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Story on p. 9

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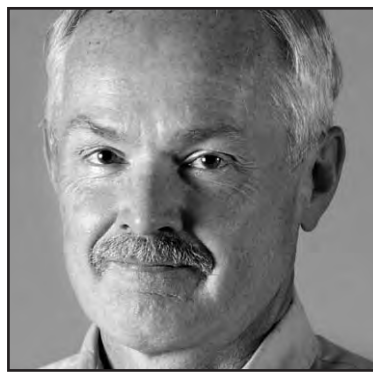
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Paper updates design to match the times

By COLIN MACLEAN

When the people of Summer-side awoke on Oct. 12, 2006, many found something very different about their community paper, The Journal Pioneer.

Gone was the traditional bright red masthead, the beige teasers on top of the front page, the long story on the left and a dozen other little things that made The Journal what it was.

"I've gone through a few (redesigns) in my time, but this one to me made the most sense," said managing editor Mike Turner.

He has been in the newspaper business for about 20 years as a freelancer, reporter and editor. Between weekly and daily publications, The Journal is the sixth paper he has edited in four provinces.

And a lot has changed in the newspaper business over those 20 years, said Turner. When he graduated from journalism school, computers were just starting to appear in newsrooms and up until a few years ago colour wasn't really an issue.

There was a time when the words would carry a story. Today, shorter stories are the name of the game and more thought is being put into photos and other types of graphics, he said.

"(Today), the 800-word story better be worth it."

But at the same time there's also a lot of room for creativity with images and photos, he said.

Nancy MacPhee has been a reporter at The Journal for about 10 years. To her, The Journal's new look is easier to read and looks more professional. She also finds the new design has affected the way she approaches her job.

"I think it's improved my writing."

It's all about trying to find a more appealing way to sell the product, she said. One of the ways they've done this is by changing the amount of hard news coverage they do.

"We've become more people-oriented and a far better read."

People want to read stories about their neighbours. They want to hear about what's going on in their community. It's not always about the more unpleasant side of news coverage, she said.



Managing editor Mike Turner with the before and after photos of the Journal Pioneer's most recent redesign. MacLean photo.

"I've always believed that journalism is about helping others."

The Journal is far more local now because it's material you can't get anywhere else. It's part of the evolution newspapers face, said Turner.

Putting newspaper websites to good use is also part of a company-wide thrust in response to a circulation slump. Most people get their information from the Internet now, so the new layout was designed with the web in mind, he said.

Donna Butler has been reading the Journal for years and she thinks the new design is a big improvement.

"The old one (design) was a little mixed up. This one is a lot more clear," she said.

She also likes the shorter stories "because they do kind of ramble on sometimes."

And she enjoys the teasers along the left of the page.

Newspapers are starting to become multi-platform news

providers by expanding their websites, said Turner.

Other media, such as radio and TV, are locked into their broadcast time. But through the Internet, The Journal's reporters can keep the community up to date anytime of the day.

The trick is getting people to see the connection between the two versions of the paper.

"It's somewhat subliminal but the website is on the top of every page."

And usually if audio or video is available to accompany a story there would be a message in the paper pointing readers to the website, Turner said.

"Instead of just reading what somebody said you can actually hear their voice, which is another facet of storytelling."

So far the response from the community has been pretty positive, although it's always a risky venture when you're making a change, said MacPhee.

"You have to really fight for

your readers."

Some people didn't like the look at first, but mostly it just took time to get used to, said Turner.

"People are defensive about their local newspaper," he said, adding it's part of the community. One person complained the new layout was harder to read even though the size of the lettering had actually been increased.

Another said they couldn't find the letters to the editor anymore, but letters to the editors are still on page four, where they've always been, said Turner.

People just needed to give it a chance and generally people have been supportive.

"It's like waking up one day and seeing your furniture moved around."

A big concern for many people was changing the red Journal Pioneer nameplate to the illustration of the West Point Light House.

"For the nameplate, we wanted something that was personal to

represent our area,' said Turner.

The Journal's cartoonist did the image with the blessing of those in charge of the lighthouse. But people had to adjust to that too, he said.

Also, the stock market section of the paper was removed.

"The people in the stock market are people who have computers," said Turner.

All of these changes are to a certain extent about breaking old rules journalists have in the industry. The papers breaking the rules are the ones being talked about, said Turner.

Many people are saying that because of the movement towards online content, printed newspapers are becoming obsolete.

Turner doesn't agree, although he did say in years to come the newspaper industry will change into something that barely resembles what it is now.

"Personally, I'm confident the newspaper will be around for a while."

The merits of J-school

Do you need training to be a successful journalist?

By JACLYN KILLINS

There is only one piece Globe and Mail columnist Roy MacGregor says he ever wrote that never ran. It's a frank recollection of his year studying journalism at The University of Western Ontario.

He was asked to write about his experience for their alumnae magazine, and what he came up with wasn't flattering.

In it, MacGregor explains how all but two professors failed to connect with the students, classes were ill attended and the curriculum was a joke.

He and his classmates, he said, were in their "early twenties, already with a degree from somewhere else ... a year or two spent tromping about Europe, grateful that Canada was not in Vietnam, Nixon-hating, Stones lovin', long haired, mixed-up, career-baffled and, instantly, appalled by what the University of Western Ontario was claiming to be a course in journalism."

There was some merit in the course, however, since he left with the confidence to become a journalist, said MacGregor.

"The year was academically a disaster, but oddly enough, as time wore on I came to see that all was not lost, that I had lost all fear that journalism might be some secret handshake ever to be denied me."

The journalism program at The University of Western Ontario was threatened with the axe in the early 1980s, but public protest helped it to survive.

Still, MacGregor is a big believer in a general education for journalists, he said.

"Go to university for a bit and study anything but journalism, and then take journalism."

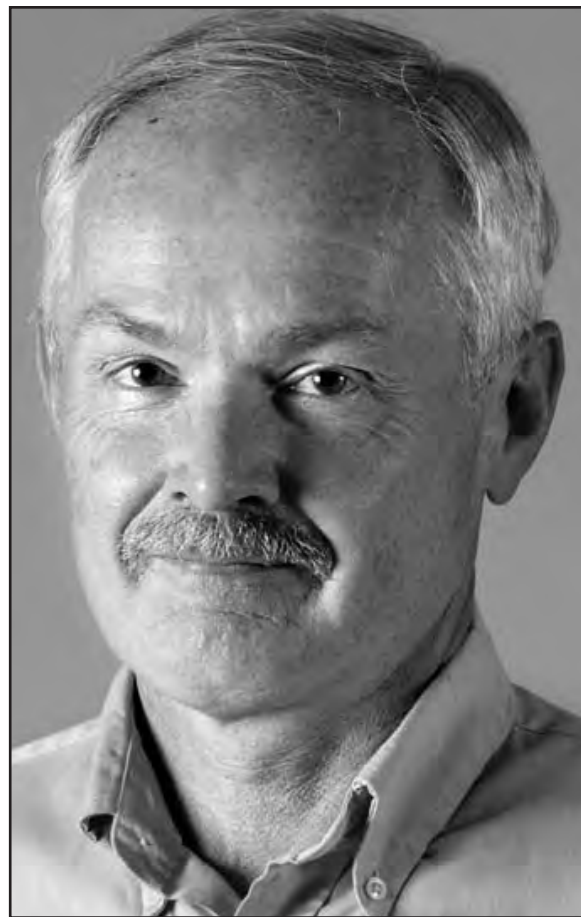
More people majoring in sciences like economics, engineering or biology should get into journalism because there is a need for people who can translate science to the public, MacGregor said.

"I don't think there are enough science degrees out there going into journalism."

MacGregor comes from an earlier era in journalism, an age when Grade 9 dropouts Robert Fulford and Michael Enwright



Paul MacNeill. Submitted photo



Roy MacGregor. Submitted photo

"The year was academically a disaster, but oddly enough, as time wore on I came to see that all was not lost, that I had lost all fear that journalism might be some secret handshake ever to be denied me."

- Roy MacGregor

went on to become famous journalists, he said.

J-school is now an important step in becoming a journalist, but he wonders if the ideal journalistic personality doesn't fit into current moulds of education, MacGregor said.

