Man: The Final Verdict on the Sam Sheppard Murder Case
(Random House)

- Elizabeth Neuffer
The Key to My Neighbor's House: Searching for Justice in Rwanda and Bosnia
(St. Martin's/Picador)

- Eric Newhouse
Alcohol: Cradle to Grave
(Hazelden)

- New York Times correspondents
How Race Is Lived in America
(Times Books)

- Niels Sparre Nokkentved
Desert Wings: Controversy in the Idaho Desert
(WSU Press)

O

- David Owen
The Chosen One: Tiger Woods and the Dilemma of Greatness
(Simon & Schuster)

P

- Mitchell Pacelle
Empire: A Tale of Obsession, Betrayal and the Battle for an American Icon
(Wiley)

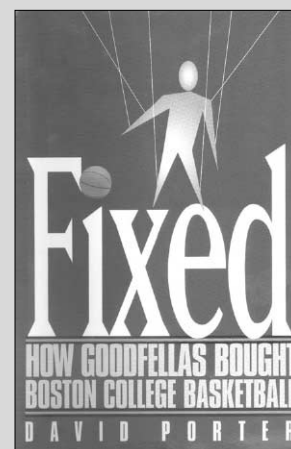
- Tara Parker-Pope
Cigarettes: Anatomy of an Industry From Seed to Smoke
(New Press)

- Daniel H. Pink
Free Agent Nation: How America's New Independent Workers Are Transforming the Way We Live
(Warner Business)

- Carol Polsgrove
Divided Minds: Intellectuals and the Civil Rights Movement
(Norton)

- Gary Pomerantz
Nine Minutes Twenty Seconds: The Tragedy and Triumph of ASA Flight 529
(Crown)

- Robert Pool
Fat: Fighting the Obesity Epidemic
(Oxford University Press)



- David Porter
Fixed: How Goodfellas Bought Boston College Basketball
(Taylor)

- Jessica Portner
One in Thirteen: The Silent Epidemic of Teen Suicide
(Robins Lane)

- Maurice Possley and Rick Kogan
Everybody Pays: Two Men, One Murder and the Price of Truth
(Putnam)

- Jonathan Power
Like Water on Stone: The Story of Amnesty International
(Northeastern University Press)

- Ron Powers
Tom and Huck Don't Live Here Anymore: Childhood and Murder in the Heart of America
(St. Martin's)

- Lisa Pulitzer
Fatal Romance [true crime]
(St. Martin's)

Q

- Susan Quinn
Human Trials: Scientists, Investors and Patients in the Quest for a Cure
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R

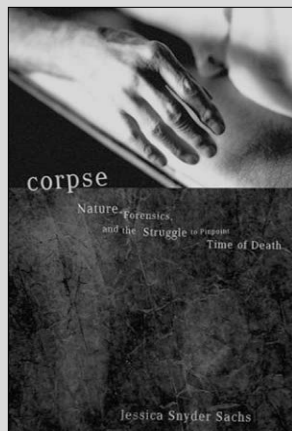
- Ralph Ranalli
Deadly Alliance: The FBI's Secret Partnership With the Mob
(Harper Paperback)

- Putsata Reang
Deadly Secrets [true crime]
(Avon)

- Bob Reiss
The Coming Storm: Extreme Weather and Our Terrifying Future
(Hyperion)

INVESTIGATIVE BOOKS OF 2001

- Gary Rivlin
The Godfather of Silicon Valley: Ron Conway and the Fall of the Dot.coms (Random House)
- Charley Rosen
The Wizard of Odds: How Jack Molinas Nearly Destroyed the Game of Basketball (Seven Stories Press)
- Fred Rosen
Needle Work [true crime] (Pinnacle)
- Jeffrey Rothfeder
Every Drop for Sale: Our Desperate Battle Over Water in a World About to Run Out (Putnam/Tarcher)
- Elizabeth Royte
The Tapir's Morning Bath (Houghton Mifflin)
- Ann Rule
Every Breath You Take [true crime] (Free Press)



- S**
- Jessica Snyder Sachs
Corpse: Nature, Forensics and the Struggle to Pinpoint the Time of Death (Perseus)
 - John Sack
The Dragonhead: The Godfather of Chinese Crime – His Rise and Fall (Crown)
 - Julie Salamon
Facing the Wind: A True Story of Tragedy and Reconciliation (Random House)
 - Bill Sammon
At Any Cost: How Al Gore Tried to Steal the Election (Regnery)



- Eric Schlosser
Fast Food Nation (Houghton Mifflin)
- Arlene Schulman
23rd Precinct: The Job (Soho)
- Charles M. Sennott
The Body and the Blood: The Holy Land at the Turn of a New Millennium, a Reporter's Journey (PublicAffairs)
- Alan Shipnuck
Bud, Sweat and Tees: A Walk on the Wild Side of the PGA Tour (Simon & Schuster)
- Roger Simon
Divided We Stand (Crown)
- Carlton Smith
Shadows of Evil [true crime] (St. Martin's)
- Rickie Solinger
Beggars and Choosers: How the Politics of Choice Shapes Adoption, Abortion and Welfare in the United States (Hill and Wang)
- Ivan Solotaroff
The Last Face You'll See: The Private Life of the American Death Penalty (HarperCollins)
- Karen Southwick
The Kingmakers: Venture Capital and the Money Behind the Net (Wiley)
- Patricia Springer
Body Hunter [true crime] (Pinnacle)

- Doug Stanton
In Harm's Way: The Sinking of the USS Indianapolis and the Extraordinary Story of Its Survivors (Holt)
- Deanna Stillman
Twenty-Nine Palms [true crime] (Morrow/HarperCollins)
- Joe Studwell
The China Dream: The Quest for the Last Great Untapped Market on Earth (Atlantic Monthly Press)

T

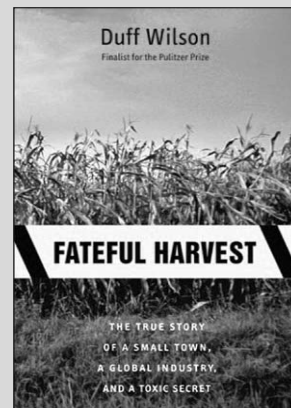
- Jake Tapper
Down and Dirty: The Plot to Steal the Presidency (Little, Brown)
- Andrew Peyton Thomas
Clarence Thomas: A Biography (Encounter)
- Patricia Thomas
Big Shot: Passion, Politics and the Struggle for an AIDS Vaccine (PublicAffairs)
- Martin and Susan Tolchin
Glass Houses: Congressional Ethics and the Politics of Venom (Westview)
- Jeffrey Toobin
Too Close to Call: The 36-Day Battle to Decide the 2000 Election (Random House)
- Joseph J. Trento
The Secret History of the CIA (Prima)

- Richard Trubo
Courage [battles against multiple sclerosis] (Ivan R. Dee)
- Larry Tye
Home Lands: Portrait of the New Jewish Diaspora (Holt)

W

- Spike Walker
Coming Back Alive [Coast Guard examination] (St. Martin's)
- David Waller
Wheels on Fire: The Amazing Inside Story of the Daimler Chrysler Merger (Hodder and Stoughton)

- Nicholas Wade
Life Script: How the Human Genome Discoveries Will Transform Medicine and Enhance Your Health (Simon & Schuster)
- Douglas C. Waller
Big Red: Three Months on Board a Trident Nuclear Submarine (HarperCollins)
- Tom Wells
Wild Man: The Life and Times of Daniel Ellsberg (St. Martin's)
- L. Jon Wertheim
Venus Envy: A Sensational Season Inside the Women's Tour (HarperCollins)
- Jeff Wheelwright
The Irritable Heart: The Medical Mystery of the Gulf War Syndrome (Norton)
- Chuck Whitlock
Mediscams (Renaissance)



- Duff Wilson
Fateful Harvest: The True Story of a Small Town, a Global Industry and a Toxic Secret (HarperCollins)
- Z**
- Adam Zagoria
She's Got Handle: The Story of Nicole Louden's Triumph Through Inner-City Basketball (Andrews McMeel)

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found that the industries supporting fast food have:

- Served meals leading to hospitalizations of thousands of diners, the majority of them children, with hundreds of them dying because of food they consumed.
- Been complicit in the consolidation of the beef, poultry and potato producers, causing countless family farms to suffer, quite likely contributing to farmer suicides.
- Played a role in the hiring of illegal immigrants to work in unsafe meatpacking facilities, resulting in crippling or fatal workplace injuries by the thousands.
- Seduced teens all over the country into working lousy hours for lousy wages, taking them away from schoolwork and leading some to drop out before graduation.
- Promoted eating habits almost certain to contribute to obesity, which in turns leads to numerous health problems in this country and overseas.

While serving up evidence that places blame on restaurant chains, multinational food suppliers and government regulators, Schlosser never forgets that sharing in the blame are consumers who

flock to McDonald's, Burger King, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Pizza Hut, etc., by the millions every day.

Schlosser brings complications to his morality play of a book, as intellectually honest investigative journalists must. Take these three sentences from different spots on one page: "A number of attempts to introduce healthy dishes (such as McLean Deluxe, a hamburger partly composed of seaweed) have proved unsuccessful.... A taste for fat developed in childhood is difficult to lose as an adult.... At the moment, the fast food industry is heavily promoting menu items that contain bacon."

Explicated one by one, here is the message those three sentences convey: The fast food industry is not all bad; it tries to promote healthier eating from time to time. But many consumers are not interested in eating healthier food. That is partly their fault, but partly the fault of the fast food executives who worked to addict consumers to fat at young ages. In the end, it is about money, because fatty bacon is easy to sell at a huge markup.

Schlosser's conclusions are based in part on documents. He is skillful on the people trail as well as the paper trail. At one juncture, he reports on his success at getting inside the usually secretive

New Jersey-based company, International Flavors and Fragrance. There, Schlosser met with Brian Grainger, a type of chemist called a flavorist. His job is to analyze brand-name fast food items so that he can artificially provide a pleasant, distinctive aroma.

For Schlosser's visit, he lined up a dozen small glass bottles. Grainger told his visitor to dip a fragrance-testing filter into each bottle. The filter is a long white strip of paper designed to absorb aroma chemicals.

"I inhaled deeply, and one food after another was conjured from the glass bottles," Schlosser reports. "I smelled fresh cherries, black olives, sauteed onions and shrimp. Grainger's most remarkable creation took me by surprise. After closing my eyes, I suddenly smelled a grilled hamburger. The aroma was uncanny, almost miraculous. It smelled like someone in the room was flipping burgers on a hot grill. But when I opened my eyes, there was just a narrow strip of white paper and a smiling flavorist."

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

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DNA DATABANK

Blood samples test policies on privacy, genetic research

BY PAUL NEWTON

WNEM-TV, FLINT/SAGINAW, MICH.

To Bonnie Prestin from Birch Run, Mich., it sounded like something from “The X-Files.” Hours after her son was born, nurses came to collect blood from the baby’s heel. The tiny droplets were affixed to a 4-by-9 card that they explained would be mailed to a state laboratory in Lansing. There, technicians could test Bonnie’s baby for a series

of potentially deadly, but treatable, diseases.

What happens to the blood samples after they are screened?, Prestin wondered. The unanswered question set us on our series.

We learned that since newborn-blood screening became mandatory for all Michigan infants in 1982, those cards – more than two million of them – had been stored in cardboard boxes at a state warehouse “somewhere” in Michigan. With scientists set to announce the mapping of the entire human genome in the summer of 2000, the state had unexpectedly collected a valuable – and extremely vulnerable – databank of DNA information.

In the age of millennial conspiracy fears, cloning and genetic-testing, I was intrigued. The secrecy that met my inquiries into the whereabouts of this seemingly clandestine vault of valuable human data only made the story more important to us. Surely, in the wrong hands, such specimens could be used to effect some malevolent means.

A medical ethicist at Michigan State University confirmed what we suspected. Even after two decades, insurance companies, employers or the government could, in theory, use the backlog of blood samples to identify people vulnerable to costly medical disorders later in life, compromising privacy rights on a scale unimaginable when the tests were first administered.

Genetic library

Despite assurances that screening cards are kept under conditions of strict confidentiality, our investigation discovered DNA had been culled from blood samples in the past and put to use by outside agencies.

The summer of 1997 brought searchers into the Flint/Saginaw area, looking for an 11-year-old girl. Detectives suspected a neighbor had abducted and murdered Andre Bosse. Her body was never found, but a blood sample was. DNA from the droplets, collected and warehoused when she was a newborn, connected the missing

girl to her killer, now serving a life-sentence for murder.

Our investigation questioned the other side of the coin. If a child grows up to be a criminal, could a sample from the state be used to convict? In my interview with the Department of Community Health, Dr. David Johnson admitted that such use would be possible, though our research failed to uncover any requests by police agencies to use blood-screening samples for this purpose.

