The Story of the Press

A Manual

Quote

All successful newspapers are ceaselessly querulous and bellicose. They never defend anyone or anything if they can help it; if the job is forced upon them, they tackle it by denouncing someone or something else.

-H. L. Mencken, 1919

Contents

Introduction

In Isaac Asimov's *Foundation*, Hari Selden is a psycho-historian who has calculated that the galactic Empire will crumble, communications will break down, and a 30,000-year dark age will follow. So Hari establishes the Foundation, a colony of intellectuals and artists which will preserve knowledge and culture, foster a renaissance, and telescope the dark age down to only 2,000 years' duration. *The Story of the Press: A Manual,* along with the Bylaws and *The Basics*, is the "Foundation" of the Press. It would be silly to believe that the high standard of writing, editing, and awareness (not to mention the great backrubs) will continue unabated at our paper. Turnover is high, senioritis infects and withers training, fools assume power. So this manual is a tool to keep the machinery running briskly and soundly, and a weapon against those who would see it rust and creak.

The construction of *The Story of the Press* reflects the construction of the Press itself. First, the definitive biography of the paper, best read with a pillar of salt. Second, an overview of the paper and a look at the role of the Editor-in-Chief. Third, a rundown of the newspaper side. Fourth, a purview (thank you, Roget) of the organization side. There's also a bunch of Notes, listed alphabetically, designed to impart wisdom, save time, and clear drains.

Caveat

Throughout this book I have used third person pronouns and collective nouns in the masculine gender. To those readers who may be offended by this, I apologize sincerely. Unfortunately, there are at this time no alternatives that do not either create confusion or impede the flow of language; which is to say, there are no acceptable alternatives. Here's hoping that when and if I publish again, there will be.

-Tom Robbins in *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*

Ditto.

Biography

I

By 1977, Statesman was in bad shape. In the Sixties, the paper had been leftist and radical, reflecting the mood of the nation's students, screaming at the administration with red-inked headlines. In the early Seventies, with the mentoring of Newsday Education Editor and Stony Brook professor Marty Buskin, Statesman turned responsible and readable: award after award was framed and hung on the wall, and Stony Brook was treated to a fine example of its own potential. But in 1976, Buskin died. His protégés were disillusioned or graduating and the apathetic Me Decade was beginning to have its effect. A universally disrespected editor was voted Editor-in-Chief after losing to "no" three times—simply to fill a six-week-old vacancy. He was soon removed after violating several conditions for his editorship. Polity was suffering its worst infighting in history, following a long period of efficacy and unity. Stony Brook's troubled childhood of construction and protest was coming to an end, but an era of transition just as difficult was in the offing.

At this time, the outlines of two distinct political camps could be seen forming at Statesman. Mike Jankowitz, the Feature Editor, considered to be the man who would do the least harm in the job, was elected Editor-in-Chief. Jankowitz (a supersenior who would continue as an undergraduate for three more years) did admirably in a job of which he knew little. But, a movie fanatic and a dreamer, he also loved intrigue, and recruited promising staff members into a tight, independent group whose aim was to outwit, circumvent, and/or defeat the other camp. It is only fair to point out that the other camp was deserving of this suspicion and con-

tempt: those editors were, for the most part, narrow-minded, shortsighted, bigoted, and incompetent. (They won't be named here because they aren't the heroes of our story—not to mention the libel considerations.) Two of Jankowitzs recruits were Eric Brand—book-smart, pompous, with a quick wit that bordered on obnoxiousness—who came from Great Neck; and Chris Fairhall—street-smart, with a cold exterior and a determination that bordered on mania—who came from Westchester.

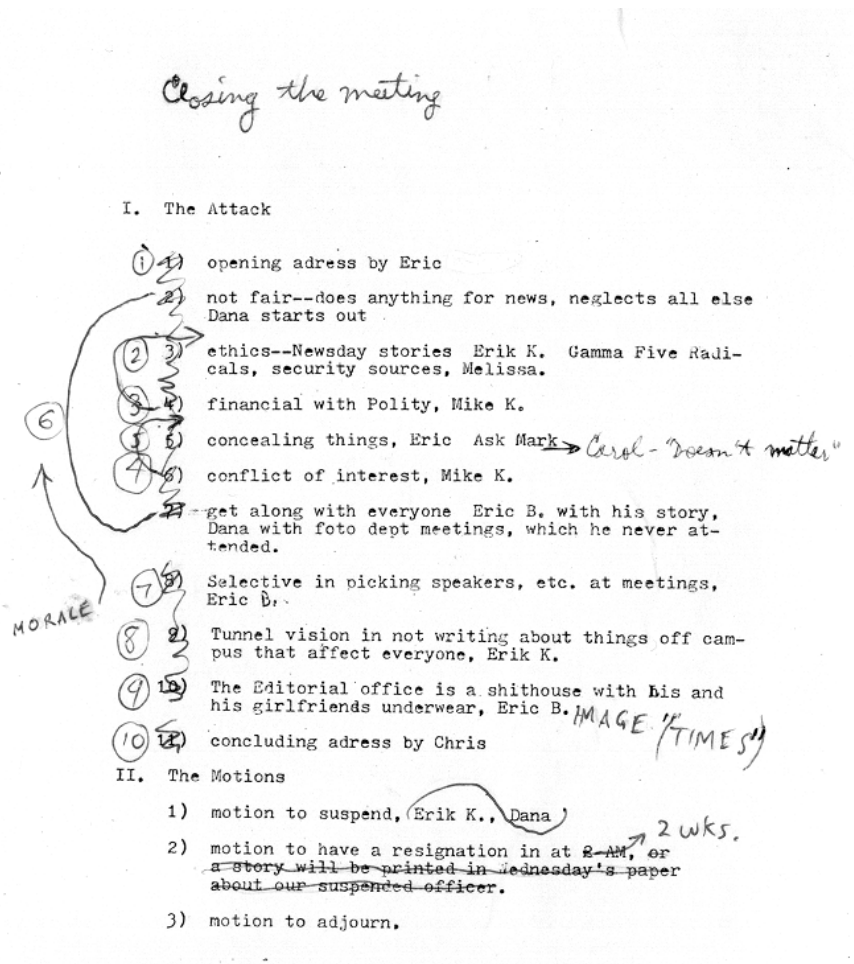
To prevent the leader of the Enemy Camp from being elected Editor-in-Chief at the end of the '77-'78 academic year, Jankowitz ran again. He lost. The following year, most of the staff's energies were put into jockeying for open positions, gossiping, plotting, and some newspapering. During that time, Melissa Spielman, a little fireplug of energy, integrity, and blind loyalty, joined the paper, and joined the Good Guys. At the end of '78-'79, things had not changed much. Editor X decided to run again because no one in his camp was competent enough to succeed him; Fairhall politicked behind the scenes, hoping to gain enough votes to support his planned surprise candidacy at the upcoming Annual Meeting. For two months, each camp ticked off a check or a cross next to the names in the staff box, trying to predict the vote. The Good Guys dreamed up embarrassing questions to ask Editor X at the meeting; the Bad Guys thought up answers. The Annual Meeting came, the questions were asked, the candidacy was announced, the victory came—to the Enemy.

The summer was spent plotting and worrying.

In September of '79, with Fairhall as Managing Editor, Erik Keller (a Good Guy) as News Director, and Spielman as a News Editor, the paper was doing a little better. Fairhall was a demanding Managing Editor, and no one knew this better than Brand, who was a lousy Feature Editor; the two fought often—and openly—about writing and editing, as much out of a genuine disagreement over procedure as a clash between the pair's arrogance. Because, by challenging Editor X for the Editorship, Fairhall had revealed his political orientation—previously, dirty looks, snide comments, and lousy news assignments were the only indications of partisanship—he became the target of the Enemy Camp's animosity. (Often, late on a production night, Fairhall could be seen complaining to a sympathetic and patient Spielman about the grief he put up with in the interests of the paper. At points such as this, Brand would blithely walk by, his arms outstretched, his eyes rolled toward heaven, in a symbol of martyrdom. It was all the little News Editor could do to hold Fairhall back. One day in early September, Fairhall requested a "private conference" in a deserted cul-de-sac in the Union basement. He warned Brand that if the latter ever, ever again impugned Fairhall's editing abilities or embarrassed him in public again, he would bash Brand's skull in. Criticism ceased.)

Meanwhile, various interest groups around school were growing more disgusted with Statesman. They found it bigoted, sexist, homophobic, and parochial. This view was shared by the Good Guys, and traced by them, with good reason, to Editor X. (His replacement of a cross-burning story from page one to page three; refusal to print stories of interest to women and minorities; insistence on printing only campus news; etc.) To this list, they added other gripes, such as his conflict of interest in being a Newsday stringer, concealment of information from the Editorial Board, the poor image generated by his messy office, and his nickname, "Scoop."

After several half-baked feints at communicating their griev-



Closing the meeting

I. The Attack

1) opening adress by Eric

2) not fair--does anything for news, neglects all else Dana starts out

3) ethics--Newsday stories Erik K. Gamma Five Radicals, security sources, Melissa.

4) financial with Polity, Mike K.

5) concealing things, Eric Ask Mark → Carol - "Doesn't matter"

6) conflict of interest, Mike K.

7) get along with everyone Eric B. with his story, Dana with foto dept meetings, which he never attended.

8) Selective in picking speakers, etc. at meetings, Eric B.

9) Tunnel vision in not writing about things off campus that affect everyone, Erik K.

10) The Editorial office is a shithouse with his and his girlfriends underwear, Eric B. IMAGE / TIMES

11) concluding adress by Chris

MORALE

II. The Motions

1) motion to suspend, Erik K., Dana

2) motion to have a resignation in at ~~2 AM, or a story will be printed in Wednesday's paper about our suspended officer~~. 2 wks.

3) motion to adjourn.

"The Attack," a memo prepared for the showdown on September 17, 1979, looks pretty silly in hindsight. It didn't much matter how good an argument Our Heroes made: participants were going to vote their party loyalties regardless. Note the evidence of equivocation at the bottom—and the motion was never made anyway.

ances, the Good Guys decided to take drastic action. In a secret meeting at the Rainy Night House, they laid out the plan: at the next Board meeting they would get the floor, list their grievances, suspend Editor X, and anoint Fairhall Editor-in-Chief. Though the Board was divided evenly in terms of Goodness and Badness, Our Heroes were confident, as the Enemy Camp's attendance was usually very poor. In fact, though, when they filed in to the Statesman Editorial Board Meeting of September 17, 1979, a full complement of Bad Guys sat around the table—even one editor who had not been seen since he had been arrested months before for setting fires so he could write about them!

Twenty minutes into the meeting, the Associate Editor, a whining fellow with an incessant twitch, began to talk about crossword puzzles, and talk about crossword puzzles, and talk about crossword puzzles. It was a filibuster. Someone had tipped them off. (Later, it was decided that the leak must have been Dana Brussel, the Photo Director, an excitable, unpredictable genius with a camera, who boasted of his expulsion from Dartmouth the year before and who gave new meaning to the term, "blitherer.") Because Statesman Editorial Board meetings went strictly by Robert's Rules of Order—and the Bad Guys were too uptight, and the Good Guys too foolish, to circumvent them—the filibuster stood. Votes for cloture indicated that Our Heroes would have lost the motion on suspension anyway....

So for two weeks they stayed away from the paper, their hopes dashed, their star descendant (to name a couple of clichés.) Then rumors went around that some members of those interest groups mentioned above were planning to turn their protests into action. Our Heroes were brought into the planning session by none other than Mike Jankowitz, still in school, dividing his time amongst flights to a Boston dentist, living in his '72 Impala, cutting classes, and kibbitzing. The session was held in the GSU office because a) they had a big gripe against Statesman, b) it was the closest office space to Statesman, and c) the homophobic Enemy would *never* bother them there. (Our Heroes, Liberals all, told themselves it didn't bother them at all to be there—just as long as they weren't *seen* there.) Members of the Womyn's Center (their spelling), the GSU, the BSU, NYPIRG, and the Red Balloon were present to discuss a takeover of the Statesman offices the next production night and forcing the publication of progressive and minority-oriented articles. These people had something to say. They knew what had to be done. They had seen pictures of the Sixties. And one among them, the legendary Mitch Cohen, had Lived Through the Sixties. These people weren't playing around: the editors had been brought in as Technical Advisers.

The next night, Tuesday, October 2nd, 25 uninvited guests entered the Statesman offices and began to work, quietly and efficiently, under the supervision of Our Heroes. The Enemy Editors went bananas. It was not just that they never wanted to see the other editors again, but there were Communists and Lesbians touching their typewriters! The twitching Associate Editor began to scream and slap his thighs; Editor X sent one of his editorial assistants to call Security. Spielman, all conviction and high-mindedness, worked with the protesters to turn their propagandistic tracts into English; Brand, enjoying the chaos he had helped create, moved self-importantly from desk to desk, pausing now and again to smile disingenuously at Editor X; Fairhall disappeared.

The first time Security came they were faced with the foaming-at-the-mouth Enemy Editors and the calm, well-spoken Good Guys; who would you believe? The second time they were called, they were set on

Newsday, October 4, 1979

SUNY Paper Tastes Own Prescription

By Mitchell Freedman

Stony Brook—For years, students at the state university here have read editorials in The Statesman, their campus newspaper, urging them to stand up for their rights and—if necessary—take over a building to emphasize their demands.

Tuesday night more than 30 students followed that advice: They took over the Statesman office, charging that the paper was sexist, racist and opposed to homosexuals.