"The journalistic personality is by nature attention-deficit, so the fact that people don't do well in the accepted school system doesn't mean for a moment they wouldn't make good journalists."

MacGregor's opinion of a useful journalism program is one that takes lessons learned in a class setting and applies it to produc-

tion of a newspaper, radio station or television program, he said.

"Students would learn far, far more with hands on experience and deadlines than they would in the class."

Most of the focus of a journalism program should be on producing material, with someone overseeing and pointing out where students are going right and where they are going wrong, MacGregor said.

"[Journalism is] like anything else from a sport to playing the piano, it's all about practice."

Learning to meet deadlines is an important part of training to be a

journalist, MacGregor said.

"Fancy writing can come later, but first of all you have to get the job done."

Jessica Arcaro worked as a reporter/photographer for Niagara This Week, a newspaper that puts out weekly and bi-weekly newspapers for communities across the Niagara Region in Ontario.

A graduate of Niagara College's two-year journalism program, Arcaro learned the realities of the field at J-school, she said.

The professors made it clear to the students that if they think being a reporter is a nine-to-five job, they will be surprised, Arcaro

said.

"I did get that it was a hard work thing. J-school does tell you there is a reality behind journalism. It's no American Dream."

Arcaro, about to graduate from Brock University with a bachelor of arts in English and history with a minor in women's studies, said university didn't help her as a journalist at all.

"I've seen one place, Toronto Life magazine that required a university degree."

But J-school taught her the important tools of journalism, Arcaro said.

"I learned about [the news cooperative Canadian Press] and its value in the industry."

Niagara College's program covered important subjects like the Canadian justice system and politics and taught students important details of reporting like "saving all records for a few years," Arcaro said.

Her satisfaction with J-school comes from being keen and shaking the information out of her sub-par teachers, something many classmates couldn't be bothered doing, so they didn't get as much out of the course, she said.

"The only reason why I got so much out of it is because I bugged the guy. There was a lack of respect for the professor. He was an old senile man. We had to do all our typesets at 16 point."

At the Eastern Graphic newspaper in Montague, P.E.I., it is not J-school, but proof of inquisitive thinking that gets people hired, publisher Paul MacNeill, said.

"You can teach people how to write a sentence, you can't teach critical thinking."

MacNeill said the big problem with J-schools today is they don't teach students how to communicate with the community around them.

"I see J-schools fall down an awful lot around that issue."

When hiring editors and reporters, MacNeill looks for people who are capable of going out and getting to know the community, people who have "the ability to take information, distill it and give it to your audience," he said.

Turning down the noise

With the wealth of information circulating today, getting overwhelmed is easy

By DOUG DICKIESON

During the school year, UPEI student Stephen Mahar can be found in his room buried deep in his studies on political science, surrounded by books and papers and cold cups of coffee.

The inside of his room is filled by two desks overflowing with papers and books, he uses one desk to set his laptop on and the other to organized what work is left.

If he hasn't locked himself in his room, he sets himself up on his kitchen table. His studies have him read Internet blogs, journals and government websites.

Having most of his classes in the afternoon, he usually goes to sleep around 4 a.m.

Mahar said his biggest challenge is when the information overwhelms him, especially when it comes to following the news.

Public access to information has always been in television, radio, or printed word, but the amount of information being promoted continues to increase, said Mahar.

"Before the Internet, you had to wait to get the news, today you don't have to."

It is hard not to get overwhelmed by the amount of information circulating, whether it comes from Internet blogs, hourly news updates on the radio, or 24-hour news stations, he said.

"Sometimes you need a break from the stress."

Many people are overwhelmed with all the information available these days and it helps to know how to reduce the noise, said Gary MacDougall, managing editor of The Guardian daily newspaper in Charlottetown, P.E.I.

When readers are faced with so many news choices, it can become hard to identify what matters in news.

"Journalism is simple, the reporter goes out and gets the info, then tries to make a balanced story."

If the information is unbalanced, it's easier for newsreaders to get confused about what they are reading, said MacDougall.

"Spin makes the story less focused and allows for a lot of



Stephen Mahar usually sets up his study area in his room, but sometimes he needs to get rid of it and do his work in his kitchen. Dickieson photo

*"Sometimes you need
a break from the stress."*

- Stephen Mahar

irrelevant issues to get into the story, it becomes hard for readers to cut out the noise."

Most people want their information to be put into perspective, and balanced stories help readers in doing so, said MacDougall.

"You have to be aware of spin to be able to put your information into perspective."

MacDougall said it starts with the journalist asking the best questions to get the best information, so the readers can make the

best judgment about what information they are taking in.

"If you know why you read or listen to the news, rather than just taking it in, is the best way to cut out the noise."

With cellphones equipped with cameras, anyone can capture an event and post it on the Internet, this is called citizen journalism.

The Internet newspaper sootoday.com uses citizen journalism to help cover the news by allowing people to post their videos

from their home computers, said Dave Helwig, news director of sootoday.com.

"If someone covers an accident or city event, we can have a video of it posted on the site within minutes."

Helwig said it is impossible for printed newspapers to do this because newspapers need to be manufactured before publishing, while on the Internet they have unlimited space.

Mahar said citizen journalism is what causes readers to get overwhelmed with information.

"They are made to sound important so often, I stopped listening to it all together."

MacDougall said citizen journalism has its uniqueness and its strengths when it comes to cover-

ing breaking news, but it is more like entertainment than journalism.

"When you watch or read it for a while, you got to ask how much depth does this have."

Helwig said the best way he has found to deal with too much information is staying focused on one issue at a time.

"Every editor wakes up to a universe of information, it's when you try to take everything at once is when you get overwhelmed."

Mahar parties with friends to relieve the stress when he is not buried in his political science work.

"Literally, every university student works for the weekend, though there are some who don't."

Citizen journalists finding ways to get their stories told

By JENNILEE
CUDMORE



Claire George of Ontario has been all smiles since she stumbled across the burning heritage building that changed her life. Submitted photo

A journalist's job is to get the news to the public.

But increasingly, they play an active role in the process of collecting and reporting news and information.

Some go out of their way to find a story to pitch to a local newspaper or TV station. Others just happen to be in the right place at the right time to get a big news story.

Guardian newspaper news editor Bill McGuire in Charlottetown, P.E.I., said the web is more flexible than the newspaper when it comes to citizen journalism.

"We have potentially 140,000 journalists on P.E.I., everyone has digital cameras these days."

Many people pitch ideas to the paper, he said

"You get a sense from calls what's important to the reader and we're always looking for help from readers."

Since the Guardian has a small newsroom staff, it's hard to be everywhere, he said.

"If what is shown to us by the public is newsworthy, we'll take it for the paper."

Sometimes citizens come across top stories by accident.

In 2004, Claire George of East Gwillimbury, Ontario happened to come across one of the town's Heritage buildings on fire late in the night.

"My family had just gotten back from vacation in Niagara Falls and our camcorder was still in the car. I called 911 then grabbed the camcorder and filmed the fire," said George.

The fire department put out the fire before the town's journalists arrived.

"I was the only one with footage of the building on fire, so our newspaper paid me \$100 for the tape so they could use images from the tape," she said.

Once George got a taste for journalism, she was addicted. She plans on enrolling in Carlton's Journalism program next fall.

"I really think it was fate I

came across that fire. I'd probably be stuck taking random courses at some university if I hadn't," said George.

Tarrin Wojick of Vancouver is a member in a Facebook group called Citizen Journalism.

She was at a popular dance club when a fight broke out.

Wojick was with her friends taking goofy pictures when they heard yelling.

Wojick turned around just in time to see one guy hit the other in the face.

"I turned my camera onto film mode and started recorded these

two guys swinging at one another," she said.

One of the guys pulled a knife out of his pocket and stabbed the other in the side.

"I was so shocked that I had forgotten I was getting all this on tape," said Wojick.

Security and police quickly arrived and arrested the man who did the stabbing. Meanwhile, Wojick was still filming.

"The guy even put up a fight with the cops, it was ridiculous," she said.

Wojick's sister, Kara Blakely, works at a smalltown newspa-

per in Vancouver.

Wojick sent her the image over the computer and Blakely wrote about it, using her sister as one of the voices for the story.