The state of Michigan has handled requests by researchers to put the extensive library of genetic information under the microscope for the sake of science. Robert Lentner’s role with the local chapter of the Huntington’s Disease Society landed him in the middle of the DNA debate. Appointed by the governor to serve on the state’s special Commission on Genetic Privacy and Progress, Lentner emphasized the importance of allowing access to the samples to aid in the fight against genetic diseases like Huntington’s.

Lentner also highlighted the urgency of another issue facing the panel. In 1982, when newborn screening became law in Michigan, the state attorney general ordered sample cards destroyed after 21 ½ years, beginning in 2003. Critical DNA data from a significant cross-section of the population was unlikely to be available anywhere else. And it was about to be destroyed.

The commission’s recommendations included a provision to keep the databank of blood samples indefinitely. Ethicist Leonard Fleck argued that since the specimens served their purpose at birth, the panel had exceeded its first well-defined mission and was now considering broad breaches of the privacy rights of the people of Michigan.

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RESOURCES AND IMPLICATIONS

By Paul Newton

Special projects producer Kim Rosansky collected statistics on the scope of the DNA databank issue using the Internet. We documented the number of newborns in Michigan to pinpoint how many samples had been stored. Legislative Web sites also allowed us to track the progress and recommendations of the state committee set up three years before our series to study genetic privacy.

From the beginning, we realized the damage our series could inadvertently do to the newborn blood-screening program. Initially, even Bonnie Prestin, our new mother, had rejected the screening. A rush of parents suddenly refusing to submit new babies to the potentially lifesaving tests would likely turn us into the target of hospitals and healthcare agencies across the state, while accomplishing little for our series.

While none of our interview subjects objected directly to the testing, we felt it was critical to reiterate the importance of the newborn blood-screening program in each segment.

We faced added difficulties in turning this scientific topic and its microscopic subject matter into a visually interesting investigation that would keep viewers tuned in for the week. The local university proved helpful, providing large-scale, three-dimensional models of different DNA structures and strands for our photographer.

While the state allowed us access to the laboratory where blood samples are analyzed, officials remain close-mouthed about the location of the storage facility, raising even more questions about the conditions and security under which screening cards are kept.



Dr. David Johnson oversees a team of technicians at the Department of Community Health that tests around 130,000 Michigan newborns every year for seven diseases. Newborn blood screening is often the only indication a child is sick before symptoms develop.

SEX OFFENDERS VIOLATE LAW; CAR, TAPE MEASURE PROVE IT

BY MARK DOUGLAS
WFLA-TV, CLEARWATER, FLA.

My eyes were bleary from scanning countless volumes of purple-jacketed (sanitized) court files the day I found the emotional core of my story. She came to life in a few obscure lines of testimony hidden away inside a dusty deposition.

The timid and embarrassed voice of the emotionally handicapped 11-year-old girl seemed to leap off the page. "He threatened me," she recalled in her sworn statement, "and told me if I told anybody, he would hurt me real bad... and bury me alive in his backyard."

The man who repeatedly molested the girl, and threatened to bury her alive, was the girl's grandfather. He faced the prospect of life in prison. After a plea bargain, he ended up with probation. The judge ordered him not to live within 1,000 feet of places where children regularly gather in accordance with Florida law.

But he did. Our computer-assisted reporting project found he was one of many convicted molesters violating the "1,000-foot rule." Some of them had been violating it for years. The restriction was a farce.

At first glance, WFLA's findings were astonishing, the kind that IRE and NICAR instructors warn reporters to distrust. So we verified our results with several methods and ultimately pinpointed more than 100 molesters violating the so-called "1,000-foot rule."

Predator database

In July 2000, we requested the database upon which the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) bases its online sex offender directory (www.fdle.state.fl.us/sexual_predators).

This FDLE Web page allows anyone with Internet access to search for registered sex offenders by name, address, crime, ZIP code, etc. For our purposes, we needed access to the underlying data. After some initial resistance, FDLE e-mailed the database to us in its entirety.

We also acquired two other databases critical

to our project: a list of all public school addresses from the Pinellas County School Board; and a list of addresses for all licensed day care centers from the Pinellas Juvenile Welfare Board.

Further, we imported all the data into Microsoft Access and mapped the locations of offenders, schools and day care centers, with MapInfo's Geographical Informational System (GIS) software. The data transfer was virtually automatic.

We narrowed our list of offenders by:

- 1) Choosing only sex offenders in Pinellas County.
- 2) Selecting only child molesters, as indicated by a database code.
- 3) Deleting offenses prior to Oct. 1, 1995, when Florida's "1,000-foot rule" took effect.
- 4) Selecting only molesters currently on probation.

That filtering process identified about 300 offenders out of thousands in FDLE'S original database. WFLA database editor Rocky Glisson then plotted the offenders' home addresses with MapInfo, and added the location of schools and day cares.

By drawing a calibrated radius around each offender Glisson discovered that more than a third of the 300 offenders appeared to violate the 1,000-foot rule.

Then we trimmed our "hot list" of 100 offenders to a few dozen who each appeared to live within 1,000 feet of several schools or day care centers. We used this narrowly defined group to find subjects for our narrative.

After extensively reviewing their court files we noticed a pattern. Just about everyone who administers justice to Florida's convicted child molesters seemed to have a hand in the problem: judges, prosecutors, probation officers and even the court clerks. It was time to start knocking on doors.

We went into the neighborhoods identified

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Media Conference

By Mark Douglas

The impact of this CAR project was intensified by the power of media convergence in the Tampa Bay area. WFLA, *The Tampa Tribune*, and TBO.com are independently run media organizations sharing a common owner, Media General, Inc. For the past two years, these organizations have cooperated in the Tampa Bay area on various special projects and in daily news coverage. The sex offender project is an example of one of those joint ventures.

The television stories on this topic provided visual impact and emotional depth to the CAR findings. *The Tribune* afforded more space for details and perspective (including a subsequent editorial), and TBO.com provided interactive ability for news consumers to scan their neighborhoods and determine the relative proximity of child molesters to their own kids' schools and day care centers.

The Associated Press picked up the story for statewide circulation on its newswire, adding even more media saturation.

Here are some tips for those working on similar stories:

- Ask for databases in user-friendly formats.
- Always ask for a key to the database.
- Try adding parks, school bus stops and playgrounds to your GIS list.
- Look for clusters of offenders as a key to stories about particular neighborhoods.
- Research other probation restrictions for discrepancies.
- See whether local law enforcement has the tools to spot the same problems and if they're using them.
- Look for patterns among sex offenders who've violated probation.
- Use CAR techniques to find the story. Find people to tell it.
- Keep your findings handy; they can add perspective in related crime stories.

"Mapping Molesters," a detailed look at the CAR techniques used in this story, appeared in the September-October issue of Uplink.

BACKLOGGED AGENCY

Child molesters remain certified Texas teachers for years

BY DIANNA HUNT

THE FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

It started with a high-profile football coach and allegations of sexual assault.

The story made headlines for weeks in the Fort Worth area, as a local school district investigated the allegations against a popular high school coach. The coach eventually resigned from the district after officials agreed to pay him \$100,000 and drop the investigation. He was never charged with assaulting a female coach, but was charged a few months later with harassing another co-worker and her boyfriend.

It wasn't until *Star-Telegram* education reporter Matt Frazier called the state teacher licensing board, however, that the bigger story began to emerge.

The agency, the Texas State Board for Educa-

tor Certification in Austin, acknowledged it was investigating the coach's teaching credentials. But beleaguered investigators also acknowledged that their workload was so high they had a backlog of cases that could take years to resolve.

At that point, Frazier linked up with the *Star-Telegram's* enterprise team to dig deeper into the story.

Before the year was out, the coach had moved on to work for another school district that was unaware of the allegations against him. And a six-month investigation by the *Star-Telegram* had found that convicted child molesters, rapists, drug users and thieves – in addition to the coach – had remained certified as Texas teachers, sometimes for years, while their credentials were under investigation.

Cases languish

The story was a new wrinkle on the standard teacher-as-felon story. In this case, state and school officials knew the teachers had problems – even convictions – but could not act quickly enough to keep them away from children.

Such information should be available routinely in other states, if you know where to look. In Texas, the information was stored at a relatively obscure government agency, and no one had ever asked for the data.

The records were fairly easy to get. State officials were eager to comply with the *Star-Telegram's* request for information because they had been trying unsuccessfully to win additional funding from the Texas Legislature. They felt that a story detailing the problems might help their case.

An Excel spreadsheet was e-mailed by the agency to the newspaper, at no cost. It contained 9,130 records and 28 fields, or about 1.6 megabytes of information on all cases handled by the agency since it took over teacher licensing in 1995. The spreadsheet was moved into an Access table for analysis.

The data contained information on both closed and open cases, including the date the case was opened, date closed, name of the teacher, the nature of the allegation and how it had been resolved.

A preliminary look at the data confirmed what the agency officials had said. Some cases had languished as long as 11 years before being resolved, and others had been pending for years.

The preliminary look also revealed a problem with the data. Although many of the fields were coded, no code-translation table had been included. In a series of phone calls to the agency, it became clear that there was no uniform coding system; the input clerks filled in the records as they saw fit, and the codes changed when the clerks changed. The agency was able to provide a general summary of what the various codes meant, but it was by no means comprehensive. I ultimately ended up standardizing the coding system myself.

Using Access, I then looked not just at how long the cases took to resolve, but what kinds of allegations were pending against teachers and who those teachers were. The closed cases were separated from the open ones, and separate analyses were done on each set.

On the closed cases, the analyses included looks at how long the agency took to close cases on average, what percent of cases resulted in punitive action against the teacher, what percent of teachers were cleared of wrongdoing and what types of allegations were involved.

On the open cases, the analysis was aimed at finding how many teachers under investigation were convicted criminals and how many were still teaching. Because the SBEC data did not include birth dates or other identifiers except name, three other databases were needed to make a link. These were a statewide roster of teachers working the previous year, which included a year of birth but not a full birth date; a statewide database of criminal records, which the newspaper already had obtained; and a smaller database of registered sex offenders, also already obtained by the *Star-Telegram*. The investigation was hampered by the lack of a current roster of school employees statewide.

Bad apples slip by

Once the data was analyzed, more traditional reporting methods were used for the most egregious criminals – sex offenders, child molesters, rapists and drug dealers.

Although the state files on pending cases were

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closed to us, we were able to obtain information on many open cases by turning to local school districts for their records and to a separate state agency that handled administrative hearings for those cases in which punitive action was recommended.

Armed with a list of registered sex offenders whose names matched those of teachers accused of misconduct, I called district attorneys across the state to confirm that their convicts were the same teachers now under investigation. Many prosecutors were shocked to learn the criminals they convicted were still licensed teachers.

Eventually, we were able to document that the backlog at the state agency had allowed teachers with serious criminal convictions to move to other districts or to move out of state and continue teaching. Several, we found, molested other children before the state could stop them.

Agency officials did not flinch at the findings. “Do bad apples slip through? Sure,” said the agency’s head of investigations. “We’ve got to be able to address cases on a more expeditious basis.”

As is often the case in Texas, state lawmakers were not deeply moved by the agency’s plight, nor apparently, its impact on children. “It’s a problem all over,” said a state senator. “We’ve got 30 or 40 agencies in Texas that oversee various professions, from architects to podiatrists, and virtually every one of them says they don’t have enough staff to investigate or prosecute.”

The stories ran over two days, with the main analysis running on a Sunday. On Monday, the package featured a local assistant middle-school principal who preyed on female students and was ultimately convicted of indecency with a child.

As a result of our stories, the state Legislature passed a bill requiring anyone with a professional license to notify the state police agency if they are required to register as a sex offender. The state police would then notify the professional licensing agency that one of their own has been a registered sex offender.

The state agency, meanwhile, is back before the Texas Legislature seeking additional funding to pay for more investigators. It remains to be seen whether they will get it.

Dianna Hunt is a senior reporter for enterprise and investigations at the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, and is currently on extended temporary assignment as assistant government editor. She also serves on IRE’s Conference Committee.

Sex offenders

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

by MapInfo to conduct interviews and verify our findings. We borrowed a handheld measuring wheel from WFLA’s maintenance department and paced off the distance separating schools and daycares from the offenders.

The odd sight of a guy dressed in suit and tie rolling an orange wheel down residential sidewalks drew curious stares, but few questions from neighbors.

The measuring wheel later became a good storytelling tool for television news, but it was more than a visual gimmick. It added credibility to our CAR findings, and generated approving smiles from the station attorneys who vetted our stories.

We also profiled the Pinellas Sheriff’s Office experimental “Enforcer” system for mapping sex offenders and talked the deputies who ran the software into mapping some of our “hypothetical” targets on it as an added verification.