Half the demonstrators had already left the newspaper office early yesterday when the remaining 15 were escorted from the site by campus security officers.

Jack Millrod, editor-in-chief, said there was nothing incongruous about the newspaper's supporting student demonstrations and calling campus security officers to help clear the newspaper office. "We've always said the first step is to complain before you demonstrate," he said.

The paper's staff members, like campus administrators in years past, locked up their typewriters and tried to protect the rest of their office equipment during the occupation. "They [demonstrators] weren't disruptive until the end when they walked into our production shop," Millrod said. None of the demonstrators was arrested, but some equipment was vandalized, he said.

The demonstrators complained that The Statesman had refused to run articles they had submitted, dealing with the concerns of women, minorities and homosexuals. Millrod, who has just begun his second year as editor, confirmed that some of the articles had been rejected but denied that bias was a factor.

There was no story about the demonstration in yesterday's Statesman, but it was the lead story in a four-page newsletter, "Statesperson," distributed on campus yesterday.

Millrod defended his paper's decision not to report the incident. He said the story was minor because there are about 17,000 students at Stony Brook and "you're talking about 25 or 30 people . . . The entire paper was practically written and we were in a hurry to get it out."

The demonstrators were joined by the newspaper's managing editor, feature editor, and one of its three news editors, all of whom have said they would resign because of an editorial board dispute.

Millrod said a Statesman photographer who tried to take a picture of the demonstration had orange soda dumped on his camera by Mitchell Cohen, a former student who had written a column in yesterday's Statesman complaining that he is being harassed by campus security and student union officials.

CURRENT
NOV. 15, 1979 VOL. 3, NO. A13

New Student Newspaper To Print Controversy

A few weeks ago, the *Stony Brook Press* appeared around the campus and people were asking, what is it?

It is a student newspaper where "the quality of writing is high and the issues are controversial," answers Chris Fairhall, the editor, straight-on.

He says that the *Stony Brook Press* which, thanks to funding from Polity, is expected to appear every two weeks—was founded 'to give people in the University community an alternative to *Statesman* and other media on campus." "Its focus," he adds, "is to give in-depth coverage to the campus issues which aren't publicized in other campus media. Our emphasis is on feature writing, where the quality of writing is high."

The *Stony Brook Press* will "certainly be different from *Statesman*. We'll look like a traditional newspaper, but we hope to hit people between the eyes with our issues—like the racism story we ran in the first paper. Because we'll be doing investigative reporting—which means to look at the foundations of your whole society and speak the truth as you find it—some of our stories will be controversial," the editor says.

In commenting on the appearance of the new paper, *Statesman's* Business Manager Russ Prince said, "we welcome the *Press* to Stony Brook. Hopefully, *Stony Brook Press'* feature writing and investigative reporting will complement *Statesman's* already prodigious endeavors in these fields. We only hope that the addition of the *Stony Brook Press* will not lead to an undue strain on Polity's finances."

The people who form the nucleus of writers, editors and producers of the *Stony Brook Press* are six students, formerly with *Statesman*, who "felt a basic dissatisfaction with that paper," said Chris. He explained that the idea of coming out with an alternative paper dates back about two months, but added quickly that "the idea of developing alternative campus newspapers is as old as Stony Brook," mentioning that such papers have appeared now and then on campus over the years.

With funding from Polity, the *Stony Brook Press* now has a potential lifespan as a bi-weekly publication that could last several months. If the staff can sell enough advertising space, the paper will be published with more security, and more frequently. Presently, all the production work is being done using the facilities of the *Three Village Herald*. The staff hopes to have an office on campus soon in the Old Biology Building.

The *Stony Brook Press* can be reached by mail temporarily via Polity in the Stony Brook Union.

throwing someone out, and it was Our Side. So the whole bunch (including Ed Silver and Harry Goldhagen, the terribly nice co-Editors of *Fortnight,* Stony Brook's feature magazine from 1975 until 1981) went over to a little computer shop across the tracks, where a protester who was employed there promised they could work and typeset. The protesters and editors worked through the night, assembling what ended up as a four-page newsletter entitled, "Statesperson." As the hours wore on, Spielman and Brand wondered to each other, where was Fairhall? They began, also, to seriously wonder about Cohen. Despite his flowery and virulent lip service to the tenets of communism and communalism, he seemed to go against the wishes of the group—by adding Red Balloon propaganda to the newsletter—after most of the folks had gone home and those that remained were too tired to care. The pair also allowed him to rationalize gypping the printer out of $60, chalking it up to "the cause."

The next morning, 1,000 Statespersons were distributed, and Spielman and Brand discovered the reason for Fairhall's disappearance: he had been negotiating with the Polity Council over disbursement of a modest sum for an experimental issue of an alternative campus paper. Thanks to the groundwork laid by Spielman weeks before (she lived in Kelly E with half the Council), they allocated $400 and no promises. (Much credit goes to then-Polity Treasurer Rich Lanigan—on whom Spielman was suspected of having a crush—for "finding" the money.) The trio's newly risen hopes were quickly lowered when they remembered that the Red Balloonish Statesperson promised on page one to reappear in a more polished form: readers of Our Heroes' new paper would think it was another Statesperson! (Indeed, this suspicion proved prescient, and for years the Presstaff fought off charges of Red Balloon connections and rumors of radical resolve.)

At the next Statesman Board meeting, all the Good Editors resigned, because, as Fairhall said, "That's what you do when a coup fails." Actually, what happened was Keller and Brussel sent in their resignations; Mike Kornfeld, the Drama Editor (a political opportunist and a ringer for Eraserhead), chose to wait two weeks to resign, because, his cohorts explained, "He's an asshole"; but Fairhall, Brand, and Spielman showed up, in style: wearing leather jackets and mean looks. (Brand, who also brought a bottle of aspirin and a baseball bat, turned in his resignation on toilet paper.)

Afterwards, the three went to Mario's (the Italian restaurant on 25A long a favorite of Jankowitz) and got very, very depressed. Now we smug bastards might wonder what they had to be depressed about. Weren't they about to found the Press? Wasn't journalistic history—or at least a little fun—waiting for them? After all, these were The Founders. But not yet. In the dark booth at the back of Mario's, they were only two juniors and a sophomore, with lousy grades, meager social lives, and their chips cashed in at the only game in town. (In addition, a Newsday story about the takeover and Statesperson had gone out over the wires, and Fairhall's father—his whole family had news ink in its veins—told Fairhall he was blacklisted in journalism.) But they had no choice: it was push on or nothing.

With anti-Statesman sentiment abounding, Our Heroes free, and a campus ripe for novelty, the prospects for a new newspaper seemed good. But the three decided not to waste the opportunity on a carbon copy of Statesman—a product of petty revenge. Here was a chance to create a different kind of paper, with a fresh approach to the news and to its own organization. A newspaper with a purpose. It would strive for the highest

Students Occupy Statesman Offices

COALITION TAKES ACTION; AVOIDS VIOLENCE

Last night a group of Stony Brook students occupied the Statesman news room to put out the first issue of an alternate campus newspaper.

A coalition including members of NYPIRG, Red Balloon, CSU, BSU, and Women's Center, among others, gathered in the NYPIRG office and discussed their growing dissatisfaction with the current Statesman staff and its non-recognition of the various student movements now on campus. It was there that the resolution was made to occupy the offices of the newspaper.

At about 9 PM the protestors entered the Statesman newsroom with about five Statesman editors and began to write articles for today's issue. The remaining Statesman editors and staff responded by removing telephones and typewriters from the room and calling Security several times.

Security officers arrived and were assured by several editors that the occupants of the newsroom were simply writing articles. Security then informed editor-in-chief Jack Millrod that no action could be taken as long as the publication of the newspaper was not inhibited, and left.

The protestors soon adjourned to the Fortnight office to work. When they later entered the Statesman production room, Security was called again. The officers announced the Union was being cleared, and all those designated by Business Manager Jeff Norwitz, who had declared himself responsible for the Statesman offices, were told to leave.

After being threatened with arrest the writers took their work elsewhere.

Among the protestors was Karen Oil of the Women's Center. "Statesman has been very unresponsive to the needs of women on campus," she explained. "I feel that it is necessary to have a newspaper that is unbiased, and covers the diverse groups on campus."

Harry Goldhagen, Co-editor-in-chief of Fortnight, said, "I think this campus needs an alternative newspaper."

"Well, I am not a part of the takeover, I respect PK wholeheartedly," said Drama Editor Mike Kornfeld. "What this campus sorely needs is an alternative newspaper, one that is willing to counter the Administration when necessary and keep abreast with what the student government is doing. Statesman has not met these needs.

A short altercation developed when members of the staff attempted to remove by force a typewriter in the news room. Russ Prince, Assistant Business Manager, had to be calmed down and asked to leave the room because of his abrasive manner when he tried to take the typewriter from students involved in writing an editorial.

Feature Editor Eric Brand was informed by Millrod that he had been suspended, to which Brand replied, "Jack Millrod is not allowed, according to the bylaws of Statesman, to suspend an editor." The bylaws of Statesman Association, Inc. clearly state: "The Editor-in-Chief may suspend the membership of any member of any class except the Editorial Board as Members, in an emergency subject to review by the Editorial Board." Therefore Millrod had no authority to suspend Brand.

Subsequently, members of the staff, including Millrod, removed typewriters from the news room by force. "Members of the peaceful occupation did not oppose them, and subsequent copy was turned in neatly handwritten.

Associate Editor Mark Schussel and News Director Mitch Murov were among those who were angered when asked to leave the news room.

"It's illegal and I can prove it," stated Schussel. "Security can come down and arrest you people."

"It's pathetic," stated Mitch Murov. "That it gets to the point where the politics in the paper gets to certain editors and makes them feel they're no longer interested in putting out a paper and instead resort to juvenile tactics to disrupt the paper." Later on, Murov asked News Editor Melissa Spielman, "Are you with the commies or the dykes?" Spielman walked away without offering comment.

STAFF BOX: Suss, Prakash, Marge, Woody, Janet, Michael, Cathy, 2 Karens, another Michael, Greg, Judy, Melissa, Mitchel, another Judy, Daniel, Chris, Christine, Dierdre, Billy, Robin, Phil, Jet, Dana, Babette, Marc, Harry, Eric, Pam, Ben, Paul, Lois

EDITORIAL

Last night, members of several campus groups occupied the Statesman office and produced the first issue of Statesperson. This action was the culmination of students' dissatisfaction with a newspaper that has consistently failed to represent the needs of students and has pandered to Stony Brook's bureaucratic bullshit.

It is the aim of the new Statesperson to serve the campus community with an intelligent, progressive outlook; to give publicity to the activities of all campus groups; to make students and faculty aware of Stony Brook's bureaucratic academic and social problems and, to expose the Administration and campus security for the corrupt and insensitive tyrants that they are.

A group of former of Statesman editors, over the past year, have consolidated their hold over the student paper, to the detriment of the entire student body. The newspaper has reflected a defeatist attitude, underplaying student initiatives to deal with our situation at the Brook, while continuously printing administration lies and press releases as fact.

The editorial board dominated all decisions of the paper. Consequently, while every newspaper in the U.S. carried articles on the mammoth anti-nuke rally in New York City Sept. 23, Statesman didn't find 250,000 people rallying (including 1,000 from Stony Brook) significant enough to warrant their coverage. While women at Stony Brook tried to develop a women's center to co-ordinate activities on the serious issues of rape and abortion, States-man (with only two women on the 19-person editorial board), didn't find these issues or the Women's Center itself, worthy of in depth coverage. While gay students organized a dance(attended by 200 students),to benefit people on trial in San Francisco, and is currently organizing for a massive gay march on Washington DC on Oct. 14, Straightsman "lost" one of GSU's ads, put the wrong date on the other, refused to print the word "lesbian" in the lesbian ad, and, in general, has treated gay people from a typical homophobic position unbecoming a campus (or human) publication. This attitude was perhaps best exemplified when a current Statesman news Director, Mitch Murov, snottily asked one of the women sitting-in at the Statesman office Tuesday night: "Are you with the dykes or the commies?"

With four anti-nuke actions coming up in the next three weeks, one would think that a responsible student paper would announce these, let alone write feature stories about them, and encourage student participation in them. In addition, Statesman has continually failed to cover events concerning Black people -- the performances in the Union Auditorium, protests over departures in the African Studies Dept., and failure to cover the University's ties with corporations doing business with South Africa -- being the latest in a long series of examples. With four anti-nuke actions coming up in the next three weeks, one would think that a responsible student paper would announce these, let alone write feature stories about them, and encourage student participation in them. But no-o-o-o-o-o-o-o.

Several former Statesman editors have joined in the occupation of the Statesman office, and are responsible, along with members of the Women's Center, the Gay Student Union, Black Student Union, NYPIRG, Red Balloon, and other students, for the publication of Statesperson. We urge student groups who in the past have felt shunted aside, not listened to, or alienated from Statesman, to join the staff of Statesperson, submit articles, report on Security's activities in your dorms, and plug in to what will become Statesman's successor for the 1980's -- a progressive, activist student paper -- Statesperson, c/o Polity.

A quarter of a million demonstrators gathered in New York City Sept. 23 to denounce nuclear power.

NEW YORK CITY TO NUKES: DROP DEAD

Two-hundred fifty-thousand people, singing, laughing, shouting, and chanting, gathered together last week and made their voices heard.

In New York City's Battery Park, Sunday, September 23, the largest public rally in seven years took place to protest the continued use of nuclear power.