"No one else got the fight on tape, I don't think anyone even took pictures," said Wojick.

She pitched her story and footage of the fight to other newspapers across the province, but they declined her offer.

Not all citizen journalists report on happening news. Some pitch interesting life stories.

Twenty-two-year-old Sharri

Luhani is also in the Citizen Journalism facebook group. He moved to Ontario from Croatia when he was nine.

Luhani and his family moved to Canada to escape the war that was going on in their country.

The war broke out in Croatia when it declared independence from Yugoslavia.

Croatian forces blockaded federal barracks, cutting off utilities and food. Yugoslavian soldiers then shelled nearby civilian areas.

Luhani witnessed families being shot and killed. He and his family were forced to go to a protection camp.

"The camps were scary. We had to practise drills in case we were bombed, even though we knew that if the camp was bombed, we would probably all die," said Luhani.

He e-mailed a reporter telling his story. The reporter contacted him the next day to set up an interview.

The story made the front page of the Ajax News Advisor newspaper.

"I just wanted to get my story out to let Canadians know what we went through and what many immigrants that moved to Canada have gone through," said Luhani.

He became interested in citizen journalism when he came across a CNN website on the topic.

Other citizen journalists go out of their way to find a news worthy story.

Corey Grey of Halifax sometimes spends his free time driving around looking for a story.

"I've always been big into getting news first, I love telling people things they didn't know. In high school I was a bit of a gossip," he said. Grey has yet to come across a story newspapers or new stations want.

"I know I'll come across a big story sometime, but it is a little frustrating," he said. Eventually Grey wants enter the Kings College's journalism program, but for now he's more interested in making citizen journalism his hobby.

Spin and counter-spin

Increasingly, politicians use experts to help them control the message

By **TERESA WRIGHT
CONSTABLE**



Brendan Elliott, CBC Radio's legislative reporter, in front of Province House in Charlottetown. Elliott must un-spin the message while covering provincial politics. Wright Constable photo.

Sitting in the legislature press room after a heated exchange during question period, CBC radio's legislative reporter Brendan Elliott was preparing to record his story – when who should appear at the door but the premier's policy advisor.

Geoff Townsend walked in and, putting his feet up on a chair, sat down for a chat.

It was the second last day of the government's fall sitting and the opposition Tories had made some bold statements regarding the province's proposed plan to introduce a harmonized sales tax to P.E.I.

They had charged the HST would end up costing every Islander an extra \$1,000 a year in taxes.

Townsend was on a mission. "You know, Brendan," he said. "If we brought in the HST, it would actually be the single biggest tax savings in the history of the province."

As soon as he said this, it was obvious he liked the way it sounded. He repeated it several times through the course of the conversation.

"The single biggest tax savings in the history of the province," the Liberal advisor said once more for good measure as he left the room.

As Townsend waved goodbye and Elliott returned to his writing, the reporter whispered, "I've just been spun."

The Oxford dictionary defines a spin doctor as "a spokesperson for a political party or politician employed to give a favourable interpretation of events to the media."

This was Townsend's role on this day. He didn't want the CBC's story to be opposition member Jim Bagnall's accusations about the HST costing Islanders \$1,000 more a year in taxes. He wanted a good news story about the Liberals bringing in generous tax savings.

Elliott wasn't biting. "The first sign that you're being spun is when someone makes an

outlandish claim like the one Geoff did. It might be true, but the Spidey senses immediately go off," Elliott said in an interview later.

When this happens, he asks himself things like, 'How does he know that?' or 'Why is he saying that?'

"Many times the bigger the hype or spin, the less substance there is to the claim."

So after Townsend left the media room, Elliott went looking for answers.

Another seasoned political journalist was also covering the day's proceedings. The Guardian newspaper's chief political reporter, Wayne Thibodeau, was hot on the trail of the HST story.

When trying to counter political spin such as Bagnall's "\$1,000 more in taxes" or Townsend's "historical tax savings," Thibodeau said he tries to find someone who can tell him the 'truth.'

"Facts are the best kind of truth, so hopefully some bureaucrat has a study or some report that would say what the true cost or savings are," he said.

Another practice he employs is checking out what other provinces have done.

"If that doesn't work, or if time is a problem, you tell both sides and let the reader be the judge."

When covering this particular story, this is what he did.

"But then we followed it up with New Brunswick's experience...where they had big savings," Thibodeau said.

Still looking for answers, Elliott wrestled with how he would cover the story.

He decided it was time to counter the spin and question the actual decision-maker on this issue – Finance Minister Wes Sheridan.

But just as Sheridan emerged from the big wooden doors that separate the privilege of elected

office from the reporters who must wait in the hall beyond, Townsend re-appeared.

He pulled Sheridan into a side office – leaving Elliott to wait until he was been fully briefed on the HST issue. Almost a half hour later, Sheridan emerged – ready to be interviewed.

Elliott got out his tape recorder while Townsend positioned himself just behind the two men as they conducted their interview.

"We're probably looking at the single largest tax saving for Prince Edward Island in the history of this province if we go with HST," Sheridan said as Elliott questioned him about Bagnall's claims of extra costs.

"We're talking about tens of millions of dollars back in the hands of Islanders."

Townsend stood behind them – his hand on his chin – smiling broadly as he heard his day's phrase emerging from the finance

minister's lips.

"How do you know?" Elliott asked Sheridan.

Sheridan mumbled something about how they were still "ratifying the numbers" and "in the midst of looking at everything."

The interview was over, but the message track had been diligently performed. Later Elliott said he fully expected this would be the outcome when he saw Townsend go off with the minister before he had a chance to interview him.

"That, to me,, sent up a bunch of flags. And predictably, the quote from Geoff's mouth magically appeared a few minutes later in Wes's mouth."

Knowing when you're being spun is all about these kinds of observations, he said.

"That to me was an example of spin."

Of course, just because a politician is spinning information doesn't necessarily mean he is lying.

Thibodeau said one of the major challenges he faces in political reporting is not becoming jaded, for this very reason.

"I may give politicians a hard time, but I have the utmost in respect for them."

They are, for the most part, hard working and have the best interests of their constituents at heart, he said.

"That being said, they need to be kept in check, and part of that job lies in the hands of the media."

At the end of the day the most important thing is reporters present the news as fairly and as accurately as possible, he said.

And at the end of Elliott's day in the legislature, he presented both sides of the debate, with some colourful quotes from question period.

He ended by reminding Islanders that, despite the partisan politics prevalent in the debate, the facts are not yet clear enough to make any conclusions.

"My story will help frame the first impression many people will have for a particular story. That's a lot of power," he said. "And I never forget that as I try to report a balanced and informative."

After ditching plans to become a doctor, Bruce Rainnie finds a career in journalism

By MEGAN WALSH

In high school, Bruce Rainnie and some friends did a show for his local cable station, but he didn't plan on a career in broadcasting at the time.

"It was bad, but fun," he said about the show.

It wasn't until 1989, when he took a part-time job at a radio station to help with his university expenses, that he realized he wanted a career in broadcasting.

He graduated that year from Dalhousie with a bachelor of science and he planned to go into orthopedic medicine.

His plans changed, however. Broadcasting gave him a rush and he knew it was what he wanted to do.

His university degree was never used, well except to irritate his friends with science talk, he said.

"My parents were thrilled," Bruce's brother, Matt, said sarcastically about him leaving medicine to go into broadcast.

Actually, Matt, who works for CBC Radio in Charlottetown, thinks his brother knew what he was doing.

"I think he made the right choice for himself. He's a phenomenal communicator."

The day Bruce graduated he was offered a job for \$15,000 at CJLS Radio in Yarmouth. He had a morning show that ran from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and a promise of \$16,000 in eight months after starting.

His time at CJLS lasted six years and in 1995 he applied for Maritime Tonight, a CBC television program. The two people who had done the weather and sports show retired in the same year and both had to be replaced.

A co-worker of Bruce's in Yarmouth got the weather position for the show. She knew Bruce loved sports and urged him to apply.

Forty-two people auditioned for the sports position along side Bruce's co-worker, who read the weather.

"I always thought she tried a little harder with me because she wanted me to get it," he said of



Bruce Rainnie sitting at the anchor desk at CBC TV's Compass. Walsh photo

his co-worker.