We visited the homes of childcare workers, parents, and molesters. Later, we called on judges, prosecutors and probation officials. Many of the questionable cases we brought to their attention – some of which had been dormant for years – suddenly began landing back in court for judicial review.

Strange encounters

Along the way we had some interesting encounters. The offender who threatened to bury the girl in his back yard was pulling out of his driveway the day we came “rolling up” with our measuring stick. He complained about the difficulty of finding a home 1,000 feet away from kids and suggested neighborhood parents keep their kids inside. The neighbors didn’t buy his solution and neither did a judge who later gave him seven days to move.

In another instance, news photographer Eric Hulsizer was videotaping pre-teen school kids walking past the apartment of a convicted molester when three girls knocked on the offender’s front door. They giggled, waved at the camera and later told us they often stopped there for a ride home or to hang out after school.

One of our targets was a molester living within 1,000 feet of two schools and nine day care centers. Pinellas County’s chief judge later admitted to us she’d botched his case by signing a flawed court order without bothering to read it.

In late 2000, we broadcast our first TV

FROM THE RESOURCE CENTER

Other stories on sex offenders are available from the IRE Resource Center (www.ire.org/resourcecenter).

They include:

- Story No. 13807. WKRN-TV (Nashville) documents that twice as many criminals are moving into Tennessee on probation or parole than leaving. It’s all because of a corrections agreement among the states, known as the Interstate Compact.
- Story No. 12570. The *Dayton (Ohio) Daily News* investigates how the U.S. military allows hundreds of accused sex offenders to escape criminal prosecution or go free despite convictions, and how the sexual charges or convictions never reach the FBI.
- Story No. 17597. WBFF-TV (Baltimore) uncovers several loopholes in Maryland’s sex offender laws that make it more difficult for citizens to access the information.

APBnews.com has a collection of all known online sex offender registries published by state, regional or local law enforcement agencies. To find more information, go to www.apbnews.com/resourcecenter/sexoffender.

reports, published a front-page story in *The Tampa Tribune*, and posted an interactive map on TBO.com (<http://reports.tbo.com/reports/nov2000/offenders/>). The combined effect of the news coverage prompted Florida Gov. Jeb Bush to ask Florida’s chief justice to initiate statewide reforms. Pinellas County’s chief circuit judge instigated her own list of judicial changes that she credited directly to our findings.

Ultimately, it wasn’t our CAR findings, upset neighbors and parents, or all the befuddled bureaucrats that made the story memorable. It was the muted voice of an 11-year-old rape victim, buried in court files, begging authorities not to let the man who molested her harm other kids. Florida’s justice system failed her. It failed a lot of kids.

Mark Douglas is a reporter for Tampa’s WFLA-TV who has won a number of journalism awards for criminal justice investigations using CAR techniques. He also writes for The Tampa Tribune as part of a media convergence initiative in Tampa.

COVERING TERRORISM

Hustling to provide context, history and new information, teams of reporters around the world hit the pavement, the Internet, databases and dogged every source available to report one of the biggest stories ever to hit the U.S.

BEYOND GROUND ZERO **Reporters use investigative know-how to move past the initial mad scramble**

By Anita Bruzzese
The IRE Journal

Knowing that cab drivers like to “gab a lot” helped nab a vital piece of detail for *The Wall Street Journal*’s comprehensive piece on the hijackers who plotted and planned the devastating World Trade Center attack.

Reporter Neal E. Boudette, working from a brief mention he had seen in a Hamburg newspaper about a six-hour taxi ride taken by three Middle Eastern men in Germany, called a cab company and said he was trying “to track down the driver who supposedly drove terrorists to Hamburg.”

“The guy there had heard about it,” Boudette says. “He didn’t know the name of the driver but did know the name and number of the cab company involved. The cab company owner confirmed that yes, it happened and gave me the mobile number of the cab driver. I got him to retell the story.”

At the same time, reporter Tom Hamburger was assigned the job of tracking the terrorists’ movements in Washington, D.C.

Using a timeline that recorded all the reported sightings of the hijackers at various locations, and footnoting the sources, Hamburger began to see that the most helpful sources were members of the local Muslim community and local law enforcement.

“The FBI was nearly impossible to crack,” Hamburger says. “The best reporting for the final story occurred – as always – when we pounded the pavement, talked with neighbors, hotel operators, got eyewitness accounts and looked ourselves at the places they stayed.”

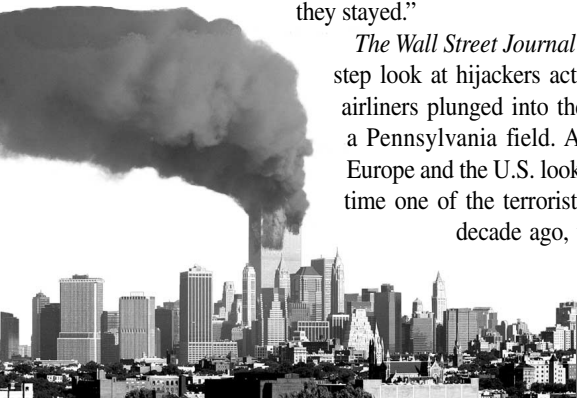
The Wall Street Journal’s Oct. 16 story pieced together a step-by-step look at hijackers actions months, weeks and days before the airliners plunged into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a Pennsylvania field. A team of reporters in the Middle East, Europe and the U.S. looked at how the plot unfolded, from the first time one of the terrorists set foot on American soil more than a decade ago, to the minute the first plane crashed into

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Robert Mecea | Newsday



A firefighter screams in pain during his rescue shortly after both towers of





New York's World Trade Center collapsed.

AVIATION DATA CAR critical in wake of airport breaches

By Jeff Porter
The IRE Journal

Just two days after the Sept. 11 attacks, the *Asbury Park Press* in New Jersey reported that security workers for airlines at Newark International Airport – one of the airports where the hijackers boarded a plane – failed to properly screen passengers and luggage more than a dozen times over a five-year period.

Investigations editor Paul D'Ambrosio and reporters were able to jump on the story quickly because they used the Federal Aviation Administration enforcement database.

"It helped us show readers the holes in the security net of Newark airport," D'Ambrosio said.

Using the same FAA database, Charlotte, N.C., television station NBC6 pinpointed lapses in the city's airport: Security personnel failed to detect handguns eight times; missed a person or vehicle accessing the runway three times; passed by a phony dynamite bomb; and didn't find a real pipe bomb.

"The FAA data, carefully used, allowed us to provide some facts, not just perceptions, about the state of airline security at our airport," said reporter Stuart Watson.

For the *Seattle Times*, too, the data enriched the story.

"We were amazed ourselves by some of the details," said David Heath, a co-author of a story published five days after the attacks. "A dynamite bomb slips through just four days after a hand grenade escapes notice."

Those facts became the lead of the story.

The FAA Enforcement Information System database is a complicated compilation of regulation violations across the United States, including security lapses. It includes four tables of information. The "main" table contains most of it, including the dates, often the violator's name and the location. A table called "security" lists lapses or violations, often with cryptic descriptions. Table "far4" cites the specific federal regulation violated, while a table called "actions" lists the outcome of cases, from warning letters to "proposed civil penalties" in dollars.

A jump start

With the crushing deadlines after the attacks, the data was a big advantage for reporters. "It was a quick hit. I make no pretense that it was some huge, in-depth investigation. But the FAA data gave a lot more depth and weight to the reporting and beat the hell out of one more person-on-the-concourse interview or an airport official talking head," said Watson, who also serves as an IRE Board member.

The data brought about a story on security violations at Denver International Airport just two days after the crash, according to Sandra Fish of the *Daily Camera* in Boulder, Colo.

And while speed is important, the database also provided perspective, said Ken Ward, staff writer for the *Sunday Gazette-Mail* in Charleston, W.Va., a co-author of a story about the city's Yeager Airport. "We were able to give our readers something no other media in West Virginia had given them – a report that Yeager was not as safe as many similarly sized airports around the country."

The *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* found a story that would have been impossible without the data.

"We couldn't have reported about the security lapses at Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee or at other airports without it," reporter Mike Johnson said. "Not only were we able to report how federal undercover agents slipped test weapons past security screeners that are employed under contract by the airlines, we reported that the information about security lapses apparently wasn't shared with Mitchell's airport director or with the county sheriff. The sheriff's department provides security at the airport, and information contained in the FAA database should be reported to that agency."

The FAA enforcement database wasn't the only potential data resource that reporters found useful. Others included:

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National Guardsmen on their new assignment: patrolling Lambert Field in St. Louis.

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the WTC north tower.

In-depth interviews with those who knew – or at least were acquainted with – the hijackers showed personalities portrayed as anywhere from “a creep” to “very meek” to “the friendliest guy.”

Tracking their family lives, friends, religious experiences, schooling and interaction with other conspirators, the story looked at how normal life events – such as a lost love – led each man down the path of destruction and fanatic religious devotion. Also included: how the events may have been avoided at different junctures along the way, including a traffic stop in Florida for one hijacker.

Identifying victims

Looking at the personal destruction wrought by the attackers, *Newsday* reported on the painstaking process of identifying victims at the World Trade Center. On Oct. 21, the newspaper published a statistical glimpse of the enormous

impact of the tragedy.

With Robert Fresco and Jo Craven McGinty, staff writer Richard J. Dalton Jr. reports in a recent issue of *Uplink* that reporters gathered names of victims from many different sources, including Web sites of companies that lost workers; press releases; relatives; airlines; the medical examiner’s office; wire services; death notices; the police and the New York State Supreme Court.

Analyzing the database in Microsoft Access, *Newsday*’s team wrote a story revealing that victims came from at least 41 states and the District of Columbia. Using ArcView, the team created a map of the U.S., highlighting how many victims came from each state. Another map showed the metro area, with various-sized dots indicating how many victims perished from each community.



Also revealed: Terrorists took the lives of people from more than 770 cities and towns, and more than a third of the victims were in their 30s.

Hustling to provide context, history and new information, teams of reporters around the world hit the pavement, the Internet, databases and dogged every source available to report one of the biggest stories ever to hit the U.S.

Digging begins

For example, *Time* magazine looked at hijacker Mohamed Atta’s life, the man considered a linchpin for the terrorists, “the center of gravity, the dour and meticulous ringleader.”

The Oct. 8 issue published compelling interviews with friends of this 33-year-old Egyptian, who conveyed shock and disbelief that he could be involved, let alone a leader of this group.

“To fly a plane! What a joke! Mohamed could hardly ride a bike,” recalled one friend. But another remembered Atta as a man “searching

for justice.”

Still another story detailed the record of missed opportunities to get Osama bin Laden. *The Washington Post* on Oct. 3 included information on the CIA-trained Pakistani commandos who were disbanded before they got a chance to root out the former Saudi militant, and a failed clandestine operation during the Clinton years to capture or kill bin Laden.

Reporters Bob Woodward and Thomas E. Ricks dug into the quality of intelligence on bin Laden over the last several years, and how U.S. officials weighed the risk of getting the Al Qaeda leader without jeopardizing American lives.

Intelligence data

In the five years since the creation of the Alien Terrorist Removal Court, which is supposed to kick terrorists out of the U.S., not one terrorist has been deported, reported *U.S. News & World Report* on Oct. 8.

Created after the World Trade Center was bombed in 1993, the special federal court has never even heard a case, a probe by reporters Edward T. Pound, Chitra Ragavan and Kit R. Roane found.

Despite Congress authorizing billions of dollars for new counterterrorism equipment and law enforcement and intelligence personnel, an analysis showed that investigators didn't want to use the court because law requires that sensitive information be disclosed, including intelligence sources. Critics claim that this inability to bring terrorists before the court shows a “glaring example of [the government's] inability to use its vast counterterrorism resources effectively.”

This story looked at the ramifications of a country with the most sophisticated intelligence capabilities in the world being unable to uncover attacks on the scope of the WTC and Pentagon, and how officials are scrambling to improve.

At the same time, transcripts from a 76-day trial of four Al Qaeda members charged with the suicide bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania turned into a font of insider information after the terrorist attacks in the U.S.

Los Angeles Times reporters Mark Fineman and Stephen Braun found themselves not only locked out of government buildings soon after the attack in New York, but also unable to contact officials because of downed phone lines.

Told by another reporter of www.cryptome.com, which houses court transcripts, Fineman and Braun divided up the seemingly endless transcript and delved into the world of Al Qaeda.

On Sept. 24, they gave readers a portrait of an organization capable of relentless, selfless efficiency, while at the same time, being a group prone to petty feuds and embezzlement.

“We had not covered this trial originally, but we knew that even the best court reporters can't fit everything into their daily coverage,” Braun says. “We were looking for a way to paint a portrait of Al Qaeda. The first main witness was really instructive.”