Freshperson Jill Marks said the whole thing was "just a concert." But Jill couldn't see the fervor behind the third major rally of the growing anti-nuclear movement. "The issue," as NYPIRG member Paul Diamond points out, "is here to stay. As long as nuclear power is around, so's the movement."

Was it, as Jill Marks thinks, just a concert? "No way," says Paul, "The issue's a magnet. Sure there was enthusiasm for the stars, and they drew a lot of people -- but everyone there was concerned about nuclear power."

Though there were problems with the sound system and other minor difficulties, the feeling of unity and popular power was a tangible thing that was embraced by most at the Battery. One of New York's Finest said that he had a "great time" as he stooped to picked up a diaper dropped by a woman holding her baby.

The beautiful Indian summer day of song and protest went peacefully. "No problems," the policeman said. "No fights, no hassles -- nothing but people fighting for something."

James Lyons, a volunteer for Musicians United for Safe Energy (MUSE), the organization responsible for putting together the rally, smiled when asked about his role of peacekeeper. "Well, I don't have to do a thing. Everything's organized great. The MUSE Committee has done a good job."

The crowd seemed pleased with that job, as they sang along with, and listened attentively to, the speakers of the day. Ralph Nader was there, along with Jane Fonda, Tom Hayden, Crosby, Stills and Nash, Jackson Browne, members of the SHAD Alliance and a

Continued on Page 4

The infamous Statesperson, with its bland headline: who else would be in the Statesman offices? a much better headline was Statesman's famous "Soccer Team Frustrates Queens."

quality of journalism, and be a strong, clear voice for the students.

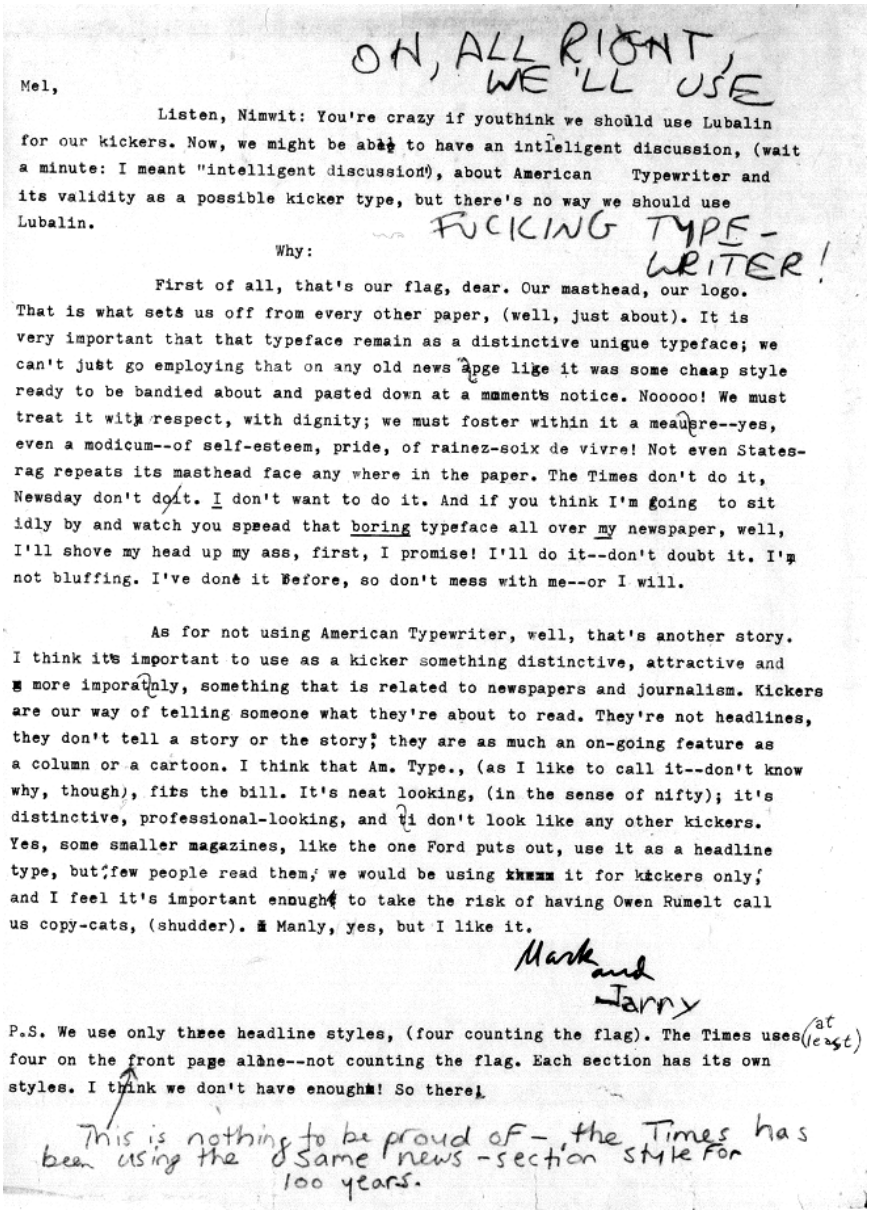
The next two weeks moved swiftly. The troika worked on their own stories and helped the writers who had followed them from Statesman with theirs. They also met over and over to decide what exactly their paper would be: everything from the name to the page numbers to the photo credits to the ad policy to the political bent and back to the bylines, had to be invented for the first time. Whereas Statesman was an event-oriented "daily," the new paper would be a feature weekly; whereas Statesman had closed, pedantic board meetings to discuss allocations for staplers, the new paper would have open staff meetings to discuss the direction of the paper or attitudes toward major issues; whereas Statesman put an emphasis on departmentalization and hiring employees to do production, the new paper would depend on cooperation in all aspects; whereas Statesman put an emphasis on filling pages with anything they could get their hands on, the new paper would hold copy until it was good enough for publication—editing was to be a crucial task, the quality of the copy a priority.

All this planning did not transpire in a vacuum. A series of Statesman editorials and articles damaging to the Cause was begun that was unrelieving in its vitriol, unbounded by taste or sense, and unceasing for months. In an editorial entitled, "Free Press," for example:

> Who will run this new newspaper? Will it be the same people who disrupted Statesman production last week, vandalized equipment and then published a four-page newsletter called "Statesperson," which misrepresented itself as the work of several campus groups that denied any official role in the affair? ...Two of them, Chris Fairhall and Melissa Spielman, argued vehemently while on Statesman for editorials urging the University to arm campus security....Senior Representative Dave Shapiro said, "The senate is not representative. They won't be able to handle the responsibility of selecting another paper."

Now they knew damned well who was going to run this new newspaper; second, no equipment was vandalized; third, Statesperson never said it represented those groups, and those groups didn't deny involvement anyway; fourth, Fairhall and Spielman never advocated arming Security, Shapiro didn't say anything of the kind, and all three were considering libel suits. Particularly galling was the fact that this attack followed Our Heroes' noble decision to raise high the banner of Quality Journalism, and do a Good Deed. (On a humorous note—but isn't all this stuff funny, anyway?—the Statesman article which broke the news of "an experimental first issue of an alternative paper funded by Polity," included this paragraph:

> Polity Treasurer Richard Lanigan would not disclose where he found $400 to finance the initial issue. "If all you people on Statesman were as concerned about expenditures as you seem to be about this expenditure, how come you haven't questioned any of the expenditures I have authorized in the last six months?")



OH, ALL RIGHT, WE'LL USE

Mel,

Listen, Nimwit: You're crazy if youthink we should use Lubalin for our kickers. Now, we might be able to have an intelligent discussion, (wait a minute: I meant "intelligent discussion"), about American Typewriter and its validity as a possible kicker type, but there's no way we should use Lubalin.

FUCKING TYPE-WRITER!

Why:

First of all, that's our flag, dear. Our masthead, our logo. That is what sets us off from every other paper, (well, just about). It is very important that that typeface remain as a distinctive unigue typeface; we can't just go employing that on any old news page like it was some cheap style ready to be bandied about and pasted down at a moments notice. Nooooo! We must treat it with respect, with dignity; we must foster within it a measure--yes, even a modicum--of self-esteem, pride, of rainez-soix de vivre! Not even States-rag repeats its masthead face any where in the paper. The Times don't do it, Newsday don't do it. I don't want to do it. And if you think I'm going to sit idly by and watch you spread that boring typeface all over my newspaper, well, I'll shove my head up my ass, first, I promise! I'll do it--don't doubt it. I'm not bluffing. I've done it before, so don't mess with me--or I will.

As for not using American Typewriter, well, that's another story. I think its important to use as a kicker something distinctive, attractive and more imporatnly, something that is related to newspapers and journalism. Kickers are our way of telling someone what they're about to read. They're not headlines, they don't tell a story or the story; they are as much an on-going feature as a column or a cartoon. I think that Am. Type., (as I like to call it--don't know why, though), fits the bill. It's neat looking, (in the sense of nifty); it's distinctive, professional-looking, and it don't look like any other kickers. Yes, some smaller magazines, like the one Ford puts out, use it as a headline type, but few people read them; we would be using it for kickers only; and I feel it's important enough to take the risk of having Owen Rumelt call us copy-cats, (shudder). Manly, yes, but I like it.

Mark and Jarry

P.S. We use only three headline styles, (four counting the flag). The Times uses (at least) four on the front page alone--not counting the flag. Each section has its own styles. I think we don't have enough! So there!

This is nothing to be proud of - the Times has been using the same news-section style for 100 years.

Believe it or not, a fairly representative missive from the early days, when editors fought tooth and nail on minor points as well as major. They would often return to their desks to find angry letters stuck in their typewriters or crayoned messages written directly on the wood, or worse, would find giant cockroaches smushed and dying next to the notes for emphasis (the little monsters had escaped from a lab upstairs and were all over the place).

The whole Polity machinery, and those students who knew and/or cared, were split pretty much down the middle: support was either fervent or icy. Political careers, Our Heroes' careers, Statesma's rep, and, of course, the future of the Press—all depended on that first issue.

Planning, editing, and layout took place in various dorm rooms. The Press was named in Dana Brussel's car one night (his seeming indiscretion concerning the coup d'etat had been overlooked) when, after a hamburger-deluxe run to Hi-Lite Diner, Our Heroes realized that publication day was coming up and they still didn't have a name for their baby. It was understood that it was aiming to be a mini-*Village Voice*. But calling it the Stony Brook Voice would prompt unfair comparisons with the other paper, accusations of unoriginality, etc. The Stony Brook Times? Too stuffy, and there was already the local Village Times. The Stony Brook Free Press? Statesperson? (Brussel got hit for that last one.) Finally, when the four were almost agreed on Spielman's suggestion for naming it "Fluffy," someone said (and this manual is not foolish enough to suggest whom), "Wait, not the Free Press-just the Press, the Stony Brook Press." "That's terrific," cried Brand, "perfect." "I think it's a good idea," agreed Spielman. Brussel sputtered for a moment, as was his wont, and shouted, "Fuckin' great!" "Yeah, why not?" said Fairhall, who wouldn't give a compliment if you tied his private parts with piano wire.

Finally, on Wednesday, October 24, 1979, Spielman, Fairhall, and Brand, arms around each other, watched 5,000 copies of the Stony Brook Press roll off the huge printing press at the Three Village Herald. The thundering of the machine easily drowned out the pounding of their hearts, but nothing could hide their quavering, unceasing smiles.

That night, the Polity Senate meeting went from ritualized pedantry and boredom to excitement, as two Presses, only 45 minutes old, were passed around, perused, and esteemed. Though the student body reaction was never accurately gauged, the issue drew raves from every administrator, without exception—for the first time they had not been misquoted! And they were delighted to be able finally to read an accurate account of the campus scene, even though it made them out to be the villains and incompetents they were.

Most important was that out of vitriol and vendetta, out of personal ambition and political chicanery, out of a ragtag group of disaffected strangers—somehow there came an entity that was better than its component parts, that rose above its origins. Almost without noticing, this handful of students created something good out of nothing, and were themselves improved by it.

The next week, the Senate voted to allocate $3,300 to the Press. A first year of publication was guaranteed.

II

Editor X resigned. After ridding his paper of Those Parasites, he proceeded to assure Statesman's doom by removing the last link with an admirable tradition and the last remnant of competence: himself. The Twitching Editor assumed command, as the Rag, with each succeeding issue, seemed to be trying to live down to its nickname. In addition to the stream of editorial invective, the Enemy Editors wished to do mean and unmentionable things to Our Heroes. (This was understandable, as their

talents, abilities, and looks were as nothing compared to the latter; but more importantly, Our Smug Heroes didn't let them forget it.) The first issue was handed out, one by one, to prevent wholesale theft of the unprotected copies. This painstaking method of distribution was continued for several issues after a Presser overheard a particularly annoying, eunuch-voiced member of the Enemy Camp offer five dollars for every bundle of Presses brought to him by his hallmates. The Press weathered the printed barrage by completely ignoring it and thereby garnering respect for restraint and integrity. Meanwhile, a brief, covert war of rat-fucking was waged on the Enemy Camp. Led by Brand and Fairhall, and with the doubting but tacit approval of Spielman, Enemy Editors would return to their offices to find telephone wires missing or coffee cups filled with urine. (Years later, Spielman explained that Our Heroes' sometimes strange, often outrageous, behavior was due to their being, for God's sake, only 19 years old. "That period was terribly exciting," she says, "but I'm very embarrassed about it.")