On Sept. 4, 1995, Bruce became the late night sports guy on Maritime Tonight.

As a former high school basketball coach, Bruce said he likes to cover that sport the most, along with tennis. Tennis star Roger Federer is one of his favourite players to watch.

"If I get either, I'm happy."

But hockey is a huge thing in Canada, so covering it is always fun as well, he said.

Besides sports, Bruce said he

also enjoys covering politics.

And his co-worker, Sally Pitt, said he does it well.

He has the depth to handle a whole range of interviews. From politics to sports to movie reviews, he always has the appropriate tone, she said.

"The job I have now is ideal," Bruce said.

Matt couldn't be happier with where his brother ended up.

"Who would have thought we'd end up in the same place. To have a brother, who's also a best friend,

in the same city is fantastic," he said.

Matt said he and Bruce have a lot of fun working together.

"He's an inspiration to work with. He doesn't go halfway with anything."

"He'll come on my show and I'll go on his," he said.

It's great to be around someone like that, Matt said.

Pitt said one of Bruce's greatest skills is he makes it look so easy.

"He remains unflustered in all kinds of hectic situations."

Bruce Rainnie is the host of Compass, the evening news program on CBC Television in P.E.I. He is also known as the voice of CBC Sports in Atlantic Canada.

He covered the Olympic Games in 2000, 2002, 2004 and 2006. In March 2004, he researched, co-produced and hosted Great Expectations, a half-hour prime-time documentary on hockey star Sidney Crosby.

He enjoyed making the documentary and sees Crosby as a good friend.

His favourite hockey team is Pittsburgh and he said it's because he enjoys watching his buddy play. He has also expanded his duties to host Hockey Night in Canada, CFL on CBC and the World Curling Championships.

When Rainnie had to fill in for Ron MacLean while he was at the Olympics, commentator Don Cherry gave him a hard time. But it was in a joking sort of way, he said.

After the show Cherry went up to Rainnie and told him he did a good job.

Cherry kept calling him Brian, but Bruce didn't correct him. Rainnie describes Cherry as a very nice guy who is actually quiet off camera.

MacLean is a good friend and someone he looks up to in the business.

"He's exactly himself when the camera is on and I think it's the greatest thing."

A person is most successful when they are themselves, he said.

During the course of a year, Rainnie does a lot of traveling for his career, whether it's to NHL games or to call the gold medal performance of the Canadian women's hockey team in Turin, Italy.

"I would say I travel 25 times a year for my job," he said.

Although his wife, Kendra MacGillivray, and son, Mark, don't travel with him often, he said that's his goal when Mark is a little older.

At 18 months, he's too little to take on long trips.

Graphic images part of daily diet

By STACEY MURRAY

Following a 2004 tsunami in South East Asia, a group of men wearing masks lined up orange and black body bags along a partially flooded mud road.

A row of stores stood behind them, damaged by water. Debris surrounded them for miles.

Andre Forget captured this image in a photograph during his time in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

While he had been to several violent and devastating events over the years, the smell as he stepped off the plane in Indonesia would stay with him, even years later.

“If you don’t expect it, it’s gut wrenching,” he said.

Now chief photographer at the Halifax Daily News, Forget has traveled to Haiti, Northern Ireland, Mexico and Bosnia for shoots in the past. Working as a photographer for over a decade, he has worked for Reuters, the Canadian Press and for several publications in Montreal, including La Presse.

At times in his career, the shock of events has led him to photograph graphic images by instinct.

Many times, the scenes before him were too compelling not to record, he said.

“Sometimes you photograph and look at it at another time.”

Forget said there have been many occasions where his photographs haven’t made it to print – by choice.

“I censor some of the graphic images myself...I simply won’t send them.”

Michael Creagen, photojournalism instructor at Kings College in Halifax, had a similar philosophy when he photographed graphic images.

“I could choose to send what I want.”

Still, when he arrived at a scene, Creagen photographed everything he saw and didn’t try to censor the events of the day.

“(A photographer’s) job is not to judge what’s in front of them. It’s to record,” he said.

It’s ultimately up to editors to decide what makes it into newspapers. Whether to print a photograph can depend on geography and the overall nature of the paper, he said.



Holland College photography instructor Alex Murchison said the increase of violent images might be due to an increasing number of media outlets. Murray photo-illustration.

“In rural New Brunswick, you’re not allowed to show a bare breast. In the Globe and Mail you can – and you can also show dead bodies.”

Because the decision lies with editors, some of the most thought-provoking images don’t see the light of day, he said.

“Sometimes the best work doesn’t get shown.”

Generally, media outlets have eased the rules on what is acceptable for print when it comes to violent and explicit images, Creagen said.

“I would say the business is allowed to print more graphic photographs.”

Forget said over the years, violence has become more prominent in the media.

“There’s certainly been desensitization with violent images.”

It has come from television and its inaccurate portrayal of some violent events, not the media, he said.

“Some of that stuff is more violent than reality.”

Creagen agreed, saying shows like CSI account for a lot of the most graphic images people see.

“These are some pretty gruesome shows.”

Forget said the Internet has also accounted to the increase of graphic images. Some of the most graphic images of the Net are posted by citizen journalists, who may not think about the impact certain images can have.

“Events in this time are possibly more violent – or more broadcast.”

Holland College photography instructor Alex Murchison said he doesn’t think the media is printing more violent images.

“I think we see more because there is more media.”

With a daily dose of imagery from television, local newspapers, the Internet and dozens of imported publications, there are more violent images to see, he said.

“I think the big move has been with digital technology. It has allowed us to see more out there,” Murchison said. “We’re fed a constant diet of imagery.”

This diet has led to people believing the world has become more dangerous, he said.

“It tends to make us think it’s a more violent world, but I think it’s how we perceive it.”

From the publications he’s seen, Europe tends to print the most violent and sexually explicit photographs, while the Maritimes takes a softer approach.

The Bridgewater Bulletin, a weekly newspaper on the south shore of Nova Scotia, has printed graphic images under special circumstances, said editor Vernon Oickle.

“It has to be pretty amazing for us to run it.”

In 1998, the paper came face to face with gruesome images following the Swiss Air Flight 111 crash off Peggy’s Cove. The

paper had to decide whether to print photographs of the wreckage.

With media outlets around the world covering the tragedy, the paper opted not to run its most graphic images of body parts, instead describing the scene through words.

The paper’s readership reacted negatively, even without the graphic images that could have accompanied the story.

“Of course, it was a pretty graphic thing.”

Still, the paper stood by its decision, Oickle said.

“I’m in the opinion that tragic events, while they’re sad, are still important to record.”

In cases where they do decide to run a controversial photograph, he tries to prepare for the negative feedback.

“I make a decision that I can defend.”

To Oickle, a newspaper serves as the historic document for the area it covers, and history isn’t always positive.

“It’s not always a good thing. It’s not always rosy.”

Forget said in many cases, newspapers in larger cities tend to print more graphic photos because more things happen.

“In bigger cities, you get closer to certain scenes.”

In Vancouver, for example, Forget photographed scenes from the ongoing drug problem in the city.

“Sometimes it can be right in your backyard.”

More recently, he photographed a cyclist who had been hit and killed by a truck. The body was covered by a tarp.

While it hit close to home for many in the city, Forget said it was important for The Daily News to publish it.

“It’s a gentle reminder to appreciate life.”

Creagen said, in many ways, North America is sheltered from many gruesome events. While we see the photographs, readers can’t understand the experience on a deeper level.

His mother lived in Japan during the Second World War.

Her experience is much different than the majority of North Americans, he said.

“She’s lived through that kind of violence.”

The man behind the scenes

Show must always go on for 30-year veteran of Compass on CBC TV

By **STEPHEN BRUN**

CBC reporter Erin Moore is struggling through a preview for P.E.I.'s evening news program, Compass, in the Charlottetown studio.

The feed isn't live though, it's being taped to air at noon and 5 p.m. – a lucky thing for Moore, whose choice words after a flub wouldn't pass most censors.

"She's got the story locked on her desktop, so I can't get in to edit it," said Compass director Brian MacRae, who speaks to Moore over a headset from the control room.

"She's trying to remember to put a word in that's not there."