Braun, based in Washington, D.C., says he finds that stories that normally would have taken weeks to put together are now being done in a “matter of days.”

“These days, all this stuff is on the fly,” he says. “It's remarkable to watch the coverage area change from week to week. You're forced to be an expert on a different subject every day. The bylines are bouncing around like a whirling dervish.”

Local sources

Also delving into records already on hand to find new information was *The Hartford Courant* on Oct. 21. Using an analysis of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Nuclear Materials Events Database, it was shown that hundreds of industrial and medical tools containing

dangerous radioactive sources are abandoned, lost or stolen worldwide each year.

Specifically, the database – a repository for reports of incidents involving radioactive tools, substances and machines regulated by the NRC – found that since 1986, 1,704 radioactive sources potent enough to trigger the NRC's “immediate report” requirement were lost or stolen in this country. Sixty percent of them have not been found.

The story looked at how illicit trafficking of this equipment in places like Thailand, Brazil and Turkey have resulted in people being exposed to radiation, and becoming sick – or even dying – from severe radiation poisoning. Exposure in the U.S. by terrorists using radioactive materials would be difficult, but not impossible, experts told reporter Jack Dolan.

“We'd asked for a copy of the Nuclear Events Materials Database earlier this summer, and didn't find it particularly useful for our original purposes,” Dolan says. “But after Sept. 11, we took a second look.”

He says that the biggest problem in investigating the story was getting information from the NRC, “which sank into ‘no comment’ mode after Sept. 11, fearing that any information could be

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Julia Gaines | Newsday



Firefighters leave the Church of Saint Mel's in Flushing, N.Y., after the funeral service for former First Deputy Fire Commissioner William M. Feehan, who was killed in the World Trade Center collapse.



Airport police officer Herman Burnett and his explosive detection dog, Kony, work at a screening station near the ticket counter at Lambert Field in St. Louis.

IRE SUPPLIES FAA DATA

Within three weeks of the terrorist attacks, 119 news organizations obtained the Federal Aviation Administration's Enforcement Information System database from IRE and its National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting.

The database library received hundreds of telephone calls about the database it began obtaining in 1997. For years, the agency sent the data via CDs, emblazoned with the FAA logo, to the NICAR data library. Since last year, NICAR has downloaded the data from an FAA public server.

The November-December and January-February editions of the NICAR newsletter *Uplink* offer more details about the data itself. IRE members can revisit detailed data discussions in the archives of the NICAR-L e-mail mailing list at www.ire.org/membership/listserv.html or find a list of recent stories using FAA or other databases at www.ire.org/store/books/aviation/story.html.

To review the list of databases available through NICAR, visit the Web page at www.ire.org/datalibrary/.

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- FAA's airmen directory. A listing of most pilots certified by the U.S. government aided reporters in finding basic information about some of the hijackers.
- Federal contracts database. *The Dallas Business Journal* used it to report on the "568 North Texas companies that did business with the military last year ... Now, some of those companies are preparing for their Pentagon contracts to grow as war looms..."
- Federal Election Commission data. While airlines are seeking a federal bailout, reporters are considering stories about linking that industry to campaign contributions. (See Bob Keefe's report in this *Journal*.)

In other words, serious media organizations discovered after the worst terrorism attack on U.S. soil that computer-assisted reporting is a necessity, not a luxury.

Does the FAA enforcement database prove conclusively that airport security should have prevented the attacks? No. Does the database provide potential starting points for reporters covering the security status of American air travel? Absolutely.

"As far as readers, these stories helped hammer home how fragile the nation's airport security systems remain even after the Sept. 11 attacks," Johnson said. "There are lessons

for journalists, too. Among them, don't wait for tragedies to review databases."

The FAA began reviewing its database too, after reporters began asking questions and publishing stories about lax security in the nation's airport. Its response: Refusing to answer questions about the data and removing the raw text files from a public server, with this ominous message: "The Enforcement Information System (EIS) is not available at this time due in part to security considerations (14 CFR 191)." The federal regulation cited is fairly general, concerning "protection of sensitive security information."

"One interesting note is that an FAA spokesman denied the existence of the database when we were seeking comment about what it showed," Johnson said.

In a fax message to another reporter, on FAA letterhead, an agency spokesman suggested the database was "a new urban legend."

Generating questions

Despite such obstacles, the enforcement and other databases are rich with starting points but not a reporter's final answer.

That's how Phil Williams, an investigative reporter for WTVF in Nashville, looks at the data.

"It gave us a snapshot of what happened at our airport. Because of all the unanswered questions, the image that emerges doesn't have a lot of depth. But it's a snapshot that we wouldn't have had without the data."

Beth Marchak of *The (Cleveland) Plain Dealer*, in a tipsheet she prepared for journalists reporting on aviation, states it simply about databases: "They really don't have everything."

It's not a surprise to experienced computer-assisted reporting users like Marchak that every database has its flaws, that no database was ever designed to be all-seeing and all-knowing. Indeed, CAR is designed to generate intelligent questions, not canned answers. Even with their shortcomings, databases can become valuable tipsheets for editors and reporters, a method to find places to go and people to see, a tool to give reporters perspective of what's happening in their own communities and beyond.

Jeff Porter is the database administrator for IRE and the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting.



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too much information in the wrong hands.”

Still, Dolan was able to find state radiation safety experts and former NRC officials “who were willing to help us figure out which missing sources actually could be used to harm people, and which were so weak they would be of no use to terrorists.”

Dolan says he has learned from probing the terrorist story that “the lesson is not to assume that local law enforcement is completely in the dark about a national investigation” and local officials and lawyers can have top-notch contacts in federal law enforcement.

“Don’t assume that if it’s a good story, the national media will get it first,” Dolan says. “They do a great job of covering the breaking news, but that doesn’t mean someone watching carefully from the wings can’t cherry pick good stories that the big guys, in their rush to get the breaking stuff, overlook.”

Also grabbing for the local impact was Minneapolis *Star Tribune* reporter Bob Von Sternberg, who was flying from Minneapolis to Grand Forks, N.D., on a reporting assignment nearly two weeks after the Sept. 11 attacks. He says he was “frankly startled” when he was whisked through security, “without even the most cursory examination of my luggage, laptop or cell phone.”

He says that security at the small regional airport in Grand Forks was “rigorous and complete,” much more so than at the larger Twin Cities airport.

When he returned to the newsroom and related his experiences, editors sent him and another reporter, Deborah Caulfield Ryback to check on airport security, having them pass through checkpoints a dozen times. They carried cell phones, computers and cameras, along with a steel pica pole, metal spoon handle and toiletry scissors. In addition, they had items that could contain dangerous substances, such as film canisters, and toiletry containers.

“Our marching orders were that in no cases were we to carry anything illegal or any items that had been specifically banned by the airlines or FAA. We were to act like legitimate travelers and held valid boarding passes from Northwest Airlines,” von Sternberg says.

“Editors took pains to be sure the language of the story was as neutral as possible and descriptive as possible, rather than accusatory,” von Sternberg says of the story published Sept. 28.

Anita Bruzese, managing editor of The IRE Journal, is a syndicated columnist and author on workplace issues.

Press needs to challenge new concentration of power



CHARLES DAVIS

Utter the word “unilateralism,” and eyes roll. It’s a big word, a policy wonk word, a word guaranteed to stultify readers.

It’s a word that freedom of information advocates had better become familiar with, quickly, because our federal government – and soon enough, our state and local governments – are embracing the newly rediscovered efficiencies of unilateral governance.

Unchecked by fear of another superpower and, at least for now, unchecked by our traditionally outspoken press and civil society, the Bush administration marches on. Debate about the purposes or methods of the war against terrorism has been cowed into virtual silence in the mainstream. The result, according to London’s *Guardian*, is a sweeping “ruthlessness” manifesting itself in a startling concentration of power in the executive branch.

Let’s take the past month alone, and count the moves that the administration has made without consulting anyone other than the inner circle:

- A presidential order to allow trials by military tribunals for noncitizens accused of terrorism.
- A suspension of the right of detainees to have private conversations with attorneys, if the attorney general deems they might pose a threat to the public.
- A Justice Department plan to interview 5,000 young men who have entered the United States from specified nations since 2000. I don’t have to tell you that no one will know who, when, where and for what reason these young men were “voluntarily” questioned, do I?
- The Pentagon has told defense contractors not to talk publicly about military business and prohibited Defense Department acquisition officials from speaking with the press. “Even innocuous industrial information can reveal much ... to the trained intelligence collector,” a Pentagon memo to contractors said.
- The White House, angry over insignificant leaks to the media, first shrunk the pool of lawmakers privy to classified briefings, but backed down after Congress cried foul.
- Government Web sites have been cleansed of sensitive military information on the where-

abouts of aircraft carriers, Army chemical weapons stockpiles and nuclear power plants.

Government maps of the nation’s gas and oil pipelines have been removed. So have data on the types of chemicals used in American communities – unilaterally, with no legal standards being applied, no debate, no principle at play other than unbridled power.

- Finally, let’s not forget the more than 1,400 people currently being detained by the Justice Department, many since Sept. 11. The Justice Department already has denied access to any information about those individuals under FOIA. One media institution – *The Nation* – joined a request by more than 40 FOI, privacy and civil liberties groups for the information. No one – not even Congress – has been able to find out how many are still detained and what, if any, charges have been filed.
- President Bush also signed an executive order eviscerating the Presidential Records Act, an overwhelmingly bipartisan post-Watergate creation opening up the records of past administrations.

Warped balance

What emerges from the laundry list is an unprecedented expansion of the exercise of executive branch authority with diminished opportunity for independent oversight, and little or no provision for accountability. The key seems to be speed, mixed with a bit of gravitas: new policies are unilaterally adopted almost daily, giving those of us in the position of debating them little or no chance to attract the scrutiny of Congress before the next outrage is perpetrated.

By doing so, and by labeling each unilateral move a blow for motherhood and apple pie and any critic of it a traitor, this presidency is warping the institutional checks and balances that took the nation decades to create. Because it seems easier, because it is more efficient, this administration is turning its cumulative

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Charles Davis is executive director of the Freedom of Information Center, an assistant professor at the Missouri School of Journalism and a member of IRE’s First Amendment Committee.

ACCESS VS. SECURITY

Removal of records puts openness at risk

By Jennifer LaFleur
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

As the federal government closes in on terrorists, many agencies also are closing the door on public records.

Since the attacks of Sept. 11 several federal agencies have removed public records and documents from their Web sites because of security concerns. In addition, some states have proposed rules that may limit access to public records.

That, in turn, has created anxiety among organizations that regularly use those public records.

"Public citizens should be most concerned about this," says Charles Davis, executive director of the Freedom of Information Center, based at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. "Citizens are in the least powerful position. Government has an unbelievable ability to monitor citizens. Citizens should have equal power to

monitor their government."

Much of the information federal agencies handle is covered by the Freedom of Information Act, a federal law enacted in 1966 requiring government agencies to disclose records. Since then the law has been amended to encourage, but not require, agencies to make commonly requested

information available on their Web sites. Many responded to that call, but some are now beginning to rethink what they put online. Among them:

- The Bureau of Transportation Statistics has discontinued public access to the National Transportation Atlas Databases and the North American Transportation Atlas. Environmental groups have used information from those sites to assess the impact of transportation proposals.
- The U.S. Geological Survey has removed several reports relating to water quality.
- The Office of Pipeline Safety has removed access to the pipeline mapping system, making the information available only to pipeline operators and government officials.
- The Federal Aviation Administration has removed a link to enforcement data that includes security violations at the nation's airports. (See Jeff Porter's report in this *Journal* for the kinds of stories done using this information in the weeks following the terrorist hijackings.)
- The Environmental Protection Agency has removed risk management plan records for chemical plants and other facilities that store and use chemicals.
- The state of New Jersey has removed chemical information from its Web site.

In each case, the agencies cited the need to take precautions in the face of the terrorist threat. But it appears they are acting on their own. The White House says it has issued no request for agencies to remove materials from their sites. But they have done it with the backing of U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft.

On Oct. 12, Ashcroft issued a memorandum to the heads of all departments and agencies in which he told agencies to carefully consider "disclosure determinations" under the FOIA.

The memo also states: "When you carefully consider FOIA requests and decide to withhold records in whole or in part, you can be assured that the Department of Justice will defend your decisions unless they lack a sound legal basis or

present an unwarranted risk of adverse impact on the ability of other agencies to protect other important records."

The memo "sends a chilling message to the entire federal bureaucracy that they better think long and hard before they fulfill an FOIA request or they will be in trouble," Davis says. "If they want to deny it, the Justice Department is right behind them. In addition, it gives very little credit to the positive values of freedom of information."