For the most part, though, the group was busy putting out the paper. A tiny office in the dungeon of Old Bio was wheedled from the Psych department, a phone installed, and some desks stolen. Duties were divvied up: Fairhall chaired meetings, gave orders, told people to "ram your head up your ass," and wrote like a demon; Spielman assigned stories, edited, and wrote like a demon: Brand wrote, wheedled offices, installed phones, and stole desks. The three played musical power chairs, as, on each topic, two would team against the third to outvote or outtalk him; there was no predicting what that moment's liaison would be (present antagonisms always gave out to Important Issues), nor the vociferousness or irresolution of the excluded editor.

Weekly staff meetings quickly became an institution. Round-robin discussion, introduction of controversial or abstract topics (Fairhall innovations), and a lively, eccentric, group, made for an exciting, challenging atmosphere, and the paper reflected this.[1] Often, articles were simply an outgrowth of a revelatory discussion, editorials a chance to prove a point brought up earlier in debate. By the spring semester, the

[1] *That lively, eccentric group was made up of people like Pat Giles, a more than portly gay student with a brilliant writing style; Alan Oirich, a friend of Jankowitz, an incessant talker, rude, charming, arrogant, clever, and sloppy—Giles would call him "the Thorazine Poster Child" and Oirich would counter that Giles had overdosed on Fern Iron; Vinnie McNeece, the conservative conscience of the paper who would become Photo Director the next year and in the midst of a campaign against nuclear energy, bought stock in LILCO; Jesse Londin and Vivienne Heston, best friends, writers, antagonists, who would later become the first Assistant Editors; Jeff Zoldan, a tall, wild-haired dog of a guy, a knee-jerk rad-lib new to newspapering—Zoldan was the first Arts Editor (we don't really count Kornfeld), and worked on the paper, in varying capacities, and at variance with varying personalities, longer than anyone else. There were, of course, in addition, a collection of writers, editors, staffers, and kibbitzers who were an integral part of the paper those crucial first years. To name a few who joined later: Debbie Marcus, the Assistant Managing Editor the second half of the second year, who had gigglepsy (editors would delight in making her spit up her Tab); Larry Feibel, a roly-poly arts writer and later Assistant Editor, who, though a nice guy, was easily the most wishy-washy person on the planet—a perfect string of "pass" votes in three years of minutes; Prakash Mishra, a born muckraker and a worshiper of Ralph Nader, Chris Fairhall, and Gandhi, who looked Indian and spoke Politician—he was responsible for interviews with Abbie Hoffman, Ralph Nader, AI D'Amato, Liz Holtzman, Tom Hayden, Dick Gregory, and was about to get AI Haig when he suddenly transferred; and Scott Higham, a blue-eyed blond with the looks and manner of a coffee-drinking, chain-smoking Mick Jagger, whose violent rejection of his conservative background and whose "hard-assedness" managed to provoke coworkers and get the paper through its first year without a founder as Editor* ('81-'82}; *that was the year the Press won First Place in the Columbia Student Press Association Competition and Higham became the first Presser to win the Buskin Award.*

Press had gone weekly. (The publication announcement in Vol. I, No.6: "With this issue, The Stony Brook Press becomes a weekly newspaper, serving the Stony Brook campus and community. We will not, however, publish next week.") By the end of the year, publication seemed less an event than an expectation. When Goldhagen and Silver of *Fortnight* beat out Editor X for the Buskin Award, it was a realization of the "virtue triumphs" axiom that had Our Heroes celebrating for days.

The next year, Brand took over as Editor, Spielman remained Managing Editor, and Fairhall bowed out of the journalistic side of the picture save for the occasions he would corner the other two and insult the paper, their writing in it, and their management of it. On the business side of the picture, Fairhall negotiated with Polity and Statesman for state-of-the-art typesetting equipment and worked with the new professional ad director, at whose insistence he pushed for a "community section" for the paper which less than a year before had declared itself solely for students. To complete the absurdity of the situation, the Twitching Editor was brought in to run the new section! (Within four issues, he was reported to have "schizzed out" and was last reported running a paper for retirees entitled, "Moving On.")

At the end of winter vacation, the Press was without a community section, mainly because it was now without an ad man—a grim situation for a paper without an adequate budget; it was without typesetting equipment—the deal had failed to materialize; it was without a managing editor—Spielman had gone to Boston over vacation and hadn't come back; it was on the verge of being without a printer as the Three Village Herald threatened to break its agreement; it was, for the most part, without hope.

For the eighth or ninth time since its inception, Fairhall and Brand met privately to discuss the feasibility of keeping the Press alive. Earlier, Fairhall had assumed ownership of the paper to allow it to do business before it was incorporated; now he faced financial ruin. With all the obstacles—including an unfriendly student government, a shortened semester, and a student body which probably wouldn't miss it—they were forced to make the decision they'd avoided making in the past: to pull the plug on the Press' life-support system, and let it fade away.

But like the planchette on an Ouija board, the Press seemed to draw its participants to a predetermined destination; seemed to pull itself together the next week; seemed to get itself to the printers, get printed, distributed, have its cash flow juggled just enough to pay its bills; and it seemed to do that long enough to finally dispel any notions about allowing it to die. The Press lived, and lives still.

Overview

While modern psychological study is still grappling with Freud's greatest question, his second greatest enigma looms large: What does a paper want? Well, in the case of the Press, we can quickly unfurrow the bearded Austrian's brow with a mandate so concise it appears naive: TO PRINT FEATURE ARTICLES, INVESTIGATIVE REPORTS, AND INCISIVE ANALYSES, FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMING THE CAMPUS COMMUNITY, PROMOTING PROGRESS, AND INCITING DEBATE.

Though there are certainly worthy, exciting, or even necessary endeavors toward which the Press staff might devote its paucity of time, keeping the tiller headed in the direction of the mandate will mean clear, if not always smooth, sailing.

The Press is not solely a commandment, of course. It is also a place to do your homework when the Library is closed. But beyond even that, the Press is its people—an ever-changing staff generally made up of misfits: intellectuals, misanthropes, angry young men and women, unfulfilled future professionals, lovers of staff members....All with one thing in common: their names in the staff box. This motley crew, as unseemly as it sounds, is the flesh and blood of the Press, giving form to the bones of its history. With each decision on page numbers, with each new article, with every innovation or argument, the staff breathes life into its ideals, builds consequence out of its theories. The challenge endures to maintain integrity and continuity while responding to the needs of the changing world.

Of paramount importance, in any analysis, is to have fun.

The dynamic of tension between fresh idea and traditional wisdom is an example of the kind of balancing act that the Press and its editors must continually play—group consensus balanced with respect for individual opinion; maintaining a seriousness of purpose without taking yourself too seriously; the public's right to know versus the individual's right of privacy; etc.

Seeing that all the elements remain in the air, or at least hit the ground as lightly and as seldom as possible, is the chief job of the Editor-in-Chief. (Though policy concerns such as those mentioned above are of great import, they will disappear like important copy on a production night when the Personnel Problem Monster rears its ugly head. When the Photo Editor complains he needs more than one photographer at each concert, and the Arts Editor claims he's got only two tickets and he needs two writers there and who needs photos anyway when we've got promo shots? and the Photo Editor says you do because the writing sucks, and the Arts Editor says the photos suck and so does the Photo Editor, and the Photo Editor says then forget the concert photos and the news photos too 'cause he's going home—the Editor-in-Chief must then carefully balance the priorities of one department against the other; the feelings of one editor against the other; the exigencies of the moment against the demands of the printing schedule; and, especially, his recognition of the importance of an equitable settlement of the crisis versus his desire to punch both the jerks—which may *be* an equitable settlement of the crisis.) The Editor-in-Chief chairs Editorial Board and Weekly Staff Meetings. But the role of arbiter and conciliator should extend primarily to personal and personality conflicts; like Roosevelt and his Brain Trust, partisan debate should be welcomed, and in its absence, instigated. A lack of contention is a sign of harbored resentments, or worse, inactive minds.

The other, more crucial, role for the Editor-in-Chief is that of spiritual leader. This may conjure up images of a nighttime pep talk around a staff office bonfire, but that's not the idea. The idea is to provide a focus for the staff's efforts, a goal to aim for. Each Editor-in-Chief should have a vision of what he thinks the Press is and where he wants to take it for the year. For Chris Fairhall, it was to establish a hard-hitting, journalistically impeccable alternative paper on campus; for Eric Brand, to continue Fairhall's vision while expanding its scope and building up the organizational side; for Scott Higham, to bring the major social issues of the day home to the campus, in the context of investigative journalism. The long-range policy choices and the day-to-day decisions of these Editors-in-Chief were informed by their visions of what the Press should be; and though the merit of all or part of those visions may be questioned, the content of the paper and the conduct of the staff benefited from the consistency and guidance they provided.

The person whose name is highest in the staff box gets the credit for a good job and the blame for the bad, basks in heaven's praise and burns in hell's heat. That person also is the first to be financially responsible in the event the paper is sued and the corporation's assets exhausted. Therefore, Napoleonic, megalomaniac, and demagogic complexes aside, that person has a legitimate claim to the Last Word. Press staffers, however, will generally accord their head honcho the respect and maneuvering room he deserves. Authority and responsibility do not merely walk hand-in-hand, they're positively an *item.*

The wise Editor will learn to balance his own wishes with the

group's, his own interests with the paper's; will learn to restrain his comments because first, he knows they will be—perhaps unfairly—accorded greater weight than the comments of others, and second, he knows that the rare judicious observation is respected far more than the oft-repeated remark; will learn that small concessions can be saved up and cashed in later on to purchase a key victory; will learn, most importantly, that he can sometimes be very, very wrong.

As the Bylaws indicate, the Big Ed is also responsible for finances, mainly because he's legally liable, but also because business managers have historically been given to secretism, unbridled capitalism, and power-brokering. Though his involvement generally constitutes nothing more than check-signing and periodic review, resting ultimate authority and responsibility for finances with an editor is sound policy for a newspaper.

As the Bylaws do not indicate, it is absolutely necessary for the Editor-elect to read a volume on libel law, (including a check with the lawyer for recent decisions); a book on business law; the Press Bylaws; *The Basics*; and this Manual. And it wouldn't hurt anyone else to try it, either. (Indeed, any staffer would do well to follow the guidelines suggested here for the Editor-in-Chief, though he runs the risk of becoming annoyingly perfect.)

In terms of the production of the paper, the Ed-in-Chief has only one responsibility: seeing that the editorial (or editorials) is written. Though he may have to fill in at the paste-up table, write a story, discover just *who* broke the Mr. Coffee machine, or perform a dozen other tasks that demand his attention, there is nothing that can't, inevitably, be done by someone else. Except the editorial. Whether the current system dictates the editorials be written solely by the Editor or on a rotation basis, that it is written at all is his responsibility. Input into future, feedback concerning past, and maintenance of standby editorials is part of this responsibility.

The editorial itself can be just about anything; it would be a needless straitjacket to describe parameters here. Except. Whether it's a well-reasoned essay opposing false teeth, or the addresses of anti-nuke groups juxtaposed with a list of explosives wholesalers, the editorial should be Honest, Responsible, and must Make a Point. The following are some brief descriptions of archetypal press editorials:

The Bottom-Line Editorial. This is the classic Press editorial, an intellectual attempt to peel away layers of societal camouflage and misunderstanding to reveal a subject's true nature. Done well, this kind of editorial satisfies all three requirements of the mandate. See "Apathy," Vol. I, No.4.

The Press Policy Editorial. A public self-examination of the Press' decision-making process, generally in relation to a campus issue. See "Endorsements," II, 14, or "Recognizing Racism and Sexism," III, 6.

The Satirical Editorial. See "Advocating Absurdities," III, 9.

The Facetious Editorial. Just what it sounds like. Kid gloves on this one, though: even superlative writing cannot prevent some misinterpretation. See "Fight for Your Country," II, 13, and the subsequent Mini-Editorial, II, 14.

The National or International Affairs Editorial. See "Voting for the Future," II, 8, or "The Perils of Knee-Jerk Foreign Policy," I, 7, (which

is also a Bottom-Liner).

The Unusual Stand Editorial. See "Heroism," II, 18.

The Stand-By Editorial. This is easily produced, yet valid, material, ready to run in the event that no one got around to writing a real one this week. See "Madison Ave, U.S.A.," II, 17.

The Standard Second Editorial. Announcement of a landmark date for the paper or the school, welcome back, so long, how do you do? , just fine and you?, etc. See "The People's Press," III, 1.

The Ill-Conceived Editorial. Or ill-executed. Something that should never ever ever run in the Press. See "To Carry a Gun," III, 8.

The Thing Itself

Now comes the cigar-chomping, coffee-drinking, stop-the-presses, Great-Caesar's-Ghost part of our story. We're talking nuts and bolts, the mechanics and ethics of putting the Press together, getting it out, and *going to sleep.*

First things first: there is no first thing. It would be convenient and calming to coolly separate the designing and implementation of the paper from the philosophy behind it, to leisurely examine each element of production, to catalogue and describe to such nice delineation that surely a band of clever apes could replicate the process and publish successfully. What sets man above simian, however, is not the knowledge of just how late is fashionably late; no, it is the peculiar attribute of integrity—or arrogance, or whatever—that prevents him from producing anything simply by rote, that invites the influence of his ideals—or vitriol, or whatever—into his machinations. The point is, there is no objective journalism. The point is, there's no such thing as balanced coverage. Or an isolated or inconsequential decision. The point is, there is no point in publishing a technically perfect but sterile Press, a paper that wins awards but saves no lives; and there's no point to a crusading Press that is unreadable, a mishmash of clumsy calls to action and shallow reporting. As its *raison d'être*, the Press must be effective, and to be effective it must have craft.