Couple that challenge with having to say the tongue-twister "cheap Chinese cold crops" and Moore starts to wonder if she'll ever get the minute-long take finished by noon.

"Are you getting worried yet Brian?" she asks into the camera.

"It's Friday, it's OK," said MacRae. "Deep breath and we'll go again in 15."

It's this calm and experience that makes MacRae such a valuable part of the team at CBC News: Compass, watched by thousands of Islanders every weeknight.

"The whole program rests on his shoulders," said Moore after finally nailing the promo.

Ten minutes later, the preview of the night's news is broadcast on a four-second delay from Toronto, where MacRae was able to send it in the nick of time.

No less than 10 computer screens line the desk in the control room and several large LCD screens show different camera angles from the studio and outside the building where Kevin "Boomer" Gallant does his weather forecast.

To the casual observer, though, you'd hardly know the deadline to relay the preview to Toronto was so tight given the apparent ease with which MacRae does his job.

Since starting at CBC in 1977 as a radio technician, MacRae has seen a huge change in the technology used to gather and broadcast news.

From two-inch videotape, run through two huge VTR machines,



Brian MacRae, director of CBC News: Compass on Prince Edward Island, surveys the array of computers and LCD screens he uses to produce the nightly news show. Brun photo

to digital news pieces the reporters can edit from their own desks, MacRae's job as a director has become easier in some ways and more difficult in others.

"[The technology] hasn't got simpler either. It's more complicated. What you can do in an editing suite now compared to 10-20 years ago is pretty phenomenal."

A few years after starting with CBC, MacRae got into full-time camera work after editing techniques for Compass changed and jobs were shuffled.

As the equipment became lighter, the network decided to train some of its camera personnel and reporters to become video journalists. MacRae was one of the first to take a course that paired an equal number of journalists and cameramen and let them go to work.

"They'd try to train the journalists to shoot and the cameramen to write," he said. "It was a very humbling experience, after shooting and working with the journalists, to actually sit down and try to do a story. To write a story and structure a story is very challenging."

But the training ultimately didn't go very far with MacRae, who preferred to stay behind the scenes.

In the mid-1990s, he became the director of the supper-hour news program, but tough times and uncertainty were ahead for the network.

In 2000, CBC cut its one-hour regional news programs in half to create Canada Now, a single cross-country broadcast of national and international news.

Keeping even the half-hour portion of local news was largely due to protests and outcry by the public and CBC employees in the Maritimes, said MacRae.

"The original plan was to cancel all supper-hour shows. P.E.I. and Newfoundland in particular put quite a bit of pressure on, so they backed off and compromised to a half hour. That was a hard time."

Many people at CBC either lost their jobs or decided to retire earlier than they would have, he said.

"There was a great growth period in the early 70s and 80s [at CBC] and then there was a downhill slide for a while. It's coming

back now. We're back to an hour."

In late 2006, CBC decided to cancel Canada Now and allow the local news programs to supplement the second half hour with nationally-produced items.

Switching to the computer arts control room almost five years ago meant a few less people producing the show, but they're now free to help gather news, said MacRae.

"It's probably because of the technology that we have an hour show now."

The host is now the only person in the studio, surrounded by robotic cameras, while MacRae and a few others monitor things from the control room.

"You have to keep on top of [the technology]. You think your education's done when you leave college, but to keep on top of this stuff you're always learning."

While the learning is constant, MacRae is no slouch when it comes to developing technology to make the job easier.

He was the first to come up with a system – now used in CBC newsrooms across the country –

of sorting digital versions of stories to make them easier to find and access, said TV reporter Ian Petrie.

"He has this amazing capacity for innovation, particularly for the computers.

"I find Brian's very creative and innovative when it comes to graphics as well. A lot of people will just slap them down on a piece of paper, but he's very detailed in what he does."

One of the problems with a largely computerized newscast is the room for human error in the programming.

"When you have a home computer, every once in a while you have to hit the power switch. That happens here too," said MacRae.

On Moore's very first broadcast as a substitute for usual anchor Bruce Rainnie, MacRae and his crew had what he describes as his most memorable meltdown in the control room.

A mistake in the programming of the show caused the video to freeze and the audio to continue playing.

The crew went to commercial, but there were moments of panic the viewers at home may not have realized.

"It blew up spectacularly. We limped through the rest of the show," said MacRae.

"The little mistakes we see here, I don't know if the viewer would notice most of them. If you dwell on the mistake that just happened, then you just made another one."

It would be silly to wish CBC didn't have the more advanced technology, said Petrie, but the Charlottetown bureau is fortunate to have experienced technicians on the job if things go wrong.

"With this digital switcher, when things go bad, they go really bad," he said.

"[Brian's] riding on the edge of a razor blade to begin with."

The nature of live TV and producing the news means being busy when people in other jobs are starting to think about sitting down to dinner, said MacRae.

"The time you have to be the most focused and the busiest is the last hour of your shift.

"There's no winding down. The hour comes and goes no matter what you do."

Irving media empire has its share of critics

By NATHAN ROCHFORD

When Ken Langdon had trouble starting his newspaper earlier this fall, it wasn't because of the usual problems.

With roughly 10 years in the newspaper business experience wasn't a problem. Neither was getting a bank loan or finding the perfect location.

Instead, the problem was the competition. Brunswick News, the Irving-owned media chain, sought an injunction against Langdon and his paper because of files Langdon had on his computer from the period when he worked as the publisher at The Bugle Observer in Woodstock, New Brunswick.

The company said the files would give Langdon an unfair advantage starting up his newspaper.

Langdon said he erased the files when he left Brunswick News and hadn't had contact with them since.

The dispute ended up in court and after weeks of fighting the injunction, Langdon was allowed to publish the first issue of his newspaper The Carleton Free Press, the only independent English newspaper in the province.

Now with his newspaper up and running, Langdon considers the ordeal an example of what can happen in places where there is little to no diversification in the media, a problem faced daily by communities across Canada.

For years, for example, Can-West News owned much of the media in western Canada. At one point the company had the newspapers it owned take a general editorial stance on subjects, sparking protests from some commentators.

In P.E.I. the two major dailies are owned by Transcontinental, which also owns most of the papers in Nova Scotia, The Halifax Herald being an exception.

With a population of 120,000 the city is slightly larger than Moncton, New Brunswick, and yet unlike anywhere in New Brunswick the two major daily newspapers, The Halifax Daily News and The Herald, are in competition.

That's a strange thing for a city so small, but a good thing, said Beth Johnston, a reporter with



Along with oil and forestry, Irving owns the majority of media in New Brunswick, a potent says Ken Langdon, publisher of the Carleton Free Press. Rochford photo.

The Halifax Daily News.

"Every paper looks at things differently."

The difference in how the two papers ran a story about a man who died after being tasered in Halifax was one example.

Johnston said her paper led with the officers at the jail not being told the man was tasered.

The Herald led with the death and only mentioned the miscommunication at the jail at the end of the story.

There isn't the same level of competition in New Brunswick as the three major English dailies as well as 22 other publications including community newspapers across the province are owned by the Irving-run Brunswick News.

That's a problem, said Langdon, because Irving also plays a major economic role in the province with interests in oil, forestry and shipbuilding.

"I think there's a certain amount of self-censorship," he said.

"I don't think there's as much investigative journalism in this province as there should be."

When a company owns all the alternative places you could work, you'd be more likely to side with the company, said Senator Sheila Fraser, who initiated an investigation into Irving's media monopoly at roughly the same time Langdon went to court.

"That's only human nature."

The answer to the problem is diversity in voices, which she said comes back pretty quickly to diversity in ownership.

"The state has no business in the newsroom."

Which is why Langdon opened his paper.

"I felt we needed different points of view," Langdon said.

Attempts to get a response from the Irving chain were unsuccessful.

Other independent publishers from the Maritimes agree with the need for diversity.

The more voices the better, said Paul MacNeill, the publisher of the Eastern Graphic and West Prince Graphic, the two independent weekly newspapers on P.E.I.

MacNeill said a variety of voices in the media helps communities learn and improve, but when big corporations are involved, there can be a threat to the newspaper's credibility, he said.

"The danger is losing local autonomy, of becoming more of a profit centre for a corporation than a source of information for a community."