Balancing needs

"I think that all of the government has been heightened to the fact that we're shooting ourselves in the foot by putting certain types of information out," says Doris Lama, head of the Navy's office of privacy and freedom of information. "If it creates change, it's wonderful. But if it increases vulnerabilities, that may not be the best way to go."

Security also was a concern for the FAA. The agency removed a file of enforcement records on Sept. 14 at the request of the agency's general counsel, according to Paul Turk, FAA spokesman.

"The reasons simply have to do with security, Turk says. "I can't go into specifics."

But Turk notes that limited access to enforcement information is still available on the Web site; it just lacks some of the details that were in the database.

Those with concerns about access to government information don't discount the terrorist threat.

But that view needs to be balanced against the public's right to know, says Gary Bass, executive director of OMB Watch, a nonprofit organization concerned with freedom of information issues.

"We live in an open society. Everything we put out carries a risk. Are we not going to announce where the next football game is?" Bass says. "The flip of that is we end up living in a closed system."

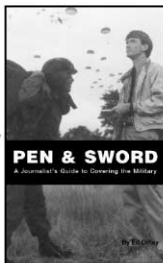
OMB Watch has come under criticism itself recently for continuing to make risk management plan data available. Bass says such information is necessary for citizens and communities to know their risks. "They could identify the names of these chemical companies, but if you go to the yellow pages you can do the same thing," he says.

"If you have a daycare center next to a chemical hazard, which is worse: not knowing about the danger or fearing that terrorists know about the danger?" says Rebecca Daugherty, director, Freedom of Information Service Center of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press.

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"If only the government has information, then only the government knows about problems. If the public doesn't know what the problems are, it's not going to fund solutions," Daugherty says.

No clear directive

For almost 14 years, Paul Orum, director of the Working Group on Community Right-to-Know, has used public records to try to make chemical plants safer for citizens and to make communities aware of their risks.

"We have pushed for many years for improved site security and hazard reduction at chemical plants," Orum says. "There has been a great deal of complacency that has accompanied traditional secrecy in the industry. Environment groups and public interest groups have relied on the right to know to push government and industry to make changes as far as hazards."

Bass also argues that much of the information has been removed randomly without a clear directive. When he's asked agencies for the reasons behind their actions, he's gotten vague responses.

An e-mail response to Bass from the Department of Transportation's information services department says: "Due to the attacks on September 11th, BTS and all other government agencies have had to re-evaluate the content available through our Web pages."

Bass says he was particularly concerned about the phrase "all other government agencies" in the message.

Florida, a state that has served as a public access model for the rest of the country, saw storm clouds closing in on its long-standing tradition of sunshine in a special session that ended Nov. 1. Several bills came before legislators that would have closed access – in the name of security – to many records that have been open. Among the proposed legislation was a bill that would have permitted law enforcement agencies to conceal arrests of individuals for seven days and delay access to public records if they could reveal terrorist activity.

What did pass in the Senate, however, was a change in the body's rules that would allow it to meet secretly and to keep records of those meetings secret.

"Interestingly, they passed it by voice vote, so we can't even hold them accountable for the way they voted," says Barbara Petersen, executive director of the Florida First Amendment Foundation, a Tallahassee-based nonprofit organization that advances the public's constitutional right to open government.

Petersen says the measure is ripe for challenge.

"The rule change in access to their records was in direct violation of our constitution," Petersen says. She says such changes can only be made by general law.

She adds that while we all recognize the need to protect information such as port security plans, exemptions already exist for those types of records.

"But how does closing legislative meetings protect us? How does closing meetings about the amount of pharmaceuticals available protect us? We have to stop and think about the true effect of some of the proposals and when we do, we realize we should err on the side of openness," Petersen says.

Daugherty notes that while "we've all looked to Florida as the example of the sunshine state...I certainly hope that states that have not followed Florida's lead in opening records will not now follow in closing records."

OMB's Bass argues that much of these actions have been done randomly without a clear plan.

"We need to have a reasoned debate about this," Bass says. "We shouldn't be acting precipitously to take things down.

"If there is a reasonable argument with reasonable benchmarks, I think we want to hear that and act accordingly. But until then, I think in an open society public right to know has to prevail."

According to Davis, journalists need to be "much, much, much, much more vocal in communicating with their elected representatives and being citizens. We've always been very reticent about these things and we're getting killed. We need to think pretty hard as a profession about whether we're going to sit back and let it happen."

Jennifer LaFleur is the computer-assisted reporting editor for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and serves on IRE's First Amendment Committee.

For more information:

OMB Watch:

www.ombwatch.org/info/2001/access.html

Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press:

www.rcfp.org

Florida First Amendment Foundation:

www.floridafaf.org

Investigative Reporters and Editors FOI site:

www.ire.org/foi/

FOI Report

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

back on the experience on which that balance was based.

Why is all of this important? Perhaps we should ask one of the 1,400 detainees who have been arrested and jailed as "material witnesses" in the Sept. 11 investigation. It seems not one of these witnesses has yet provided any evidence material enough to secure an indictment against anyone for any involvement in the Sept. 11 attacks.

Yet the government has done whatever it can to avoid releasing them, and to avoid releasing any details about them. Why? Because knowing their fate engenders sympathy, and sympathy might engender criticism.

Thanks to lawyers and human rights activists, (the fact that we speak of human rights activists working on domestic law enforcement issues alone is truly newsworthy, no?) we know the story of Ahmad Abou El-Kheir. El-Kheir is a 28-year-old Egyptian national arrested days after the WTC attack. He was suspected of knowing two of the hijackers. He was transported to New York and jailed as a material witness.

Almost one month later a federal judge ordered his release. He was then transferred to a Bronx court on a three-year old warrant involving a minor disorderly conduct conviction. Once that matter was resolved, he was transferred to the custody of the INS to face a charge that he had violated his visa on an earlier visit to the United States. When he agreed to depart the country, the INS continued to detain him for deportation, but refused to actually deport him. He remains in INS custody to this day.

No excuses

According to those closest to the situation, it appears the vast majority of the detainees have no access to representation by counsel, or access to the federal courts to seek habeas corpus release. The media has gathered information on a small number of detainees, and media coverage of their plight has helped some people to win their release.

Yet overall, media response beyond the initial "they won't tell us who these people are" stories has been virtually non-existent. Huge stories lie behind the administration's unilateral shift. Why aren't we telling them? The lack of access to information is no excuse.

News researchers play key role in fast-strike terrorist coverage

By Gina Bramucci
The IRE Journal

On Sept. 11, as the unimaginable unfolded on TV screens and reporters struggled for words, research teams across the country moved to the forefront of a momentous investigation. While reporters hit the streets and their phones to cover the breaking story, news researchers joined collaborative efforts to provide background and context for one of the most demanding stories in America's history.

They scoured databases, probed the Internet and compiled data on Web pages to share with news organizations around the country. Between fast-paced searches for names of victims and firefighters, researchers scanned electronic mailing lists like IRE-L, CAR-L, Public Agenda and NewsLib – hunting for answers to offer a stunned nation.

Fast-strike research

On the day of the attacks, most newspapers were focused on gathering information on all of the victims in New York, Washington and Pennsylvania. Researchers built comprehensive databases, opening the door for reporters to contact families and write the stories of individual victims and heroes.

At *The Washington Post*, research director Margot Williams and her staff used AutoTrack to find the names and families of those missing in the Pentagon. In addition, they drew from online versions of local papers around the country to find clues about family connections.

"The fact that all of the newspapers are up on the Web has made a huge difference in this case," Williams said.

In the days following the attacks, *Post* researchers pulled stories concerning the probe from the Web and set up an internal distribution list. They included small U.S. papers, as well as papers from other parts of the world.

"[Reporters and editors] are lining up to be on this distribution list. It used to be that this information was on Nexis and was two days old.

Now we have that ready when they come in," Williams said.

As the public records search shifted its focus from victims to suspects, *Post* researchers created a database of suspects in Lotus Notes. They relied on the FAA Airmen's Directory and pilot lists from AutoTrack, www.landings.com and Lex-

isNexis, using several sources to account for variations in data (some of these are limited to current pilots, while others archive the names of

"fast-strike team," said Vince Kueter, a researcher at *The Seattle Times*.

The Times, which has fresh experience in disaster coverage after last summer's Seattle earthquake, was able to draw on its unique familiarity with commercial jetliners and technical issues. The proximity of Boeing headquarters has developed a "special expertise in aerospace" on *The Times'* research team, Kueter said. The paper was well prepared for stories about airport and airline security, as well as the massive layoffs that hit the airline industry in October.

Kraig Scattarella | The Oregonian



No longer just used on special packages, news researchers, like those at *The Oregonian*, have become a vital part of day-to-day coverage since the terrorist attacks. Clockwise from top left: Kathleen Blythe, news researcher; Lovelle Svart, news researcher; Rich Read, senior reporter; Lynne Palombo, news researcher; Brent Walth, senior reporter, and Kim Christiansen, investigative editor.

pilots no longer licensed). Locating data on the planes used by the hijackers proved to be more of a challenge.

FAA Web sites were largely unavailable immediately following the attacks, and only a fortunate few made it to the flight-tracking site www.trip.com before it was disabled for safety reasons. After digging for alternative sources and consulting colleagues, researchers discovered that private companies often could provide the flight-tracking information they needed (FlightExplorer and Flytecomm.com were especially helpful). They also were able to gather information on planes from insurance companies connected with the airlines.

One of the lessons learned in the attack coverage was how necessary it is to move as a

Part of the team

Researchers around the nation made breakthroughs, small and large, on Sept. 11. Gail Hulden, research director for *The Oregonian*, says that earlier in the year, researchers had moved from the relative isolation and quiet of the library to the newsroom floor. Initially it was a jarring transition, but on Sept. 11 the move proved invaluable.

"It was like, bang, you're a part of it, you're in the middle of everything going on," Hulden said. "Our location was directly on the beaten path... [you] might just as well grab a researcher as you go by."

Barbara Maxwell, the library director at *USA Today*, was deep into research about the World Trade Center when her own office shook. The *USA Today* building, about one mile from the Defense Department, seemed to sway with the echo of American Airlines flight 77 as it pierced the Pentagon's side.



GUEST COLUMN

Producer injured trying to outrun collapsing WTC



ALLISON GILBERT
WNBC-TV, NEW YORK

Because Sept. 11 was supposed to be New York City primary day, I was slowly getting ready for work. As a producer at WNBC-TV, I hadn't planned on going in until about noon since I would be working well past the 11 p.m. show covering the elections. My son's babysitter was already there and it was a relaxed morning. Then my husband Mark called.

Calling from the American Stock Exchange, he told me to turn on the TV – a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. I was amazed at the pictures. The building had a gaping hole, with smoke and fire billowing out. I couldn't believe it. I told Mark I had to call my office and asked him how I could call him back in case they needed to do a phone interview with him. I thought the crash was an accident and a plane had veered off course and lost control. I called the office, gave them Mark's contact numbers and kept watching the images on TV. They put me on standby.

Then the second plane hit.

I called my office again. I told them I was in Hoboken. They told me to go to the World Trade Center. I got dressed, kissed Jake and ran toward the Path train.

As I approached the train, I saw huge plumes of smoke from the towers in the sky. Thick. Dark gray. A lot of people were standing around the station, trying to place calls on their cell phones or joining the lines already forming at the phone booths.

The train to the World Trade Center had been stopped. My cell phone was dead. I went to a nearby bank, but that phone wasn't working either, so I ran back to the train. Miraculously, I managed to get one into the city – one that did not go directly to the World Trade Center.

Getting off at Christopher Street, I was walking and running down Hudson Street toward the towers. As I got closer, people were rushing past me in the opposite direction, crying and staring at the sky. When I was about eight to 10 blocks away, I saw the first tower implode right before my eyes. I heard the rumbling, I saw the clouds of white ashen debris. I was scared.

Eerily alone

I needed to get to a phone and call Mark and my office. Was Mark OK? There was not a phone booth

that did not have a long line of people waiting, so I ran into a restaurant, looking for a phone. The place was empty except for a woman employee who was on the phone crying in Spanish. I waited impatiently and finally left.

As I raced further south to the remaining tower, there were fewer and fewer people around me until finally I was eerily alone. The streets were covered in white ash. I found an empty phone booth, but I still couldn't reach my husband. I did manage to call my office, but while I was on the phone I was told to leave the area by two emergency workers who raced by me. They must have thought I was crazy to be there. I flashed them my press credentials and they kept going. I felt as if they said to themselves, "We warned her. If she stays, that's her problem. Let's go."

I told my office the first tower collapsed, that I was all right, and asked them for the location of the reporter and crew I was supposed to hook up with near the towers. I spoke with Jean Woody, the WNBC assignment manager, and she told me she had no communication with the reporter. She suggested I head to West Street where I might find them.