The activity of Doing the Newspaper can be itemized thusly: Assigning, Writing, Editing, Layout, Paste-up, Printing, and Distributing. This is the "proper" order for any particular story but rarely for an issue as a whole. Invariably, a step will be left out or the order will be switched.

Perhaps what counts is knowing what you should be doing even as you're doing what you shouldn't.

The **Assignment** of stories is a relatively simple task. Relative, because the scope and depth of the paper stem from good assigning. Pick tough issues, unusual topics, background sidebars to major articles, funny or human interest stories, a *variety* of stories.[1] Keep in mind the mandate and the goals you've set yourself. A thousand possibilities should be fighting for attention, and staffers—in the best of all possible worlds—should be pleading to do a good story. Though writers will generally offer their own story ideas (three or more with the same one indicates Journalism Class Assignment), some control should be exercised over what is being worked on and what is run. The time to choose what's going to run is before it gets written. (Occasionally, staff meetings can be given over to the questions of satisfaction with the current copy, what topics have been ignored or overplayed, or even a rethinking of the balance of on- and off-campus coverage.) "Tips," anonymous or otherwise, should be welcomed and encouraged.

It is all too easy to stay in the office, dispassionately analyzing the news, removed, distanced—safe. For the Press to be effective, it must be in touch with the community and its readers; and that means going out there and talking with them.

Give some thought to who's doing the writing. Novices get excited about the big scoop, but they will burn themselves out on a story they can't do justice to anyway. Making the trainee pay his dues with simpler stories puts the hierarchy in perspective, and gives him a goal. (Besides, what *self-respecting* editor would give up a good story?) A good compromise is to have a veteran work on a big story with a trainee, sharing a by-line. Also, certain writers will obviously develop some expertise in certain areas; don't waste that expertise. On the other hand, a writer with a grudge should not be allowed near a related story .

Assign follow-ups. A newspaper article is static; the subject is not. If it was worth writing about once, it's worth writing about again. A follow-up exhibits many things to the public: that you're conscientious; that you're on the ball; that your stories get results; that they can be sure to find a continuation of a story that piqued their interest. Most of all, anyone can ride out the bad publicity of an isolated report; but a series of reports is devastatingly effective.

A specific person should keep track of what stories have been assigned to whom. There should be no need to expand on this critical point.

And finally, you can threaten. You can plead. You can entice, cajole, bargain. You can stand on your head, hold your breath, and kick your feet. But nothing will cause a writer to turn a story in on time. Well, maybe not nothing. A combination of discipline, peer pressure, the promise—kept—of bouncing late copy, and a good example set by the editors, will result in deadlines met consistently.

In other words, forget it.

Before it gets too late, this manual must thrust a T-square deep into the heart of that sacred cow, Objective Journalism. You see, there is no such thing. What there is is idiots who, believing the human being capable of omniscient observation and the transmission of immaculate fact, approach journalism "objectively," furthering only the obfuscation of truth; and there's slightly wiser idiots who, recognizing that reality is inevitably filtered by perception, admit their bias and strive to expose as many layers of the truth as possible.[2] (An extended discussion can be

found in the NOTES section, under, "On Credibility, Objective Journalism, and, Especially, Conflict-of-Interest.")

Cut loose from the false security of Objective Journalism, the writer might now panic, particularly at the realization that the only guardian against lousy, inaccurate reporting and **Writing** is himself. But that is the reality, and must be faced up to. Psychiatrists contend they cannot invoke a conscience in a patient. Similarly, an editor cannot kindle a professional attitude in a writer; the writer must himself embrace the highest standards, and strive always to meet them. The next step is even more alarming: the writer must continually raise his own standards.

Self-discipline is the key, of course, to this professionalism. For the talentless writer, it is imperative. The best example of this was Chris Fairhall, who studied writing ceaselessly and wrote incessantly, and literally drove himself to a level of competency. At the other extreme is the natural writer. Fortunately able to spin out readable copy in first draft form, he will unfortunately receive few demands for increased quality. Self-improvement for him will come only through self-discipline.

(In a connected vein, only an unprofessional writer will label a story assignment "bad" or "good." The good writer, the imaginative writer, can take any story and make it interesting; and since no story should receive more or less space than it deserves, the relatively unimportant story can be quite short!)

Foremost in the writer's mind should be why he is writing this story. Is it to expose corruption or stupidity? Give recognition to a public figure? Explain an intricate subject? The why should be the focus—and literary devices, muddled structure, secondary subjects, whatever, should not be allowed to obscure it.

The greatest tool a writer can apply to his craft is that of organization. If your notes are clear, orderly, well marked; if you have a working knowledge of the Reference Room, and an idea of what materials you need; if you allot adequate time for research, writing, and rewriting; then your task will be easier and the result superior. Just before you actually begin writing, pause to consider the purpose of the story, and its focus. Write this down. Then consider the secondary points, and what evidence supports them. Write these down. Form a single sentence which reveals the thrust of the story. This is your lead. Complete a paragraph summarizing in order those secondary points and the evidence. This is your first paragraph, invaluable to the rest of the story. If done correctly, it will serve as an outline of the structure and focus of the story, and facilitate the writing in half the time it would have taken without it. Guaranteed. (Read the first two paragraphs of "Fighting Factions: Iranian students reflect Iran's political animosity," a prime example in III,4.)

Take heart, the Press is a writer's newspaper: it runs lengthy stories because it has a week's hiatus between deadlines; it publishes weekly to allow time for quality, in-depth work. But the desperate editor will always accept late copy, regardless of quality. So it is up to the writer to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the Press' printing schedule. It is only the writer who can choose to push himself, meet and then raise his own standards, and publish accurate, in-depth, hard-hitting stories—in other words, practice True Journalism.

The photo staff are often the unsung heroes at the Press. For although this is a writer's newspaper, it would nevertheless look awful without photos. Photos add the visual dimension to a story, pointing up three-dimensional relationships, identifying public figures, etc.; photos

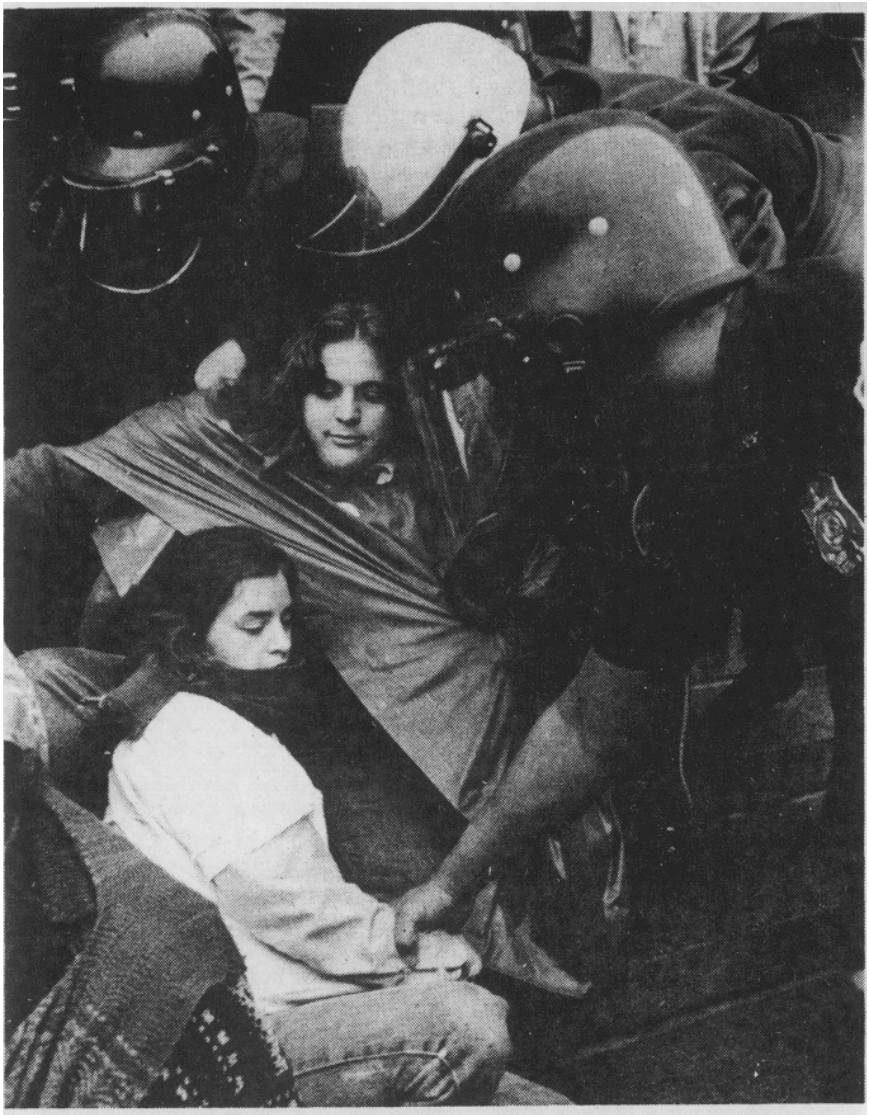
lend excitement to the appearance of a page otherwise bland and gray; in their flexibility of size and shape, they facilitate layout; they can often serve as a feature story on their own (though this technique is difficult to master and is often abused). A schism generally develops between photo staff and other staff, the result being poorly matched photo and story, or no photo at all. Writers and photographers—and their respective editors—should be encouraged to work together. But to command respect and position equal to writers, photogs must employ the same ethics and standards as their counterparts: their work should be appropriate, dramatic, clear, and concise; photos should be balanced, well-contrasted, focused, and thought out; photogs should invade no one's privacy, yet be inquiring and industrious; assignments should be completed and developed *on time.*

The topic of **Editing** should actually come before Writing. For editing is not simply amending or emendating copy; it is an ongoing organic process encompassing every stage of copy flow. For the sake of convenience, we can break the editing process down into three levels. The first is the general level, a continuum of information, ideas, discussion, and impassioned speeches that should pervade the offices. Throughout the research, writing, and formal editing stages, the editor or writer approaches his story, and judges its merits and ramifications, against the background of this continuum. What relationship does it bear to another story? Where does it fit in with our mandate? With our goals? What effect will it have? Who will it help? Or hurt? Should it be held off! Or is its effectiveness past? This interplay of story and staff is inescapable. If understood and used correctly, it will be greatly beneficial.

The second and third levels of editing are formal editing, or what is commonly called copy editing, the act of setting pencil to paper and marking it up. The extent of this marking-up depends on two factors: urgency and importance. All copy should get the attention it deserves, but deadlines often leave time only for detail editing (the third level). Stories of a sensitive nature, or including questionable information, should be bounced if time is not available for decent editing. As George Washington said, delay is preferable to error. Too, more attention should be paid to the lead stories, for obvious reasons.

Ideally, then, a story first undergoes editing for thrust and structure (the second level). The editor should read through the story without a writing implement in hand, as the reader would, and watch for thrust (focus, sense) and structure (presentation of information). If a news story, is it pyramided? If a feature, are the main ideas presented clearly and at the outset? Does the progression of ideas flow? If there is a point to be made, is it? If it is, is it done well? Is there a side of the story (argument) left out? Is the angle ill-chosen? Is the thing in bad taste? Are there glaring errors? Holes? These and other questions should run through the mind of the editor as he reads, and a negative answer—even a lukewarm positive answer—to anyone should either send the editor to the writer to discuss his analysis, followed by a rewrite by him or the writer; or simply cause him to rewrite himself, as the factors of urgency and importance dictate. (One editorial was completely rewritten back and forth between two editors four times, and then edited some more, before all were satisfied.) A passage from the *Harvard Law Review's* "Editor's Manual" advises editors that:

> General comments such as "This piece needs more creative ideas" or "The analysis in this piece is inadequate"



Protesters arrested at the Pentagon

What makes a good photograph? Drama. The interplay of human emotions, the clash of ideals, the contrast of light and space. A good photographer knows his equipment, knows his subject, knows the needs of the story and his newspaper. Not every photo deserves a Pulitzer, but not every photo needs to. A good photographer knows this and gets the job done.

> are useless to the writer: the writer knows he or she should be creative and analytical, and if the writer is failing in some ways, it is the editor's job to provide clear and specific direction for correcting shortcomings. At the same time, a successful editor-writer relationship requires respect for the writer and a positive attitude about developing the piece.

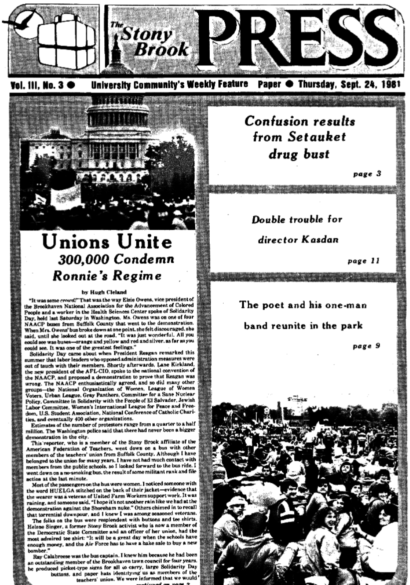
Once the story is in shape generally, it should undergo the final stage, detail editing. Rephrase awkward sentences, check for grammar, style, and spelling mistakes. Check facts. But avoid making changes unless you can justify them. Let the author have his style: you'll be glad when the editor of your own story does the same for you. Finally, read it through just once more to be sure, and hand it in. As picayune as this stage seems, it is no less important. Unreadable copy, or inaccurate information, lead to a loss of credibility—and that's the whole ball game.