For David Cadogan, former publisher and co-owner of the Miramichi Leader in New Brunswick, that danger became more prevalent in the last 20 years.

Cadogan grew up in the newspaper business at a time when media concentration was more of a distant thought than a reality.

Newspapers were a community service, owned locally, published

locally, sold locally and most communities had one.

But over time that changed.

He eventually sold his paper to Irving and retired from the publishing business.

Cadogan said like the man cooking hamburgers in his backyard trying to compete with McDonalds, the newspaper industry had met corporatization.

"You lose something in the corporatization of it," he said. "They all have a similar mantra - cut costs, cut costs, cut costs."

His concern with media concentration is not censorship, but with a newspaper losing its focus, he said.

"There's always an unspoken concern on part of the reporters to be careful not to offend the people they work for," he said. "No different than any other publisher, except with the Irvings there isn't much else a person can do."

He, like Langdon, said the difference between New Brunswick and any other media centre in the country is that Irving owns other industries as well.

The result, Langdon said, became obvious recently when Irving announced it was dividing the empire into different sectors.

Oil would be controlled separately from forestry and the media outlets.

The problem was the first place Langdon read the story was The Globe and Mail.

"It's just a huge important story for this province," he said.

Langdon said he has barely read any coverage in the New Brunswick newspapers.

"Maybe a couple of columns in the Telegraph Journal, but that's it."

As well, coverage of Langdon's battle with Brunswick News came into question by media critics in a CBC story Oct. 25.

The critics, including Kim Kierans, a journalism professor at King's College in Halifax, said the coverage from New Brunswick papers was one-sided.

"I think this case, more than any other case in the country, illustrates the danger of media concentration," Langdon said.

"In a situation where a company controls the economy and the media it's a dangerous, unhealthy situation."

Turning to Facebook

Reporters find Internet site handy tool in search for sources

BY MARGIE HOLMES

Every day there is a new application, photo, or note waiting for you on Facebook - and after a while it can get repetitive.

You know if you really need to find someone's phone number, or their plans for the weekend, you can easily do it and go on with your day.

And young people aren't the only ones taking advantage of the simplicity and usefulness of the social networking site on the Internet.

Reporters and journalists are catching onto the Facebook phenomenon by joining groups and scrolling through surnames.

Nigel Armstrong, a Guardian newspaper reporter in Charlottetown, P.E.I. heard the buzz about Facebook at work, but he wasn't able to get onto it for a while because it was blocked by a firewall.

His reason for wanting it available in the newsroom was simple. "That's where people are and we need to be there too."

This past summer, when Gage Prevost was killed by a train in Calgary, Armstrong wanted to add some perspective to the story since the 17-year-old had family connections to P.E.I.

He turned to Facebook to help him find contacts on the Island.

Armstrong joined a group on Facebook dedicated to the memory of Prevost and began looking for someone who wanted to add their voice to his story.

He was surprised with one response he got.

"The person wanted me to give more clarification about who I was and what I was looking for, which I found rather odd since I was upfront about who I was."

Facebook wasn't helpful with that story, but it did give Armstrong a reality check about technology and youth today.

"It brought home the fact of the gap between a 45-year-old reporter and Facebook users."

Facebook is underused and misunderstood at the Guardian, which isn't surprising for Armstrong.

"There are definitely newsrooms



Editorial page editor Roseanne MacDonald and reporter Wayne Thibodeau discuss the day's paper and work in the Guardian newsroom. Holmes Photo.

that still see that type of technology as a waste of time."

Another downside to Facebook is finding ways to squeeze it into a reporter's busy day.

"It kept me focused on the Prevost story, but I did find I had to constantly justify my time when I was using it," he said.

Another reporter who finds Facebook helpful is Beth Johnston with the Halifax Daily News.

She uses it to search for ideas and for people willing to talk. She finds the thousands of groups on Facebook helpful for both.

"It's like walking into a room full of people," she said.

When Christopher Paul Neil, a Canadian, was arrested for allegedly sexually abusing young

boys in Thailand this year, Johnston joined a Facebook group for Greenwood, N.S. air cadets, where the suspect was once a chaplain, and began sending messages.

"I ended up using most of the quotes for the story from a former teacher of his, but the group did help narrow my search."

Johnston said reporters must be careful when using Facebook as a tool for a story. She recently heard of a CBC reporter who had his account closed by Facebook because someone complained when they were approached for an interview.

"You have to be careful. Using personal information on a person from Facebook is hitting below

the belt."

She has doubts about Facebook's future in the next few years and thinks it could be closed to the journalistic world because of issues like the similar page Myspace. But there are ways around everything, she said.

"It's just another tool and there is always the Internet."

Some people may have thought Facebook would be a flash in the pan and once the hype died down Myspace would rule again.

Chris Gooding, editor of the Springhill Parrsboro Record, thought the same thing, but since he joined Facebook a year ago he rarely uses Myspace and can't remember the last time he updated his account.

He was able to find a classmate who served in Afghanistan and was given a head's up about a band through Facebook.

It was helpful tool for the basics of a story, but he is careful not to give the site too much credit.

"While both Facebook contacts did materialize into print articles, I was networking within my own life experiences to flesh out story ideas."

A negative side to Facebook is the loss of anonymity, which surprised and angered Gooding.

"I was infuriated after I realized my personal information became my profile rather than giving me the choice up front to have a screen name."

Using Facebook as a way to find story ideas and leads can be compared to going to a coffee shop and chatting with the locals, said Gooding.

You could spend the better part of a day going through profiles and threads, like talking to every person in a coffee shop.

"You could, but it is highly unlikely you'd find an editor

who'd appreciate you doing that every day," he said.

Gooding doesn't see a problem with a reporter using the site, but he has reservations about them spending time on Facebook when they could be out picking up story ideas.

A good news story must always have a human element, he said.

"It says a lot to sit across from someone and witness their body language as they talk, or call them and listen to which words they give emphasis on. You won't get that using Facebook."

He doesn't see Facebook affecting journalism anymore than an address book, it can give you an edge in getting contacts, but it

doesn't replace hard work and first contact.

"Pen and paper, timeless and effective regardless of where you are in the world and what resources you have with you."

For people involved with the education of young people, it can be hard to keep up with the technology of today.

Richard Kurial, dean of arts at UPEI, has a Facebook account but doesn't use it often.

"The engagement process just takes up too much of my time."

Facebook could be an advantage if it allows you faster communication to a news story, he said.

"If it can connect you to main players for a news story, then it could be an advantage, like text messaging."

Even if he had more time to get re-acquainted with Facebook, there are some tricky social barriers to manoeuvre, he said.

"I feel bad if I don't reply to someone, there are some innuendos and they might think I don't want to be their friend."

"You have to be careful. Using personal information on a person from Facebook is hitting below the belt."

- reporter Beth Johnston
Halifax Daily News

By LINDSAY CARROLL

Covering trauma: Reporters, victims struggle to cope

Bruce Shapiro was lying in a hospital bed waking up from surgery for a stab wound that could have killed him when the phone rang. It was a reporter. He started asking Shapiro questions.

Still groggy from the morphine, Shapiro was in no mood to talk.

"Go **** yourself," Shapiro said to him.

A few days later he got a call from another reporter. It was a local guy who inquired about his family, was respectful, and asked Shapiro's permission to tell his side of the story, putting him at ease.

"He gave me some choices," he said during an interview.

Shapiro, a reporter and professor of investigative journalism at Yale, covered crime for years.

He was at a coffee shop in New Haven, Connecticut with some colleagues in 1994 when a man stabbed him and six others.

After he became a victim, he realized there was a need for reporters to become more sensitive to victims, he said.

"We don't want to hurt the people we're reporting on."

Reporters can lose sight of the human element in reporting, said Shapiro.

"Sometimes when people write stories of trials or wars, they see the people affected by it primarily as sources of quotes or colour."

This isn't a new issue, but it's only now becoming more prevalent because of recent world events, said Shapiro.

"We are learning how to report on mass death and terrorism on a scale never known before with wars and terrorism increasing around the world."

Shapiro is the executive director for the Dart Centre for Journalism and Trauma in Seattle.

It's an international resource with offices in London and Australasia designed to help journalists with victims and personal trauma.