When I got to West Street, I saw a rush of activity by firefighters, police and emergency medical crews. There were no civilians. (Somehow, by coming in from a few blocks east, I bypassed any barricades set up to prevent people like me from getting that close.) I was the only TV journalist. I saw no sign of any other reporters or producers, just emergency workers. Some were coughing. Some were wearing white hospital masks to cover their mouths and noses. Some were wearing full white protective suits and boots, some were wearing full black rubber breathing gear – looking like they were going into some sort of chemical or biological war zone. I was wearing nothing but beige slacks, a beige linen shirt and navy blue tank top and brown slip-on leather shoes.

By now I was maybe two blocks from the remaining tower, and I began interviewing emergency workers while looking for my crew and a reporter. I grabbed papers full of soot from the ground to see

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31 >

Allison Gilbert is an award-winning producer with WNBC-New York.

At *The Washington Post*, Williams described a different change – a newsroom that had to focus under extreme pressure, and succeeded because it pulsed with the need for immediacy. "We had so much work to do. It was kind of a medicine for us. We had a purpose," she said.

Williams and her staff, like others around the nation, worked for two and a half weeks straight without a day off. They put in long days and slept little, increasing their presence in the newsroom and making certain that reporters were aware of what they could offer.

"It's a very hard story to research on a good day," said Maxwell. "But on top of that you have people who are worried and afraid. How do you balance that?" People were asked to function at extraordinary levels, she said, and without exception, they did.

Gina Bramucci, a graduate student at the Missouri School of Journalism, is the editorial intern for The IRE Journal.

TIPS FOR RESEARCHERS:

- Demonstrate confidence in your ability as a researcher. You have valuable skills to offer. Show it.
- Attend news meetings, stay familiar with the news budget and be willing to offer your input and ideas.
- Make it your business to know what reporters are working on and keep your eyes peeled for resources that might help.
- When you find a good resource for a story, send it to the appropriate reporters – solicited or not. If you haven't heard back after two or three submissions, grab them in the elevator or stop by their desk to ask what they thought.
- Work one-on-one with reporters. Share Internet searching skills, teach how to focus searches on Lexis-Nexis and show them how to search PhoneDisc by SIC code.

TIPS FOR REPORTERS and EDITORS:

- Involve news researchers in project story meetings from the beginning of the process.
- If you've spent 15 minutes searching without finding what you want, go find a researcher.
- Seek out a tutorial from a researcher. A researcher's purpose is to help you do your job better. Take advantage.
- For daily stories, give researchers a heads up as early as possible. The more time they have, the more fruitful the research.
- If a researcher has made a significant contribution to a story, credit him or her for the work. Everyone likes to be recognized for a job well done.

BAILOUTS Industries line up to get congressional money

By Bob Keefe
Cox Newspapers

When you're giving away money, the lines can get deep pretty fast.

Nowhere has that been more evident lately than on Capitol Hill. After approving \$15 billion in cash and loan guarantees to the beleaguered airline industry, Congress was inundated by industries requesting aid to keep their businesses afloat in the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and the increasingly lousy economy.

Everybody from travel agents to Amtrak managers followed the airline money trail to Washington and queued up before Congress, looking for help. Representatives of industries ranging from agriculture to steel also renewed their pleas for government aid, using the terrorist attacks and the damage inflicted on the economy – and Congress' quick-to-spend airline bailout – as fresh fodder for their own SOS calls.

Pork-barrel politics also was evident. New York Reps. Carolyn Maloney and Thomas Reynolds introduced the "I Love New York Tax Deduction Act," which would give tax breaks to tourists.

Noted University of Dallas economist Michael Cosgrove: "Anytime people can find a reason to get cash out of the government trough, they'll do it."

The questions from John Q. Public were clear: Why should airlines get government aid when their chief executives make so much money? Shouldn't I get a tax break if my small business dropped off after the attacks? Why should only certain industries get government breaks when everyone is struggling?

My editors and I knew that in this economy, where virtually every business is hurting, the corporate handout line would clearly only get deeper if Congress let it. Further, propping up industries in a country built on capitalism and competition would certainly have some far-reaching aftereffects once the country got out of this mess.

A tricky road

Covering the West Coast from San Diego for Cox Newspapers, I was further from Washington

than anybody on the chain's national staff. But as a business reporter and editor for the past 13 years, I also had some experience covering companies and knew a bit about corporate bailouts. (Perhaps most important, I was a free body at a time when all my East Coast colleagues were swamped.)

Even on the other side of the country, finding background information was pretty easy – given some of the electronic tools we all have in our journalistic tool kit today. For example:

- Using Editorsweb.org, the excellent online service that compiles daily news releases in Washington – introductions of bills, government agency actions, even politicians' chicken-dinner proclamations – I electronically examined everything I could find since Sept. 11 that looked like a terrorism-related aid request. That's where I found the "I Love New York Tax Deduction Act."
- Going to the Library of Congress' Thomas site, <http://thomas.loc.gov/>, I was able to review specific bills, such as Florida Rep. Alcee Hasting's "Ancillary Airline Industry Relief Act of 2001," which would give \$4 billion in grants to travel agents, car rental agencies and other travel-related businesses. I could also research other pending financial aid bills, such as those for the agriculture and steel industries. With the names of sponsors and supporters of those bills, I talked to aides who cautiously told me how they were forming their pleas for funding in the wake of the Sept. 11 tragedies.
- With the help of Profnet.com, I tracked down economists and business school academics who had studied the effects of bailouts, such as Cosgrove. A simple search on Google.com led me to an essay on the airline bailout package by another insightful academic, Suffolk University professor C. Gopinath, whom I interviewed. These and others who have studied economic intricacies told me that propping up businesses in a competitive market – no matter what the circumstance – was taking the government and the U.S. economy down a tricky road.
- Combining information from LexisNexis and the Atlanta *Journal-Constitution's* research staff, I got some clips, congressional records and other background from past bailouts. I knew

about Chrysler and the savings and loan bailout, the latter of which I had covered bits and piece of as a younger reporter. I had forgotten about the bailouts of Lockheed Aircraft Corp. and Penn Central Railroad, which with other failed Northeastern train lines, later formed Conrail.

At the same time, simply reviewing history as other journalists had recorded it yielded some interesting voices from the past – and present.

Specifically, in testimony before Congress in 1971 a guy named Alan Greenspan – then just a private consultant – warned against bailing out Lockheed because that industry was already in bad shape. Two years later, then-Treasury Secretary George Schultz similarly warned that it was not a good idea to bail out the Penn Central Railroad, because it would change the rules for the railroad industry.

With a Republican president and a pro-business Congress, the idea of government bailouts today seemed pretty ironic. With a capitalistic icon like Greenspan and former Reagan Secretary of State Schultz warning of bailouts in the past, it made the story all the more interesting.

I also learned from clips how past government interventions in corporate affairs had turned into boondoggles. The government did OK in the Chrysler bailout, history showed. But the Conrail fiasco cost it – and taxpayers – at least \$5 billion. Depending on who you talk to, it could take until 2019 for taxpayers to finish paying the hundreds of billions it cost to bail out the S&L industry – although that action, aimed at insuring consumers' funds as much as anything else, was under much different circumstances than today's business bailouts.

Temporary help

I wanted to talk to some of the beneficiaries of past bailouts, but – probably in part given the rising controversy over corporate aid – I didn't have much luck. I tried several former Chrysler executives. I tracked former Chrysler chief Lee Iacocca to Las Vegas, where he was attending a trade show. But he never returned my calls. Likewise with former Chrysler right-hand man Robert "Steve" Miller, now chief executive at Bethlehem Steel Corp. Miller apparently was busy with other problems; I later learned he put Bethlehem into Chapter 11 bankruptcy court protection a few days after I tried to talk to him about Chrysler.

Striking out with direct beneficiaries, I next tried to talk others who had benefited to try and give some perspective as to whether they were



Making the link to campaign finance

By Aron Pilhofer
The IRE Journal

With all the industries devastated by the events of Sept. 11, why were the airlines first in line for a bailout?

Perhaps because the air transport industry is one of the nation's most generous campaign contributors and hires some of the best lobbyists roaming Capitol Hill.

That was one of the conclusions *New York Times* reporters Leslie Wayne and Michael Moss came to in an Oct. 10 article detailing the way the airline bailout package came together.

Air transportation companies ranked 16th in total campaign contributions last year among the 80 industries tracked by the Center for Responsive Politics, a Washington-based watchdog group. Since 1992, the industry has given more than \$65 million in total contributions, the center found.

The airline industry may have been the first, but certainly will not be the last to press lawmakers for help.

Travel agents approached Congress shortly after the World Trade Center disaster, asking for a \$4 billion grant and loan program to help their struggling industry. Airline maintenance workers, rental car agencies, insurance companies and other groups have made similar requests.

On the immediate horizon are insurance companies, which are probably next to receive some kind of government support. In January, a majority of commercial insurance contracts will be up for renewal, and many companies are saying they will explicitly exclude insurance for losses due to terrorism. The industry wants Congress to develop some sort of system that helps limit the potential losses as a result of future attacks.

Not everything will focus on Congress. At least three state legislatures have already

considered bailout packages. Minnesota lawmakers are considering ways to help struggling Northwest and Sun Country airlines, which are both based in the state. The Wisconsin Assembly approved \$10 million in loan guarantees to help Midwest Airlines and Air Wisconsin. And New York lawmakers already have passed a \$5 billion general aid package.

For journalists following the ripple effects of Sept. 11, here are some things to consider:

- Not all pressure on lawmakers will come from domestic sources. Foreign interests are barred from making campaign contributions, but they are not restricted from hiring lobbyists.

Among the more interesting recent filings, Political Money Line (www.politicalmoneyline.com) noted that the Afghanistan Northern Alliance Junbish Party had hired Philip S. Smith & Associates to lobby Congress on its behalf.

The Secretary of the Senate puts these forms into a searchable database, which is found online at <http://sopr.senate.gov>. The forms are searchable in several ways, including by filing date, filer and client.

- Any group working on behalf of a foreign agent must file with the federal government, and those filings are available online through the Department of Justice, www.usdoj.gov/criminal/fara/.

- Federal campaign finance reports covering the period after Sept. 11 are trickling in to the Federal Election Commission because some committees report their activities monthly. Most committees are not required to file electronically. Find the data at <http://herndon2.sdrdc.com/dcdev/>.

- A number of watchdog organizations have been closely monitoring congressional action on Sept. 11-related items, including the Center for Responsive Politics (www.opensecrets.org), the Center for Public Integrity (www.publicintegrity.org) and Common Cause (www.commoncause.org).

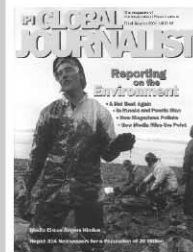
Aron Pilhofer is director of IRE's Campaign Finance Information Center.

said. But ultimately, not even government-backed loans could keep the airplane maker from shutting down the local factory a few years ago.

In the end, the piece gave some insight into the news of the day – that the airline industry certainly isn't the only business hurting and looking for help – and some indication of what Congress' actions hold in the future, based on the results of past bailouts.

Bob Keefe covers the West Coast for Cox Newspapers, focusing on business and technology.

Now, more than ever, reporters and editors need to think globally.



IPI

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worth it. I knew that the city of Marietta, Ga., was a Lockheed town, so I tried tracking down the mayor. Using the Internet, I also found City Councilwoman Jo Anne Darcy in Santa Clarita, Calif., another Lockheed town.

Darcy ran the chamber of commerce there back when the government agreed to guarantee \$250 million in Lockheed loans to keep the company afloat. She told me that government intervention did make a difference in her central California town – temporarily. Lockheed planned to cut 40 percent of its local workers there if it didn't get the government help, she

Bookmarks Location: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/Agent/Anthrax/Anthrax.asp>

CDC Home Search Health Topics A-Z

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Anthrax

The following documents have been developed to provide information pertaining to Anthrax that will help private and public healthcare providers develop plans to prepare for and respond to acts of bioterrorism. The documents are broken into the following categories:

- Agent Information** – this information is intended for the healthcare provider (private and public) and includes details about the disease, recommended treatment, and specific issues relating to recognizing Anthrax in emergency departments.
 - [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
 - [CDC Advisory: Protecting Investigators Performing Environmental Sampling for Bacillus anthracis: Personal Protective Equipment](#) **NEW**
 - [CDC Advisory: Interim Recommendations for Firefighters and Other First Responders for the Selection and Use of Protective Clothing and Respirators Against Biological Agents](#)

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The CDC Web site includes disease fact sheets.