Speaking of which, sending copy to the typesetter with only cursory or worse yet, no editing, is nonsensical. The press exists as an organ of communication. Its medium of communication is the printed word, or more truly, the thoughts those words convey. Publishing those thoughts without guidance, without control, will lead to a view of them as unconnected, erratic packages of meaning, of questionable veracity, and therefore questionable worth. Without a great deal of forethought and effort, the paper will suffer a loss of credibility. And an organization which deals in information is powerless, useless, without its credibility. Guard your credibility well: it can be lost in a moment and never regained.

There is a great deal of difference between, but a fine line separating, editing and censorship. The institution and implementation of certain standards and ethics on the Press is necessary .But a constant guard must be up to prevent these from metamorphosing into the tools of censorship. Remember that refraining from working on stories deemed too difficult is censorship every bit as insidious as the classic cover-up of a story damaging to a friend. Remember, too, that self-censorship is the monster in its worst form, for it provides no antagonists to thrash out the potential merits or dangers. Aside from libel considerations, it is better to err in the case of freedom than to refrain in the name of prudence.

As an object of the physical world, apprehended by means of one's optical sense, the *look* of a newspaper is undeniably important. Yet, because it is so much a visual component of newspapering, Layout can receive here only a few basic stabs. The first is that the layout of the paper should be designed with one thing in mind: communicating your message. That is the function of the paper, and so must be the function of layout. Whether it is the overarching decision of going tabloid or standard, or the minor decision of where to crop a photograph, the question of *what will draw the reader's attention and keep it there?* should sit on your brain much the same way as your parents hovered over you exhorting you to eat your vegetables.

Keep the eye moving—from left to right, and from top to bottom. A pox on those who can't understand why. (The explanation why, anyway: that's the way English is read; and also the direction the reader goes through the paper.) The ideal is a mixture of the two, a vertical movement (usually accomplished with photos in opposing comers). A static page will not keep the reader reading. Use common sense. Just because it all fits on the page doesn't mean it's a good layout. Is it readily apparent which headline is for which story? Do quoteboxes break up copy too


The Stony Brook PRESS

Vol. III, No. 3 ● University Community's Weekly Feature Paper ● Thursday, Sept. 24, 1981

Confusion results from Setauket drug bust

page 3

Double trouble for director Kasdan

page 11

The poet and his one-man band reunite in the park

page 9

Unions Unite
300,000 Condemn Ronnie's Regime

by Hugh Cleland

continued on page 7


The Stony Brook PRESS

March 20, 1980 Vol. I, No. 10

Increase Is Likely For Cooking Fee

by Melissa Spielman

Continued on page 4

R.C. Anderson Richard Schmidt

President Search: 'It's on the Upbeat'

by Chris Fairhall

Continued on page 3

Drugs: 'To Be Found If You Want Them'

by Chris Fairhall

Drugs at Stony Brook Part II

On The Inside

Students discuss being gay at Stony Brook. page 2

Amiri Baraka interviewed on his arrest. page 5

"The Scarecrow" is reviewed. page 9

The Clash in concert. page 11

Continued on page 3


Fall Fest '81 Brings Food, Fun, & Fireworks

Uncle Ralph Energizes S.B.

By Joseph Caponi

Cousin Abbie Fires 'Em Up

by Ned Goldreyer

'I wish I was a goddamn right - winger!'

page 6 The Stony Brook Press

September 17, 1981 page 7

Top left: Note strong vertical movement from top left to bottom right; interesting breakout of photo through flag; strong ascending shape (Capitol Building) on top and strong anchoring shape (receding crowd) on bottom. Top right: Note flow of copy from top left to bottom right, facilitated by repetition of rectangular shape top right, middle and bottom left; also note varying column widths, use of series logo, and alternation of roman and italic heads. Bottom: double truck is excellent for tying together big story; note balance of photo and copy, varying column widths and common theme for photos

often? Make it easy for the reader to read, without boring him. (Hey, no one said this was easy. Grown editors have been known to tear their own heads off rather than do layout.) Avoid extensive gray areas (large amounts of copy) by breaking them up with photos or quoteboxes. Consider the relationship of placement in the issue to importance of the store. Right-hand (odd-numbered) pages are seen first by the reader and therefore better used as copy pages. Page three, of course, is the prime news page.

Some archetypal Press layouts:

Front page, I, 10 Front page, II, 8
Front page, II, 19 Front page, III, 3
Pages 8 and 9, I, 4
Pages 6 and 7, III, 2
Pages 10 and 11, III, 5 (10/15/81)
Pages 14 and 15, III, 17: a bad layout

Common sense is also the prime consideration for **Paste-up**. Alacrity is important (often crucial), but neatness counts, counts, counts. Sloppy spacing, mismatched borders, missing captions—beyond looking like crap, indicate to the reader lack of concern, translatable to lack of credibility.

Printing should cause few worries. Check on inking quality, photo contrast; be reliable and make sure the printer is reliable, too; keep on his good side.

In a narcoleptic, apoplectic state, with the paper finally put to bed, no editor wants to deal with **Distribution** of the paper. But to finesse this final, vital step is a mistake. What's the point of putting yourself through that hell if no one—or not enough—sees it, or it comes out late? Figure out your target readership, estimate their number and location. Then, allowing for funding and logistical limitations, figure how best you can get a Stony Brook Press to them. The first issues of the Press were hand-delivered, every single last one of them, into the hands of the readers. That's a little far to go, but getting the Press out is the bottom line. The bottom line.

Someone, of course, has got to be responsible for this madness. Someone has got to be crazy enough to see that these steps are taken, and on time, and in some sort of order. It might be the Editor-in-Chief, and it might be some other sucker. But usually it is the Managing Editor. To him is charged the dual responsibility of overseeing copy flow (including production), and content. If he's got any sense, he'll delegate his duties all over the place. He will appoint a News Director, to keep in touch with the writers; a production supervisor to oversee paste-up; a proofreader to nitpick. But his is the final responsibility for the final product, the Thing Itself. And he's got to be as competent as they come, as big a bastard as can be tolerated, and as dedicated to quality and efficiency as he is to breathing.

Following are examples of archetypal Press stories, headlines, photographs, and graphics.

News/Feature
Investigative Large: "The University Tightens Control," I, 1
Investigative Small: "SB Foundation Invests in Nuclear Utilities," II, 3
Sensitive Feature: "From the Inside Out: Gays at SB," I, 10
Evenhanded Feature: "A Fight of Rights: Abortion Is Debated at Stony Brook," II, 20
News Analysis: "Presidential Search: 'It's on the Upbeat,'" I, 10
Spot News: "Say It Ain't So, Liz: Under Pressure, Wadsworth Resigns," II, 11
Interview: "Here's Abbie: An exclusive interview with former fugitive, Abbie Hoffman," II, 14
Forum: "Battle of the Calendars," III, 5 (10/15/81), pp. 10 and 11
Short Feature: "Every Second," III, 8 p. 9

Headlines
"From Pitching Ball to Pitching Himself," II, 7, p. 2
"You Say, D' Amato: The conservative senatorial candidate defends his record to the Press," II, 8, p. 1
"Reagan Rules: Bonzo goes to the White House," II, 9, p. 1
"Yes Deposit, Yes Return: 5c1: deposit on beverage containers in Suffolk is finalized," II, 22, p. 1
"Fairness, Dammit," (editorial) III, 3, p. 2.
"'I Will Not Be Specific': The new provost speaks on education, the calendar and his job," III, 6, pp. 1 and 8
"March of the Would-Be Soldiers: Reagan continues draft registration," III, 12, p. 1
"Having a Great Time, Wish I Were Here," (article on talk by drug guru Timothy Leary), III, 14, p. 9
Heads and subheads on SUNY story, II, 7, pp. 1 and 3

Photographs/Graphics
Wadsworth, I, 2, p. I
Protestors, I, 2, p. 7
Smile, I, 2, p. 9
Man and graphs, I, 3, p. 5
Amityville Herring, I, 4, p. I
Cartoon, I, 7, p. 5
Marchers, I, 13, p. 1
Cops and protestors, I, 13, p. 2
Marburger and Jackson, II, 2, p. 5
"Truman," II, 11 (11/20/80), p. 11
Calendar, III, 4 (10/15/81), pp. 10 and 11
Koch, III, 7, pp. 1 and 7

[1] *Interviews (the Q&A-transcript kind) are not stories, but excuses for stories. They require no creativity, analysis, and little skill except for typing. The week an editor devotes to a Q&A is a week in which his writing muscles atrophy. Obviously, circumstances occasionally demand this form, and then a great deal of research and planning should precede it, lest it be merely a published chat rather than a revealing exchange of challenge and parry. However, interviews are better suited to magazines than newspapers. And besides, the staffer who thinks he's cleverly avoiding work with an interview will end up spending more time transcribing than he would have writing.*
[2] *Anyone who works on a newspaper has got to be an idiot.*

The Organization

Surprise! The Press does not magically appear each week, the handiwork of clever little elves. It is the product of the blood, sweat, tears, and other bodily excretions of a group of people. That group of people—being people—needs, in order to function, a set of rules, both implicit and explicit, to govern its behavior. Further, that group of people has been incorporated, and deals with other groups of people, and therefore needs even another set of rules to govern that behavior. Dealing with elves would be a whole lot simpler, but they have a tough union and won't work for scale.

So we have to settle for the people.

The **Dynamics** of the staff are fascinating to observe, for the relationships, duties, and responsibilities change subtly or remarkably depending on the players and their roles. Officially, a rigid hierarchy—as set forth in the Bylaws—exists at the Press. Ultimately, authority and responsibility are buttressed by this legal system; but we all know that since the Managing Editor and the Assistant News Editor are roommates, and since the Editor-in-Chief and the Business Manager are sleeping together, and since the Photo Director and the Managing Editor are both short and suffer from chronic chips on the shoulder—hierarchical lines of authority and responsibility are shot all to hell. But generally, staffers will hold positions to which they aspired and/or deserve and/or excel in. So this natural hierarchy supports the one on paper. Though staff should respect position and title ("A nation of laws and not of men," etc.), they often don't or can't. As mentioned before, authority and responsibility walk hand in hand.

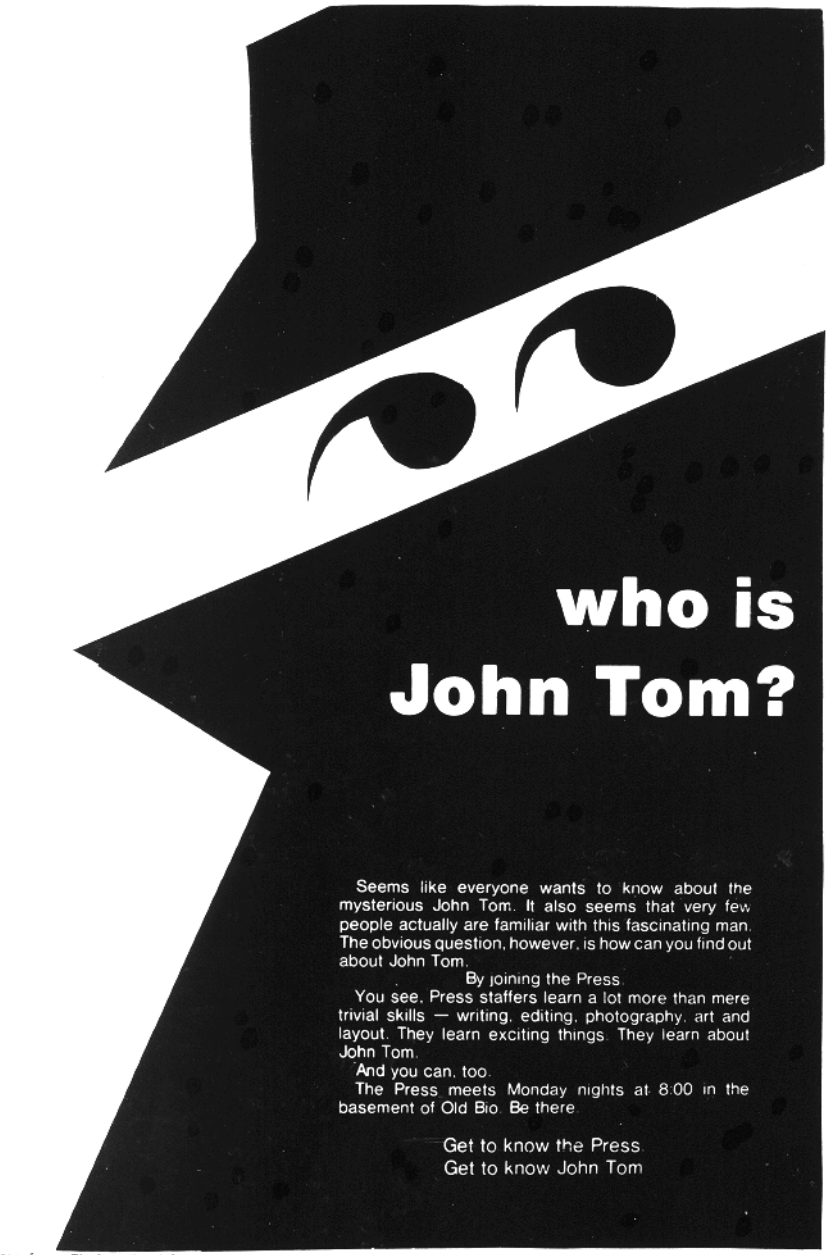
Because the Press is a group venture, everyone must be on his best behavior to ensure success. This might sound condescending (all

right, it is pretty condescending), but not less true for being so. The importance of attitude and behavior is the reason much of this manual comes off as a self-help paperback. The Press will thrive if staffers, in their dealings with each other, their writing, and themselves, strive for honesty, awareness, and selflessness. Amidst the cries of "fat chance," the alternative is pointed out: a chaos of backbiting and infighting; an inefficient organization publishing an ineffective newspaper. Yuck, right? As a group and as individuals, the staff must embrace honor as its hallmark. The more your involvement, the higher you climb, the more you produce—the greater should be your sacrifice. Cooperation yields the sweetest satisfaction. (Pragmatists please note that the notoriety attending credit for overall effort is greater than that for individual achievement.)[1]

The whole argument becomes moot, however, if there is no one to populate the staffbox. For the Press has a problem no professional paper must face: graduation. If for no other reason (and other reasons, such as lack of salary, abound), Recruitment may be the most important job the staff has. Certainly, neophytes unaware of what they're getting themselves into will peek in, offer to help, and never leave. But for the most part, positions must be filled by persons who wouldn't dream of working in our hellhole without coercion.