The Internet site has tips on how to talk to victims, case studies and personal accounts of trauma.

Shapiro said he feels more empathy for people after being a victim.

"I think I'm much more patient, I've been trying for the last decade to have a more victim-centered approach."

The aim of the Dart Centre is to educate journalists on victim responses, which can be wildly

different, and how journalists can be affected by reporting on traumatic events, said Shapiro.

It's not uncommon for journalists to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD) which can cause depression, anxiety and substance abuse, said Shapiro.

He suffered from the disorder after he was stabbed.

"I couldn't concentrate. I'd get to the end of a story and forgot what had happened at the beginning."

Most journalists think they are weak if they are affected, said Shapiro.

Cliff Lonsdale agrees.

He's a professor of television broadcasting at the University of Western Ontario.

Reporters are often told to 'suck it up' and are afraid to admit when they can't because it will be seen as a sign of weakness, he said.

Lonsdale had 40 years of journalism experience as a former CBC-TV news executive and print reporter.

"News happens in a hurry. You're thrown out the door and there could be body parts in the road."

Journalists have a high rate of substance abuse because they deal with job stress by drinking too much, said Lonsdale.

He has had to help 'dry-out' many friends, as well as himself when he realized he had a drinking problem 16 years ago.

Police get special counseling, however, journalists are expected to deal with it on their own, which doesn't make sense, he said.

"We are all human beings and we shouldn't be letting ourselves suffer in silence."

There is no Canadian resource for journalists like the Dart centre, so Lonsdale and his wife, Jane Hawkes, decided to create one called The Canadian Journal-

ism Forum on Violence & Trauma, allied with the Dart Centre.

They are hoping to attract interested people with a new website created in October, and they are hosting a two-day conference called *Journalism In A Violent World* on Feb. 9-10 at the University of Western Ontario.

It will feature journalists telling their own stories, and academics reporting on research.

Lonsdale is still haunted today by a traumatic event that happened many years ago. He thought he had forgotten about it, but recently it has resurfaced.

When Lonsdale was in the Middle East, his car was stopped and a child soldier held a gun to his head.

"You could see the gleam in his eyes, saying 'I wonder what would happen if I shot him.'"

His heart raced, while he remained completely still. A nearby man grabbed the child, and the car continued on, but the memory still affects Lonsdale.

Although he never talked to a counselor, he laughed and said maybe he should have. Although he is on his second marriage, and has left a drinking problem behind him, he said he's one of the lucky ones.

Doreen Kays was as a TV foreign correspondent since the 1960s. She retired last summer to Charlottetown.

It was the people affected by war that got to her, she said during an interview.

When Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait, hundreds of thousands of people became refugees.

"That was the saddest thing to see. The facilities were no more than tents. I was in tears then."

She pulled herself together because she had a job to do.

If you're the kind of person that is too affected by your emotions, you shouldn't be in the business,

said Kays.

"You know you've got to get out of there and get your tape back."

But she still recalls the faces of the victims of war.

"What struck me most, and still does, is their lack of outrage."

Kays refused to attack victims with TV cameras asking, "How do you feel," because she considers asking that stupid and insensitive.

"I think that just turns people against journalists."

Instead, she approached them as a person, not just a subject.

"You still get your answers, but in a different way, without being a vulture."

When she began journalism in the late 1960s, it was a male dominated environment with a different mentality.

"I came out of the rough and tumble school, all of that has changed now."

Society has changed since then too, she said.

"We're living in a much more violent world in every possible way, school shootings may have happened, but they were never as common back then."

Although she never had training in how to deal with victims, she said it would have been an excellent idea.

Lonsdale agrees.

At 19, he was reporting for a British newspaper when he was he told to go to the house of a young woman who had died in a car crash to get a photo of her. Her mother answered the door with a smile.

His heart sank.

"Please earth, open up and swallow me, she doesn't know," he thought to himself.

He said her daughter was dead, adding he hoped it was a mistake.

She collapsed in a heap. He had no idea what to do.

Today he knows he should not

have been put in that kind of situation.

There are more than two dozen schools in the U.S that have incorporated instruction on dealing with victims into their ethics or foreign reporting classes, said Shapiro.

At the University of Washington, it's covered in News Ethics, which is the way it should be, said Shapiro.

Most journalists will have to report on rape or murder at some point, so it shouldn't be taught in a separate class, he said.

"I don't want it to be thought of as a separate field of journalism."

The closest thing Carleton University's journalism program in Ottawa offers is a day-and-a-half lecture covering issues in reporting on war, said Chris Waddell, associate director of journalism.

"These issues should come up in the regular courses you have to do."

Only about a quarter of the journalism undergraduate students will go on to work in the field, so an entire course on dealing with trauma isn't necessary, said Waddell.

He said many reporters will not be faced with daily traumatic events.

Shapiro disagrees. Just because you're not covering war does not mean you won't be in traumatic situations.. He briefs his investigative journalism class on the impact of trauma on victims and reporters.

"You're not in the frontlines of war, you are on the front lines of people suffering."

Ross Howard teaches ethics at Langara University in British Columbia. Like Carleton, there is no course on victims or personal stress, but Howard said it would be a good idea.

"We've been aware of a need for sensitivity training for a while."

If journalism was a four-year course, instead of two years, that kind of course would be more likely to exist, he said.

Shapiro said Canada is not that far behind the U.S.

"The Dart Centre was only established in 1999, we're still babies here too."

Many Canadians helped create the centre, however, these things can take time, he said.

"It always takes a while to trickle down," he said.

Lonsdale said the new resource is just what Canada needs.

"We're ripe to do this. It's an idea whose time has come."

Power of Internet raises power of opinion

By MATTHEW DAYE

The rise of the Internet has created new avenues for journalists and average citizens to be heard and to interact with their readers.

Michael O'Dwyer was a journalist for 20 years, practising the trade in Victoria, B.C. and New Zealand. Now he runs an import business in Sydney, Nova Scotia, but there he continues to write through blogs for the Cape Breton Post, the local newspaper.

O'Dwyer uses the freedom both the web and the loose format of blogs - a kind of diary/website on the Internet - to do a general interest blog for the paper. "There's news writing, which is factual and unbiased, then there are editorials, which are opinion based," said O'Dwyer. "I approach blogs the same way I do for editorials."

Despite using the editorial method for writing his blogs, they don't read like most editorials. "The difference between a blog and an editorial is that blogs can be provocative. I'm not shy about being provocative."

Provocative seems to work for him. He seems to draw the most comments of all the blogs hosted on the site. "I have a passion for addressing meaningful issues and encouraging readers to respond to them."

But some of the comments he receives are not always positive or constructive. "I found that some people use the blogs to vent. I just wish more people were able to respond more rationally or lucidly."

One person, who replied to O'Dwyer's most recent entry, seemed to have a personal grudge. "Michael you're just another IDIOT with a blog. Thankfully you're stuck in one small corner of the universe out of harm's way and out of the mainstream," the writer said.

These kinds of messages seem to continually pop up whenever he posts a new blog, no matter the topic. "They're all pretty much the same. You can feel the spittle as you read them," O'Dwyer said. "I think the 'You have the brain of a fifth grader' is the best one."

He has already noticed a pattern in how people respond



Michael O'Dwyer writes a controversial blog for the Cape Breton Post news paper. Steve Wadden Photo.

COMMENTS SENT TO MICHAEL O'DWYER

The Good

- "I always like to read the comments on news stories, but yours is the first one I've replied to. Some of the comments I agree with, and some I don't. It seems some of the people commenting have a grudge against the world and they're just venting off."

- "Mr. O'Dwyer, ... the fish seem to be in a frenzy, and it looks like you're lunch. For all it's worth, I do stand on your side."

The Bad

- "Michael O'Dwyer your intellect is that of a 5th grader. It amazes me how you can keep a job when you put those thoughts to paper!"

- "Michael you're just another IDIOT with a blog. Thankfully you're stuck in one small corner of the universe out of harms way and out of the mainstream."

The Ugly

- "You sir exhibit the brains of horse. What garbage, you could however be writing for the N.Y. Times as truth and honesty in reporting are not required for employment. Is it possible that the filth spewing from those twin towers at Lingan have affected the little brains you appear to use, make an appointment with a Specialist, oops forgot, in Canada that might take a year or more, by then the last remaining brain cell would have ceased to exist for you."

to his blogs. The attackers seem to react quickest, but supporters eventually jump in and then it tends to become more civil. "I get as much from the dynamics as much as the content of the responses."