Exploring the CDC Web site

By Carolyn Edds
The IRE Journal

With terrorism-related stories breaking at a record pace these days, more and more reporters are being assigned stories in which they have little background. The Web often has made the difference in getting them quickly up to speed on an unfamiliar topic. One Web site that has been helpful is run by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is a federal agency responsible for protecting the health and safety of people, at home and abroad, providing information about health and promoting health through partnerships. The CDC has more than 8,500 employees in locations around the United States, in state and local health agencies, quarantine offices and in other countries. Originally established in 1946 as the Communicable Disease Center, in

1980 it was renamed the Centers for Disease Control and in 1992 “Prevention” was added to its name.

The CDC Web

site is a good place to start when looking for current disease-related information. Many sections of the site are updated regularly. Often the date the page was last reviewed is posted at the bottom of the page. Some pages do not necessarily need to be updated such as a fact sheet on chicken pox. The cause and characteristics of chicken pox will not change.

The latest on health

On the CDC home page menu on the left, several topics are listed. The “In the News” section provides links to news releases, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMRW) summaries, telebriefing transcripts, and daily updates. In the “Traveler’s Health” section, select a geographic area to get the latest on health information covering that area. Other information is available about outbreaks, diseases, vaccinations, and cruise ship or air travel. Links for the cruise ship information lead to a searchable database on sanitation inspections of international cruise ships.

A quick and easy way to get information on a disease is by visiting the “Health Topics A to Z” page. Disease and health topics are arranged in alphabetical order. Jump to a topic by clicking on the first letter of the desired topic

from a list of letters at the top of the page.

Information on a topic page varies. For example, if anthrax is selected, the information includes a fact sheet, general agent information, medical information, surveillance case definitions, and links to related sites. Also, there is a news and media section with the latest CDC summary of confirmed cases of anthrax. The fact sheet contains information about symptoms, possible treatment and vaccination recommendations.

If flu is selected, that page lists general information about the flu, the vaccine, antiviral drugs for influenza and the influenza vaccine supply information for the winter season. The page includes surveillance reports and a tipsheet about preventing the spread of influenza among travelers. Some historical data is available in narrative reports.

Publications and data

In the “Publications and Products” section, links include the CDC Fact Book 2000/2001, the MMWR, and publications from related agencies. In the “Data and Statistics” section, links are available to several statistical sources, including searchable databases. The link to CDC Wonder leads to information on a variety of CDC reports and data from AIDS to leading causes of death to sexually transmitted disease reports. Depending on the topic, statistics are available at the city, county, state or national level. Although recent statistics often are not available, the historical data can be useful.

Turning to the “training and employment” section, journalists might be interested in the link to the Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Network or information about the Knight Journalism Fellowships at the CDC. The “subscriptions” section has a list of electronic mailing lists that anyone can join. Topics include the MMWR, Hospital Discharge and Ambulatory Surgery Data List, and Minority Health Statistics Grants Program.

The “other sites” section lists links to CDC resources, public health partners and related agencies including state and local health departments. Finally, the “hoaxes and rumors” section provides such things as consumer alerts about buying antibiotics online.

Carolyn Edds is the Eugene S. Pulliam research director for IRE. She directs the IRE Resource Center and helps maintain Web resources. She formerly worked as a news researcher for daily newspapers.

NEW FEATURE

This edition of *The IRE Journal* marks the debut of a new feature that will focus on a Web site of particular value to journalists.



Guest Column

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 27

what clues there might be to what happened and who might be hurt or killed.

I felt proud of myself for staying focused and doing my job. I felt sick to my stomach for doing my job. Looking at the papers on the ground, I asked myself: “Am I a journalist looking for real clues or was I a grave robber?” I couldn’t help feeling like a vulture.

And I couldn’t stop thinking about Mark and why I risk my life for a job. I thought about Jake. But I kept doing my job.

I was on top of a little hill when an emergency worker told me to move away from the area. I slowly made my way toward him, continuing to look at what was on the ground. I think I was on the corner of West and Vesey when all of a sudden we all heard the second building begin to collapse.

It sounded like a rumble. Deafening thunder. At that moment, everyone around me started running. I was facing away from the building when it started to fall and I never looked back. I kept running, trying to outrun a falling skyscraper. I did not know then the building was falling straight down. I thought it was going to fall like a tree and would smash me into the ground. I ran so fast, I ran literally out of my shoes. I was barefoot and running over falling debris, soot, papers, garbage, pieces of concrete and metal. I didn’t feel anything – just fear.

Smoke inhalation

I was running next to firefighters and ambulance workers. I saw a concrete barricade of some sort and was trying to get to it for cover when I fell down. I slammed face down into the ground. I think I used my pocketbook to cover my head. I don’t remember exactly. What I do know is that within seconds I was covered in a tornado of thick black smoke and being pelted by debris. I could not see anything, not even my own hands. I could not breathe. I was gasping for air. My mouth was full of so much soot I could bite it. It felt like thick sawdust. It sucked all the moisture out of my mouth. I did not know if I was ever going to see the sky again.

I was not sure if the building was on top of me and I was just in an air pocket, or if it had missed me. I started feeling the space around me, trying to figure out where I was and whether there were any big pieces of building around me. I thought at that very moment I might live.

I remember hearing the crackling of an EMS worker’s radio in the dark. I yelled to him. He

yelled back. I heard other people screaming for help. I knew I had to make it over to the guy with the radio. If we were trapped, he was my only hope of communicating with the people who could save us. We found each other and he insisted I slow my breathing down. I was breathing too deeply and too fast. I was taking in too much smoke. The smoke finally began to clear and I was taken to a makeshift emergency station a few feet away. I’m not sure if that man took me or someone else. I never saw him.

The emergency shelter was actually a deli. I was rushed into the back where firefighters and police were helping each other – and me – to breathe again. Our faces were being hosed down to rid them of white ash. I was given water to swish around my mouth and to drink. I was instructed by a police officer – who herself was hacking up soot – to keep coughing, blowing my nose and to vomit if I could. Anything to get the thick ash out of my lungs, throat and nose. Even though I was now indoors and among professional rescuers, I was terrified. Was this building safe? Would it, too, disintegrate? Would it bury us alive? I needed to get out. I needed to head away from the area. I needed to get to an ambulance.

I was taken by a police officer to a triage post inside what I would later find out was the lobby of the Embassy Suites hotel. I was immediately put on oxygen to help me breathe and was given an emergency tag around my neck to identify me and my injuries. It said “smoke inhalation.” A stranger who worked inside the World Financial Center appeared out of nowhere and began holding my hand and consoling me. His name was David True – in my opinion, one of the thousands of World Trade Center heroes. He was physically fine. He was staying in that triage center to see if he could help. He got me through the scariest moments of my life. But it was just about to get scary again. We all had to evacuate because there were reports of a gas leak.

Barefoot, bleeding and covered in ash, the smell of so much soot was starting to make me sick. Taken onto the street by rescuers, I was told to wait and keep on my oxygen mask. That’s when I saw an ambulance being loaded with two firefighters and one other emergency worker. I saw an empty seat. As they were about to close the doors and leave, I knew I had to be on that ambulance to not only get treatment, but to get me safely out of the area. I got on board, and we headed to Bellevue Hospital.

When we got to the hospital, it was eerie. It seemed like hundreds of doctors and nurses were waiting for us and any other victims who were

coming. But we were some of the few injuries they treated – there were too many dead.

I was whisked into the emergency room where all of my wet, soot-filled clothes were cut off and thrown away. I was put on an IV, my blood drawn to check the carbon monoxide levels, and an endoscope – without any anesthesia – was stuck down my nose and throat to see if my lungs were burned. They placed me on maximum oxygen.

Doing a job

I kept asking to call my husband and my office, but my requests were denied because most of the phone lines were down and any open ones were needed for emergency calls. Once they considered me stable, I was taken to a makeshift intensive care unit.

In this ICU, there were only three other beds. We all looked like we’d been through war. We were all covered in ash and the room began to smell like a smoldering fire. I was kept there under observation for about four hours, and then was transferred into a regular hospital room.

I finally got to a phone, but I couldn’t reach Mark. I left him a message on his work voicemail that I was fine, but in Bellevue. I then called my office. I did a phone interview with news anchor Chuck Scarborough from my hospital bed at about 3 p.m. I felt doing the interview made sense. It wasn’t for nothing. It made me feel like I didn’t just risk my life for my job – I was doing my job.

When Mark got to the hospital, I cried. I guess, up until that point, I was holding it together. He helped me take a shower. It took me nearly a half dozen shampoos to get my hair free of soot and half an hour to get all the dirt off my skin. The hospital gave me clothes and shoes to wear home.

But there was no way to get home to New Jersey. Both tunnels and the bridge home were closed and the Path trains were not operating. We called our babysitter and she assured us she would stay with Jake as long as we needed. Mark and I left Bellevue on foot at about 6 p.m. and started walking to my father’s apartment.

We got to my dad’s, but found out later that the Path trains were once again running. The news report said it would be temporary, and they might close again tomorrow. We immediately left and headed back to Hoboken.

We got home about 11 p.m., and it had never felt so good. And Jake? He was fast asleep in his crib.

TERROR IN PRINT

Books already have plowed much ground where reporters are digging since Sept. 11

By Steve Weinberg
The IRE Journal

Many previous books have been published about biological and chemical warfare, the shame of supposedly civilized nations. Undoubtedly, many more books on the deadly phenomena will be published in the future.

But, through a coincidence of timing, it is quite likely that “Germs,” reported and

written by three *New York Times* journalists, will win the prize for relevance.

When international correspondent Judith Miller, investigative projects editor Stephen Engelberg and science writer William Broad finished the manuscript in mid-August, they had no idea what would happen in New York City,

rural Pennsylvania and Washington, D.C., on Sept. 11. Nor could they have known that in the wake of the massive death toll, the conversation about the unimaginable body count that could result from illegal biological and chemical warfare would reverberate around the globe.

How did these reporters happen to write “Germs” when they did? Their decision followed a Pentagon announcement during December 1997 that about 2.4 million soldiers and reservists would be vaccinated against anthrax. “Why then?” the journalists wondered. After all, it was six years after reports of biological weapons being used during the Persian Gulf War and two years after the specifics of Saddam Hussein’s arsenal became public knowledge.

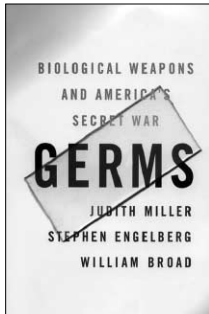
The journalists learned “that the anthrax decision was part of a much larger government effort to combat what officials believed was a growing danger from germ weapons. Over the next three years, we followed the story from Washington to Kazakhstan to Russia.... The issues were as complex and intellectually challenging as any we have ever examined, cutting across science, intelligence and foreign affairs. We came to see the debates of the 1990s over what to do about germ weapons in a much larger context – a half century of largely secret history.”

Germ terrorism

The research of Miller, Engelberg and Broad derived from a few dozen previously published books listed in a useful bibliography. The journalistic trio expanded on that research impressively, as demonstrated by their 42 pages of source notes. They write clearly, popularizing the science behind germ weapons without sounding condescending.

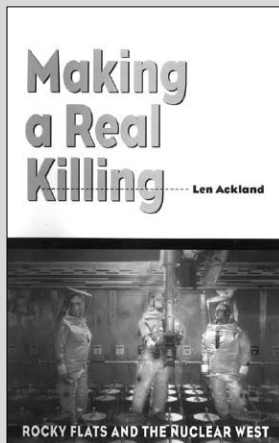
The prose style is often flat, no surprise given the compromises in language that frequently occur during a collaborative effort. The book’s organization leaves much to

GERMS: Biological Weapons and America’s Secret War
By Judith Miller, Stephen Engelberg and William Broad
Simon & Schuster, 382 pages, \$27

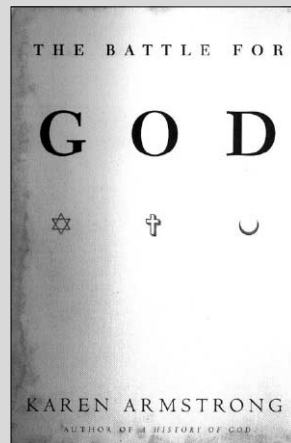


TERRORISM-RELATED BOOKS

“Germs” is perhaps the most timely book available to journalists in the aftermath of Sept. 11, but is just one of hundreds of useful books about terrorism and obviously related topics. Here is a slice of the rest from the past decade. It perhaps is not a totally idiotic reminder to journalists in a rush that books – usually the result of many years research by serious, talented authors – can be far more substantive than Web sites, periodical articles and television news magazine segments.