Recruitment takes many forms, and though it is the Associate Editor's responsibility to organize the "effort," it is everyone's responsibility to search out new members, to boldly go where no staffer has gone before, and bring 'em back alive. There is a peculiar reluctance, however, on the part of every Presser to press anyone to join; it seems to stem from embarrassment. Here are things you can tell yourself to feel less silly when approaching a prospective writer: if I can get this asshole to write the story, I won't have to; the more people on the paper, the less work I have to do; if I talk this gorgeous girl into writing a story, she'll have to spend hours with me alone in a basement; it's for the good of the cause; it'll score points with my editor; if Richie Rich here worked on the paper, he could pick up the tab at the diner; (and lastly) after all, *I'm* working on the paper, so it can't be *that* bad....

Recruitment is an ongoing struggle. Writers and chore-doers must be scouted, and from their ranks, editors. Senators must be recruited into the philosophical camp.[2] The Press should constantly be sold; mentioned, explained, defended. Anyone and everyone is fair game: journalism (and other) professors told to announce meetings in their classes; profs invited to contribute articles; mentions in the university's official news organs; ads in minority newspapers and hangouts—affirmative action is imperative;[3] participation in activities fairs; flyers; etc. (In '82-'83, free ad space for COCA was swapped for the opportunity of having "Read the Stony Brook Press" printed on every movie ticket.) The first issue should announce a major recruitment meeting that night or the next; this to catch the unwitting freshmen and the returnees who have not yet established their routines. House ads should be run regularly (though not too big or more than two an issue, or you will appear desperate). They can range from the serious and simple to the outrageous, but they should never be unprofessional, i.e., irresponsible or pleading. (One change from Statesman the founders wanted to make was in the recruitment ads. Statesman house ads inevitably consisted of or ended in the words, "Statesman needs writers," a line more suitably scrawled on a bathroom stall. The standard, "The Press is accepting trainees for the position of blank," though stuffy, at least sounds like the applicant will be the beneficiary of his work rather than the paper. A confident tone will create interest, desperation only



This house ad, which ran in IV, 7, is a good example of what a house ad can be: eye-catching, intriguing, tounge-in-cheek. It looks professional but is not pompous. Did it bring anybody doen to the office? Who knows.

doubt—and this has an effect on the staff, too.) A nice example is from II, 20, a simple box stating, "If you are interested in reporting the truth, kicking ass, having a good time with a bunch of nuts, and padding your resume, join the Press and perpetuate Stony Brook's weekly newspaper." Another is the striking, full-page ad from IV, 7, p. 6. Because they are relatively easy and free, house ads are the editor's favorite form of recruitment. But they should not be the only form: believe it or not, there are potential staffers who don't read the paper.

Training is the area with the worst record of success at the Press. If the collected information and wisdom of past years had been passed on and maintained, this manual would be unnecessary. But even in the Press' nascent years—at the time of this writing—the process has broken down irretrievably. The training of editors and non-editors alike is an unending chore, exhausting and exasperating, but one which spells life or death for the paper.

New staffers should be indoctrinated into the Press ideology, both its organization and editorial goals. Careful assignment of stories and/or chores should be made to encourage initial success and the pursuit of further work. Close, personal guidance should come from an editor or senior staffer in the trainee's area of interest. Training, whether it is the explanation of technique or the relating of history, is a continuous, often subtle, process, and no one, be he the top editor or the darkroom assistant, ever completes his training; there is always something new to learn. Patience and persistence are mandatory on the part of both teacher and student. And the most competent, experienced editors must be prepared to repeat their words *ad nauseum.*

Out of this stumbling crew of greenhorns, management should identify potential leadership material; often it will offer itself, and sometimes it must be prodded. The training of these staffers and the subsequent transition of leadership can mean the critical difference between a successful and productive year or one spent simply keeping heads above water. No doubt the reader can think of at least one area in which his predecessor(s) left him woefully ignorant—don't pull the same crap on your own successors.

The process is composed of the informational and the practical, the teaching and the doing. First, provide an historical perspective of the paper, where it's been, why it's there, what it's meant, and to whom. Describe the year's goals, the attempts to meet them, the failures and successes. Outline the political and environmental context of campus and community, and how the Press fits into it. Identify resources, such as services, contacts, and advisers (as opposed to advisors, a real no-no). Explain the budgeting process, its rationale and mechanics, and involve them in it—after all, it's going to be their budget. Describe the various roles and relationships within the Press, the dynamics of personality and power, and discuss how the new person(s) can best deal with those dynamics. Finally, help the new people to begin to form their own priorities, goals, and strategies. Be careful: the next year's staff and the next year's campus will not be the same as yours, and will require a fresh approach. It might kill the outgoing Editor to think of his beloved paper with a new headline font, but he must remember that what's important is the effective publication of the Press, and not the preservation of his ego. New management will feel powerless without the right to rethink policy. Besides, a little rebelliousness should be expected.

The second half of management training is the practice of man-

agement. All the information and advice will do tomorrow's leader no good if it is not in his blood, his reflexes. He must have hands-on experience, and now, while veteran editors are around to advise and avert disasters, not next year when it may be too late. As painful as it sounds, the last two or even three issues should be given over completely to the new editors, to succeed or to fail, but *on their own.* Independence is meaningless without the right to make mistakes. Nothing will prepare them better for the coming struggle. (And wouldn't it be nice to sleep late on production day?) Decision-making is undoubtedly the most important aspect of leadership; an inexperienced but decisive Editor-in-Chief is preferable to one who is accomplished but wishy-washy.[4] Background does not create backbone.

As suggested before, the training and transition period is not the time for self-aggrandizement; it is the time to seriously lay the groundwork for the future of the Press.

The business side of the Press organization is the most mundane, but (that phrase again) nevertheless important. The executive editors are officers of the corporation, and the rest of the board its directors. Responsibility for direction of the corporation and its finances falls on this group; financial liability can actually fall on the Editor-in-Chief, as president, then the Managing Editor, as vice president, and so on down the line, in the event of a lawsuit or similar action. There are further responsibilities in corporate existence, such as filing taxes, or conducting elections and meetings properly. Adherence to the Bylaws and a check with the lawyer should keep you out of trouble.

As businesspeople (albeit that thought is stomach-turning), Press people have got to behave as such. Standard business practices should be observed: financial records kept and in good order (a New York State and Polity mandated policy); speedy deposit of received payments, and prompt disbursement of monies owed; courteous relations with both debtors and creditors. When money is involved, people tend to get real funny, so to avoid hassles in your business dealings, simply behave in a businesslike manner .

The biggest headache business-wise is the Budget. In comparison, other activities, vital and not-so-vital, pale. Each year the Press is around is a point in its favor, but money from Polity is NEVER GUARANTEED.[5] Do not take funding for granted. Only Statesman may do so, as it is considered the school paper (i.e., the one that prints varsity football results). The Press must continually prove its worth—which may be galling, but it serves to keep us on our toes.

Other sources of moolah are, of course, available: the local chamber(s) of commerce, the graduate and health sciences student associations, the faculty, the alumni association, the Faculty-Student Association, awards and grants from outside organizations, the Stony Brook Foundation, and the University.[6] In fact, originally, the Press was intended to be subsidized by monies collected from each of these groups, so that funding would reflect readership, increase possible income, ease the bite on Polity, and ensure that no one contributor could stifle content or even publication. But too many good reasons kept this plan from implementation. Anyone who's been even marginally involved in the annual panhandling ritual knows what a pain in the ass it is—and can imagine the horror of performing it for a score of skeptical budget committees rather than just one. And one check from one source is infinitely easier to handle (just ask the Business Manager) than ten checks from ten sources arriving (or

not arriving!) at various intervals. Sticking with Polity means a consistent budgeting process; and while some years the pickin's might be slimmer than others, a Polity which feels it is the Press' only hope will be far more amenable to supporting the paper than a Polity which is aware of rival (or replacement) benefactors. Finally, a paper which, at heart, is a student advocate, and predominantly peopled by undergrads, should rely on the undergraduate student government as its main source of income. So, though other green shots-in-the-arm should be solicited, logic (and, inevitably, circumstance) dictate concentrating on Polity. (In relation to relations with the Future Political Hacks of America Club, and a breakdown of the budget process—including strategy and tactics—see "Polity" in the NOTES section.)

Advertisements are both another source of funds and a nifty way to pad an issue. If handled properly, they will represent a steady flow of cash into the coffers. They will constitute an active relationship with the business community. They will give readers another reason for picking up the paper, and will prevent them from being overwhelmed by unrelenting copy. So that is why we have ads. Notice, however, the use of the conditional in this paragraph, following the clause, "If handled properly." No accident. For advertising is yet another area to which management must apply its exiguity of wit.

Before we get down to mechanics, let's pay a cursory ('cause who cares about 'em, right?) call on principles. General policy, such as whether to have a student or professional ad director, or whether an editor can receive commission on solicited ads, should be set at the outset. Specific policy, such as the acceptance of ads anathematic to editorial stance (e.g., military ads), can be dealt with when it comes up (preferably just *before).* The underlying principles of responsibility and reliability should be ever-present. *Should* be...

Set rates. Undercutting Statesman and other local papers is always a good idea, but too much and you won't be taken seriously. Solicit. Sign contracts: they're binding and give you a record of the transaction. Semester-long and year-long contracts are a great idea, as they represent a bargain to the advertiser and a convenience to the ad staff. Be creative: whip up a special event and hit on unlikely advertisers (e.g., administrative offices at graduation time, departmental offices at preregistration time); find a common theme and pressure appropriate advertisers to join (e.g., Spring '82's "The Stony Brook Union News," a semester-long two-page spread of propaganda and ads). Bill. As efficiently and professionally as possible, extract payment from your advertisers. (The '80-'81 Business Manager started small claims court proceedings against a dozen recalcitrant shopkeepers, got his money, and had a great time doing it.) Place the ads in the issue. Because they are business propositions, grown-up papers base issue size on the amount of ad copy, and ad placement takes priority over story distribution. Here at the Press, more often than not, issue size is the result of a compromise, following an argument, between the Managing Editor and the Business Manager; and ad placement is the result of a compromise, following an argument, between the Managing Editor and the Ad Director.

Though at times you may feel like William S. Gilbert's Frederick—a slave of duty—certain chores must be completed for to maintain the Press. In a vague approximation of descending order, from vital to superfluous, the following list of **Duties** is presented.

•Check-signing. Sign and distribute checks.
•Maintain offices. Renew terminating leases; look to expand presently-held property. Assign desks and space. Clean up (ha!). Distribute (sparingly) keys, and keep track of them (robberies have taken place).
•Keep a surfeit of reference books on hand.
•Maintain equipment. Make capital purchases and improvements. Keep 'em running and out of harm's way. You may not need state-of-the-art, but you also don't need the headaches of antiquated machines. Keep plenty of typewriters on hand.
•Stock supplies. Anticipate needs and order times. Be creative: used computer printout makes nifty typing paper .
•Maintain morgue. Save copies of each issue and hide them for posterity.
•Maintain files. Keep little memorabilia like, oh, you know, contracts, awards, and irreplaceable documents, in some sort of order somewhere safe. (Look at it once in a while: my, my, what interesting things are there.) Record, copy, and file minutes of meetings. This is both a wise thing to do in terms of remembering just what happened, who said what, to whom, and when—and is also a *legal obligation.*
•Solicit subscriptions. And remember to send the copies out!
•Maintain correspondence. With whomever.
•Supply the S.B Library with copies. For microfilming.
•Enter award competitions.
•Hold an X-acto and Wax Dinner. By far, the least painless of these duties. Generally, an end-of-year fete involving staff and friends, useful for toasting and roasting the outgoing Pressers, and indulging to excess.
•Maintain a network of contacts. When the Press is in possession of a story of beyond-campus import, a list of key people at various news media organizations is useful, in order to take advantage of the opportunity to perform a public service and attain some notoriety.
•Update resource material. Like the Policy and Procedures Manual, the By-laws, etc.