Another pattern he has noticed is how the attackers and supporters interact with him. "You don't see the e-mails I get personally. It's like there are two camps."

His supporters are more

likely to send him encouraging e-mails, but not post in the forum attached to each blog, while his attackers seem to react entirely in open forum.

"I think a big part of the type of responses I get is because of the relative anonymity the Internet gives them."

His years as a journalist have allowed him to shrug off most of the attackers. "I have a thick skin and I don't take it personally, to me it's transparent. Calling me names doesn't tell me or anyone else why they feel strongly about the subject," O'Dwyer said.

Despite the control he has over the system, he has only ever deleted one entry. It was an attacker going after a supporter. "Abuse me all you want, but don't abuse other people."

He continues to blog for the enjoyment of it. "I like blogging because it's fun. It's a lot looser than a carefully researched news piece."

Part of the fun is coming up with new things to post with. "I post things that I think are worthy of discussion and are provocative. I talk about things that I want to talk about."

He has gone weeks when he can't think of anything important to say. "I choose things that are specifically provocative, otherwise why do it?"

Robby McRobb, a retired sergeant in the Canadian Armed Forces, writes a military-based blog for The Guardian in Charlottetown, P.E.I. He does it for the troops. "I do it unpaid because I feel it's good for the troops and good for the people to voice their opinion. I'm surprised at the hits and comments I get. Some good, some not so good."

He called the newspaper a year ago asking if it would like someone to write a military column. In January, they said they loved the idea, but they were going to do it digitally. McRobb submits his blogs through the paper. "I didn't get into blogging as blogging."

Despite the unusual start to his blogging, which he does when he's not working four other jobs, he has managed to eke out some success.

"The one I got the most hits for was about how [Prime Min-

ister Steven] Harper should pay more attention to General [Rick] Hillier." McRobb said.

Despite the fun and interaction the blog gets, O'Dwyer said he's still not sure how it fits in with other media. "I'm not so sure that it provides a service, but I think it does."

The service is to instill ideas and personal debate in his readers, to raise interesting ideas.

"Quietly, in the dead of night, they'll be thinking of these issues."

He writes the blog, but it doesn't mean it is about him, he said. "I'm very interested in knowing what other people have to say. I am looking for dialogue for me and other people."

So is Elke Semerad. The associate producer and technician at CBC in Halifax is also looking for dialogue over the podcast. "There were no numbers on what people wanted to listen to, so we've been flying blind," Semerad said of the program start-up three years ago.

CBC wanted to stay ahead of the technology curve and wanted Semerad involved. "I was charged initially with starting the program, but I got to involved in it and had to step back."

The science show Quirks and Quarks was the first podcast CBC produced. She was responsible for the podcast Maritimes This Week. "My job was to make an interesting half hour radio for the Internet."

What people get is a show made up of the best or popular show segments through out the week, with the show updating once a week. "The production [of the Maritimes This Week] was actually passed around, from Halifax, to Fredericton, to Saint John. So there was always a fresh delivery and fresh material."

But as with all new technology, there was a problem.

"It's a funny thing, because it's a technology that's supposed to let anyone produce their own show, but with the CBC it is all uniform. It had to be."

The show started out well, quickly rising above the viewership of CBC's regular radio shows, before falling to a lower rate than other shows. Its viewership is now stable.

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Who counts as "family"?

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"family", they're family!



HOLLAND
COLLEGE

News must evolve to attract a new generation

By **CHRISTY MARSTERS**

An elderly lady once stopped her vehicle in the middle of the street, recognized Chris LeBlanc, and called him over to her car window as traffic backed up behind her.

"I had to tell you I just love your columns," she said before driving away.

People are frequently complimenting him, says editor Scott Doherty of the Sackville Tribune Post in New Brunswick. The community can't get enough.

The students he hired for his paper usually come from Holland College, Doherty said.

LeBlanc was an exception.

He started writing columns as a co-op student in high school, but because of his unique writing style he was hired as a regular columnist after completing the work placement.

Today, LeBlanc attends St. Francis Xavier University, but he continues writing first-hand opinion pieces from the perspective of a student.

Everyone, no matter the age, likes his writing because it comes across as very tongue-in-cheek in a good way, allowing the paper to show a less solemn side, Doherty said.

"He's just hilarious. However, for such a young person, he does take his job seriously."

And it's important for papers to find different ways of getting more youth involved as it becomes an increasing challenge to keep young people, influenced by the Internet, interested and attracted to the news, Doherty said.

"We have to start listening more



Mateo Cheverie looks through an issue of the Holland College Surveyor Nov. 30. Newspapers face an unclear transition as they try to keep a new generation reading the news. Marsters photo

to what they want and change with the times."

Aside from hiring LeBlanc, the paper has shortened articles, added more visuals and worked with the newspaper on-line to reach out to the younger audience, Doherty said.

"It's important because they're going to be the future of the paper."

Patrick Thornton agrees. The 23-year-old works as a web content editor for a newspaper called

Stars and Stripes in Washington, D.C. The daily paper is distributed throughout the American military.

Younger generations care about the world around them. And the issues many papers face when trying to attract youth have little to do with them not liking news and more to do with the news itself, Thornton said in an online interview.

"Most mainstream media is geared towards older generations."

It's possible the industry won't even survive should hiring freezes, old ideas and youth intolerance within the business continue because it's youth who can offer the only real glimpse into this new marketplace, Thornton said.

"But what do people honestly expect when all the decisions in the news industry are made by old, white males? It's news that appeals to old, white males."

The younger generations want more modern ways of consuming news because most of them seek news online and many newspapers are not really prepared to deliver, he said.

"I don't know any people my age that subscribe to print publications. If you don't have a strong online or mobile product, you aren't attracting the younger people."

It's even worse when newspapers put out alternative publications meant to attract an edgier and more youthful crowd because young people want real news, not fluff, he said.

"It's not people's fault if your product isn't popular – it's your own. If you build a product that is attractive to people, they will consume it. It's that simple."

Managing editor Fred Sgambati, working with the Transcontinental Media chain of community newspapers in Kentville, Nova Scotia, agrees the onus is on newspapers to find a way to communicate to youth in a meaningful and relevant way.

Newspapers are a vital meeting place to connect the community, Sgambati said.

"Young people, as much as any-

one else, have a role to play."

Young reporters who join the publications bring new ideas and gain experience from veteran journalists whose credentials are extensive, said Sgambati.

"There's a meeting of the minds in every instance, a sharing of old and new making the total experience come alive. It's pretty exciting for me as an editor."

It's sometimes tough for media to appreciate a changing generation, but there's no doubt young people are eager to learn what's happening in the world around them, he said.

"It's important to listen to what they say. Once you know what they want, the challenge is to go out and get it. Then deliver it in a package appealing to their sensibility."

Technology has allowed young people to get news and information in a much more immediate manner than ever before as instant messaging, social networks and online video archives have broadened the playing field, Sgambati said.

"It is incumbent traditional media understands the sense of immediacy and responds to it."

Transcontinental's Nova Scotia weeklies have reacted by creating a daily news website called NovaNewsNow.com to provide the same information from a weekly print product though a daily web product.

Reporters working at weekly papers across the provinces have bought into the concept and are posting to the site faithfully, Sgambati said.

"It has proven to be extremely successful."

Christy Marsters asks: How do you get the news?



Hessel Altenburg – 19

"I get news from the Internet or cause I can get it whenever I want and the TV because I see it when I flip through channels."



Zoë Novaczek – 21

"I'll often turn on the radio when I'm driving around, but I also pick it up from various other things like the Internet and through talking to friends."



Brenton Ives – 18

"I get news from just the Internet. I don't watch TV and I don't listen to the radio, but I'm on the Internet a lot."



Heather Wotton – 19

"I get it from TV and I listen to the radio in the morning before I go to school."



Nicky Wichers – 21

"I get news from the radio and I read the newspaper. The radio I can listen to while I'm doing other things and the newspaper I'll read when I'm at work."