• Len Ackland
Making a Real Killing: Rocky Flats and the Nuclear West
(University of New Mexico Press)



• Karen Armstrong
The Battle for God
(Knopf)

• James Bamford
Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency From the Cold War Through the Dawn of a New Century
(Doubleday)

• Benjamin R. Barber
Jihad vs. McWorld: How Globalism and Tribalism Are Reshaping the World
(Times Books)

• Christiane Bird
Neither East Nor West: One Woman’s Journey Through the Islamic Republic of Iran
(Pocket Books)

• Jonah Blank
Mullahs on the Mainframe: Islam and Modernity Among the Daudi Bohras
(University of Chicago Press)

• Paul Blustein
The Chastening: Inside the Crisis That Rocked the Global Financial System and Humbled the IMF
(PublicAffairs)

• Yossef Bodansky
Bin Laden: The Man Who Declared War on America
(Prima)

• Mark Bowden
Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War
(Atlantic Monthly Press)

• Mark Bowden
Killing Pablo: The Hunt for the World’s Greatest Outlaw
(Atlantic Monthly Press)

• Geraldine Brooks
Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women
(Anchor)

• Richard Butler
The Greatest Threat: Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction and the Crisis of Global Security
(PublicAffairs)

• Andrew Cockburn and Patrick Cockburn
Out of the Ashes: The Resurrection of Saddam Hussein
(HarperCollins)

be desired, too, as the authors shift from a chronological account to a thematic account and back again, over and over. During those shifts, significant players in the numbingly large cast of characters disappear for many pages, to be reintroduced later. Given all those problems, this important book is probably best read one chapter per day, so that all the information can be absorbed and evalu-

ated.

By far the best-written chapter is the first, although initially its relevance to the title of the book seems questionable – set as it is in rural Oregon during 1984. The relevance of the hostility between the area’s long-time residents and the members of a religious

cult known as the Rajneeshees soon becomes obvious, however. The cult members are retaliating against their opponents in government and business by poisoning the salad bars in local restaurants with a strain of salmonella.

“It was the first large-scale use of germs by terrorists on American soil, the union of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34 >

TERRORISM-RELATED BOOKS

Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People

{ The Dynamics of Torture }

JOHN CONROY

- John Conroy
Unspeakable Acts, Ordinary People: The Dynamics of Torture (Knopf)
- John K. Cooley
Unholy War: Afghanistan, America and International Terrorism (Pluto Press)
- Dusko Doder and Louise Branson Milosevic: **Portrait of a Tyrant** (Free Press)
- Jason Elliot
An Unexpected Light: Travels in Afghanistan (Picador)
- James Fallows
Free Flight: From Airline Hell to a New Age of Travel (PublicAffairs)
- Robert I. Friedman
Zealots for Zion (Random House)
- Mark Fritz
Lost on Earth: Nomads of the New World (Little, Brown)
- Laurie Garrett
Betrayal of Trust: The Collapse of Global Public Health (Hyperion)

- Richard L. Garwin and Georges Charpak
Megawatts and Megatons: A Turning Point in the Nuclear Age? (Knopf)

- Robert Alan Goldberg
Enemies Within: The Culture of Conspiracy in Modern America (Yale University Press)

- Larry P. Goodson
Afghanistan’s Endless War (University of Washington Press)

- Bradley Graham
Hit to Kill: The New Battle Over Shielding America From Missile Attack (PublicAffairs)

- David Halberstam
War in a Time of Peace: Bush, Clinton and the Generals (Scribner)

- Adrian Havill
The Spy Who Stayed Out in the Cold: The Secret Life of Accused Double Agent Robert Hanssen (St. Martin’s)

- Khidhir Hazma and Jeff Stein
Saddam’s Bombmaker: The Terrifying Inside Story of the Iraqi Nuclear and Biological Weapons Agenda (Scribner)

- James F. Hoge Jr. and Gideon Rose, editors
How Did This Happen?: Terrorism and the New War (PublicAffairs)

- Stephen Kinzer
Crescent and Star: Turkey Between Two Worlds (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

- Tom Mangold and Jeff Goldberg
Plague Wars: The Terrifying Reality of Biological Warfare (St. Martin’s)

- Eric Margolis
War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet (Routledge)

- Robert S. McNamara and James G. Blight
Wilson’s Ghost: Reducing the Risk of Conflict, Killing and Catastrophe in the 21st Century (PublicAffairs)

- Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck
American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing (ReganBooks)

- Pat Milton
In the Blink of an Eye: The Inside Story of the FBI’s Investigation of TWA Flight 800 (Random House)

- Benny Morris
Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict (Knopf)

- Benjamin Netanyahu
Fighting Terrorism: How Democracies Can Defeat Domestic and International Terrorists (Noonday)

- Paul R. Pillar
Terrorism and U.S. Foreign Policy (Brookings Institution Press,)

- Ahmed Rashid
Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia (Yale University Press)

- Simon Reeve
The New Jackals: Ramzi Yousef, Osama bin Laden and the Future of Terrorism (Northeastern University Press)

- Ed Regis
The Biology of Doom: The History of America’s Secret Germ Warfare Project (Holt)

- Nicholas Regush
The Virus Within: A Coming Epidemic (Wildcat)

- Barry M. Rubin
The Transformation of Palestinian Politics (Harvard University Press)

- Elaine Sciolino
Persian Mirrors: The Elusive Face of Iran (Free Press)

- Charles M. Sennott
The Body and the Blood: The Holy Land at the Turn of a New Millennium – a Reporter’s Journey (PublicAffairs)

- Michael Shermer
Why People Believe Weird Things: Pseudoscience, Superstition and Other Confusions of Our Time (Freeman)

- Dan Stober and Ian Hoffman
A Convenient Spy: Wen Ho Lee and the Politics of Nuclear Espionage (Simon & Schuster)

- Gordon Thomas
Gideon’s Spies: The Secret History of the Mossad (St. Martin’s)

- Milton Viorst
In the Shadow of the Prophet: The Struggle for the Soul of Islam (Westview)

- Jeff Wheelwright
The Irritable Heart: The Medical Mystery of the Gulf War (Norton)

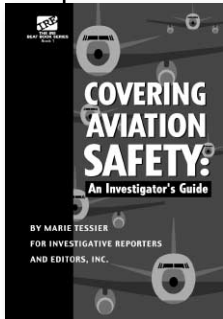
- David Wise
Cassidy’s Run: The Secret Spy War Over Nerve Gas (Random House)

- Robin Wright
The Last Great Revolution: Turmoil and Transformation in Iran (Knopf)

REQUIRED READING

For Your Newsroom

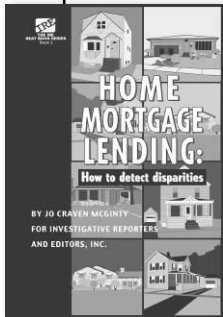
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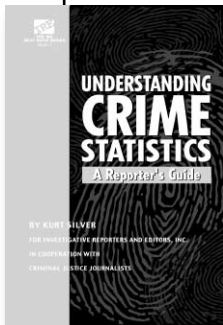
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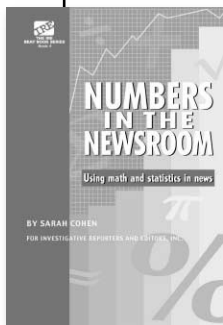
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Terror books

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33

a modern phenomenon and an age-old means of destruction,” the authors comment. “The unusual case exposed numerous shortcomings. One was the ease with which pathogens could be ordered from a germ bank.... The case revealed another problem. The partnership between law-enforcement officials and their scientific colleagues was rocky, a clash of cultures. Information was not shared; opportunities were missed. It proved difficult to establish that a crime had been committed. Even to trained eyes, a natural outbreak and a germ assault look much the same – large numbers of people become violently ill. The inquiry underscored the importance of intelligence from insiders. Investigators cracked the case only after members of the cult came forward and confessed their crimes. Quietly, the small cadre of experts and federal officials who understood the power of germ weapons began to wonder if the attack in Oregon was an anomaly or a harbinger.”

The book moves far beyond Oregon, to national capitals, scientific laboratories, terrorist bunkers and other sites across the globe. Verifiable incidents of biological and chemical warfare are told in depth.

There is little reason for optimism. As the authors note, government and military officials in the United States and other nations have known for decades that they were poorly prepared for biological and chemical weapons assaults, yet have done little to protect the public. “A half century ago, a group of eminent citizens warned James Forrestal, the first secretary of defense, that the United States was defenseless against germ attacks. But its recommendations for better intelligence, more research, drug stockpiles and medical surveillance systems were largely ignored. Over the next five decades, a series of American presidents confronted the problem, considered various remedies, and shuffled the issue into the ‘too hard’ box. Such denial is understandable. Biodefense has no natural political constituency in Washington. The military-industrial complex that supports weapons systems has little interest in vaccines and public health.”

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

Houston column

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

These are just a few examples of agencies that are lagging in protecting public safety and are removing databases that could show how badly they fall short of their mission. The cover story package in this edition of *The IRE Journal* details the many fine stories that have been done and those that are at risk in the future.

Contributor thanks

The IRE Journal's recent first-place award in the publishing/journalism category in the Folio: Editorial Excellence Awards was not only a tribute to the hard work of its mostly part-time staff. It also was a tribute to the investigative work of our members and their generosity in sharing how they do it.

For each issue, we count on members to find the time to share and often write about how they did an investigative story. For those unfamiliar with IRE, the idea of journalists sharing techniques and tips is a shock. But this organization is based on cooperation and support.

We thank all our volunteer members and contributors who help make each issue valuable and unique.

Members-only

To increase the value of an IRE membership, we have made the long-awaited move to shift some of our Web site resources into a members-only area.

Most of our Web pages remain public, but some key services require membership, including the online *Journal* pages, indexes for past *Journal* and *Uplink* articles, reporting tipsheets, the latest online news projects, listserv archives, videostreamed tape clips, many educator resources and more.

Help a colleague

Also, in the spirit of this organization, IRE and our employed members are reaching out to help those members who have been recently laid off. Under the Help A Colleague Program, a fund has been set up to finance discounted fees for those who have lost their jobs.

The program allows recently laid-off members who are still unemployed to renew their memberships for a year at half price – \$25. It also allows generous working members to help out by sponsoring out-of-work colleagues who apply for help.

MEMBER NEWS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

partisan studies on international security, social policy, education and the humanities.

■ **Leah Samuel** is now a staff reporter for *The Chicago Reporter*. She was formerly a reporter for *Labor Notes*, a nonprofit magazine dedicated to labor issues. ■ *South Florida Sun Sentinel* investigative editor **Fred Schulte** and senior writer **Jenni Bergal** won the National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association Award for Excellence in Journalism for "Crashing for Cash," a series detailed in the July-August edition of *The IRE Journal*. ■ **David Stoeffler** has been promoted to the newly created position of vice president for news at Lee Enterprises. Stoeffler, who served as editor of the *Lincoln (Neb.) Journal Star* for four years, began his career with Lee as a reporter for the *La Crosse (Wis.) Tribune* in 1979. As vice president for news, Stoeffler will focus on improving editorial content in Lee's 23 daily newspapers and will oversee recruitment and training efforts.

DNA bank

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

In the weeks before our series aired, Michigan lawmakers announced their decision on the DNA samples, ordering hospitals to continue administering the newborn blood screening tests without parental consent. The law allows researchers access to the databank of blood drops, provided scientific study meets federal research standards and preserves the confidentiality of test subjects. The Department of Community Health also was charged with developing a schedule for the retention and disposal of blood samples.

When we broadcast our findings, no date had been set for the large-scale disposal of newborn screening cards. As a result of our series, however, Dr. Johnson insisted his department would develop a plan for parents requesting that individual samples be destroyed. Bonnie Prestin's request was among the first granted.

Paul Newton joined WNEM as a reporter in 1996. In 1999, he became part of the station's first special projects/investigative unit, where his work has been honored with several awards.

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.

Programs and Services:

IRE RESOURCE CENTER – A rich reserve of print and broadcast stories, tipsheets and guides to help you start and complete the best work of your career. This unique library is the starting point of any piece you're working on. You can search through abstracts of more than 17,000 investigative reporting stories through our Web site.

Contact: Carolyn Edds, carolyn@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: Jeff Porter, jeff@ire.org, 573-884-7711

CAMPAIGN FINANCE INFORMATION CENTER – Administered by IRE and the National Institute for 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: Aron Pilhofer, aron@ire.org, 573-882-2042

ON-THE-ROAD TRAINING – As a top promoter of journalism education, IRE offers loads of training opportunities throughout the year. Possibilities range from 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: Ron Nixon, ron@nicar.org, 573-882-2042

Publications

THE IRE JOURNAL – Published six times a year. 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: Jeff Porter, jeff@ire.org, 573-884-7711

REPORTER.ORG – A collection of Web-based resources for journalists, journalism educators and others. Discounted Web hosting and services such as 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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