As with the newspaper side of our newspaper, there ought to be a personage in charge of coordinating and overseeing all the loose ends of the organization side. In Press heaven, there is an Associate Editor to do this—someone who has strong editing and leadership qualities; looks presentable; handles public and personnel relations courteously and wisely; prompts recruitment drives and training initiatives; sees to the maintenance of the Press infrastructure; handles the myriad maddening details of corporate existence that confuse and muddle news-minded editors. It is conservative to say that this sort of person is rare. But a good Associate Editor can turn an organization respected solely for producing a good paper into a revered institution, emulated for its professionalism. So filling the position is at least a feint in the right direction.

[1] *More on "Honesty" and "awareness" in the NOTES section.*
[2] *See "Polity" in the NOTES Section.*
[3] *See "The Open Door" in the NOTES Section.*
[4] *The dilemma in Spring* '80, *of choosing for Editor between indecisive cofounder Melissa Spielman and the forceful but less experienced Scott Higham, was resolved when Spielman decided to move to Boston.*
[5] *This is, of course, assuming Polity is still responsible for the distribution of activity fee monies. Following the Turbulent Sixties, students wrested control of the fee from the University, as was only right since it was their money and their activities. The disbursement of same has since been relatively fair and stable. Woe to the student body lax enough to surrender this right and unwilling to take it back.*
[6] *In a crisis, an early Editor once secretly exacted a pledge from a Stony Brook president to assist the Press with* $5,000 *in the event it was about to go under. Luckily, this did not come to pass, and the offer was forgotten with the Editor's graduation. Nevertheless, the possibility of this sort of assistance exists. But it should be sought only in the most dire and dreadful of circumstances, and as a last resort.*

Notes

The Administration

The Administration is the enemy. Not necessarily because it wishes to be, but because that is the role in which circumstance has cast it. As a bureaucracy, permanent and impersonal, charged with overseeing various factions with sometimes conflicting needs, and answerable to a removed, even less personal, authority, the Administration cannot have the students' best interests at heart. A bureaucracy exists to establish order, and will by its own inertia seek efficiency to facilitate that order. Often, educational goals, or living-environment amenities, lose out to this bureaucratic priority. Limited funding also con- strains efforts for keeping all satisfied. This perpetual push towards order often goes unnoticed because it takes so long: the University can afford to take its time; and actions frequently appear to be benign or unconnected when in actuality they are concerted attempts to exert greater control. This will sound paranoid without the understanding that most administrators are not evil people—they are simply trying to keep their jobs, and with the minimum of fuss. This means clamping down on liquor licenses to prevent the sale of beer to minors; clamping down on vending machines to avoid taxation problems; clamping down on activity fee distribution to keep clear of federal civil rights enforcement; etc. Each of these actions is easily and justifiably explained by administrators in terms of responsibility and accountability—but they never-the-less boil down to *control over the students.*

It is inevitable for this to be so. So for the Press it means being ever-vigilant, scrutinizing the University's every action and occasionally stepping back to fit the pieces into the larger picture. It means reminding the student body and the student government of these facts and possibilities. And on those occasions when no one sees the truth but you—the frightening, exciting realization that you are the last hope—it means taking the lead in championing student freedom. In personal relations it means viewing every word and action with an eye for strings attached. Free rooms for the summer editors? Donations to the Press coffers? Foundation cars for long-distance assignments? And what in return? It had better be nothing, or integrity and credibility are flushed down the toilet. Finally, be sure that from the outset nomenclature is on an equal basis, preferably first-name. Remember that these administrators, from president to secretary, are just people, with only age differentiating them from us. Aside from something slimy and illegal, THERE IS NOTHING THEY CAN DO TO YOU. So mess with their bureaucratic mentalities. Throw off your inhibitions and have fun!

Advice

Ever notice that when you get to the top of the heap in junior high, you have to start all over in high School, and then when you're established there and you know everyone and how to bend the rules and all, out you go and you're on the bottom looking up in college, and then…The endless assembly line of schooling results in students with little knowledge or understanding of the schools. And when they do finally begin to gather that knowledge and formulate that understanding, boom! Graduation. This inescapably leads to student editors lacking perspective, and working in a position inferior to administrators who have seen more years of action. The solution is to augment your knowledge by seeking out veterans, i.e., graduated or perennial students. As warehouses of trivia, history, and tall tales they cannot be beaten; and generally, their advice is sound, informed as it is by experience.

The caveat to this is in dealing with former editors: Established patterns of authority (both in word and deed) may compromise the usefulness of the advice (look at the example below in "Awareness"). Respect should be accorded the former editor as due him. But each party should recognize that the former editor has had his time in the sun and should butt out. (See "History" in this section and **Training** in THE THING ITSELF.)

Awareness

Just as the original fundamental policy of the Press was to uncover the real causes of events—the stories behind the stories—so should that be the counsel for personal issues. An attempt to discern underlying motivations will save time and embarrassment. Recognizing the hidden agenda of others will prevent ministering to manifestation rather than motive. Recognizing one's own hidden agenda will generate the power and self-confidence that comes with self-awareness. F'rinstance: at two in the morning during the last week of one semester, following publication of the last Press, the outgoing Ed-in-Chief called his newly elected successor, and, with his voice full of outrage and excitement, informed the latter of the Administration's latest act of oppression and how it demanded a special issue. The new editor knew that the graduating editor had unfailing instincts, a respectable track record, and indeed knew he was nothing if not intimidated by him. But he also knew that the crisis merited, perhaps, a small box in a future issue. And so he figured the episode to be a desperate bid for the fire and frenzy the dedicated but nostalgic editor was leaving behind; he thanked his predecessor, assured him he would think it over, and went to sleep, neither of them mentioning it again. (See "Honesty," in this section.)

Backrubs

Backrubs are nice. They're nice because they soothe muscles knotted from typewriter hunch; because they foster good relations amongst the staff, and between the strata of authority; because they can lead to interesting sexual possibilities; because, rather than relaxing a worker to the point of sleep, they actually improve circulation, dexterity, and the flow of oxygen to the brain; because they're a terrific nonverbal peace offering; because they're a good excuse for taking a break; and because, just because, they're nice.

Being Overwhelmed

No sense in telling you not to panic. If you're reading this because you're overwhelmed, you're probably half-way to panic anyway. So go ahead. Panic. Then come back.

Finished? Okay. Now, let's get constructive.

A no-win situation in which the obstacles are too great and the resources too sparse probably stems from a combination of poor training and recruitment by last year's crew and poor judgment from this year's. Indeed, the staff may be occupying itself with arguments over this. But whatever the cause, it doesn't matter. All that matters is that you get out from under right now. One way or the other, you'll have plenty of time later on to assign blame.

First thing: As simple as it sounds, there is a way out. No matter what the obstacles, the hardships, etc., there is a solution. Usually, the pressures in your head are more threatening than those in the real world-

which doesn't make them less serious. You cannot function if you don't think you can. But if you keep in mind that there is a way out, if you trust this manual, the Press tradition, yourself, and fate, you'll be all right.

Second thing: Prepare to do things differently. Whatever you're doing now obviously doesn't work, so you will have to change your attitude and/or your methods.

Third: With little exception, being bogged down and overwhelmed is the result of lack of focus. Being fuzzy on the job of the Press, on the jobs of the staff, on your purpose there, must inevitably lead to scattered activity, diffused energy, a general flabby state of unenthused ennui. Focus. That is the key word. Focus. Ten-to-one, production nights are devoted to pizza delivering, arguing, shmoozing (hanging out), and about twenty minutes of putting out the paper. Even if the staff is diligent, you may feel overwhelmed; this, too, may be caused by lack of focus if the diligence goes to unimportant tasks. Focus. Decide what you're doing, what you want the paper to do. Narrow it down to a few words. Is it to print the news? Is it to provide a voice for the students? Is it to construct a platform for the editors' political aspirations? Chances are that only about thirty percent of your energies are actually devoted to your real goal. The rest is most likely time-wasting, a bad habit resulting from lack of discipline. Bad habits are the hardest to break, but this is imperative. Reject, out of hand, ideas for columns, boxes, cartoons, listings, everything but news stories, if, for instance, your focus is news. Reject any idea, person, event—ignore infighting, insults, praise—if it has no direct bearing on your task: putting out the Press.

It sounds hard. Exerting discipline, especially self-discipline, can be excruciatingly tough. But it is hugely preferable to the alternative. You will discover efficiency, productivity, respect, self-respect, and, of course, some resentment from small-minded people. Most of all, *you will find things go much easier.* You will be amazed when you realize how much time you used to waste when you were unfocused.

Fourth: Delegate responsibility. A feeling of being *personally* overworked and spiritually exhausted is not uncommon. It may come because, as submitted above, you are unfocused, or, like many an editor before you, you are doing too much. It may be noble to take on a few jobs at the Press, to accept a lot of responsibility, to work your ass off, to crusade—but you may be hurting the paper more than helping it. Now don't get indignant. Even if you are the only person there—the only thing between publication and extinction—if you're doing too much, you're in the wrong. First, because you'll burn out and then where will the paper be? Second, because you can't keep it up forever (graduation, remember?), and part of your job is to recruit and train (which must include the assumption of responsibilities by the trainees). Further, it is unfair to do more than your share because it means someone else doesn't get the chance, and it means you cannot devote yourself fully to *your* job.

It is very difficult to see these things from the inside. When you're doing a hundred things, with all the responsibility on your shoulders, asking questions, giving orders, answering questions, solving problems—it is all-consuming, exciting, exhausting, addictive, *dangerous.* It's hard to break stride in the middle of a sprint, but if your legs are about to give out, you have no choice. Delegate. The Managing Editor doesn't have to be the one to get in contact with the writers. The Editor-in-Chief doesn't have to write the editorials. The Advertising Director doesn't have to so-

licit the ads. The Arts Editor doesn't have to send out the tear sheets. Suckers (freshmen and the uninitiated) abound who can do the menial tasks and free your mind and hands to do the important jobs.

Fifth: There are concrete measures you can take in addition to attitudinal ones. Take these if you are actually short on staff and/or time, or because it is important to buttress a change in direction (i.e., focusing) with positive, visible steps: cut pages per issue; cut issues per semester; insist that each staffer hand in something—anything—each issue; redesign your production schedule; relax stringent editing and/or production requirements. *Be very careful with these:* even in crisis you must consider the future and not establish situations you will regret later. (See "Precedent," in this section.)

Sixth; Remember that you have assumed the responsibility of the position in which you find yourself; by choice, you are inundated, and it is up to you to find a solution to the mess. This does not preclude seeking advice, taking a break, radically altering your routine, or even ceding some authority to someone who is willing to accept it. What it does mean is that you are no different from a hundred other Press editors who have, at various times, striven, panicked, succeeded, and occasionally failed. But don't allow mere events to defeat you, a human being; don't allow Stony Brook and its attendant evils to triumph over you, a Press editor. The bigger the challenge, the greater the victory. To be suffocating beneath a heap of work and pressure, to be completely overwhelmed, provides you with the biggest challenge of all. Be energized by the prospect of throwing off that weight, of beating back the forces that oppose you. Gain strength in knowing that the battle to remove your pressures is one with *yourself,* and a victory in that battle means the greatest sort of personal freedom.

Credibility

A newspaper exists to affect the public. This will be true regardless of cast (i.e., scholarly periodical or advertising circular.) It can affect the public only if the public has faith in its message—or at least believes the producers of the paper have faith in its message. When doubt is cast on the message or the producers, the message loses its strength, and so does its effect on the public.

An impression—like credibility—is, of course, an intangible thing. To guard against its injury or destruction must be an elusive defense, fought with the inexact weapons of ethics. But fight we must. To be slack in this struggle for the public's trust is to weaken the efficacy of the Press. And with this, we lose all. (See "Honesty," in this section.)

Detail

The harried Managing Editor with only seven out of twelve pages put to bed and only eight minutes to go before the printer sends his pressboys home will not look gladly (if he'll take the time to look at all) on the following, but attention must, as Mrs. Loman said, be paid. Detail is important. Details are important. Incorrect or missing page numbers lead to confusion at best and a loss of credibility at worst. Because it displayed the wrong date, no one picked up issue I, 6; the time and effort of the entire staff—not to mention the advertisers' money—was wasted because someone overlooked an otherwise minor mistake. The same goes for volume numbers, paste-up lines, centering of headlines, fact checking—in short, when the entire paper is really nothing more than a mass of organ-

ized minutiae, a consistent inattention to detail will lead to misinformation, misunderstanding, and distrust.

Drugs

Our staff has included teetotalers afraid to take an aspirin and wild-eyed experimenters rolling copy for a new high. Though adrenaline is the time-tested and safest boost to efficiency, there is no doubting that man-made drugs provide the quickest short-term crutch. But remember that speed, uppers, and even coffee do not supply energy, they merely help your body to tap its own reserves, so extended use will turn the healthiest jock into a burnt-out derelict. Since staffers should expect and be expected to work on more than a few issues, let this rule apply: IF YOU DON'T REALLY NEED IT, DON'T USE IT; IF YOU DO, GO TO BED. (Unless it's production night, or it's a breaking story, or no one else is there, or…)

Folding

Don't.

The most dire circumstances in which you might find yourself cannot excuse the folding of the paper to the many editors and readers who have gone before and who, now, may never again. Of all the decisions a Press editor can make, the decision to kill our paper is the gravest. When you have placed a chokehold on the long lifeline of publication, you destroy not simply a fine tradition—for that is just the past, and the past, to us, is dead—but the future. As long as the Press publishes—In whatever form, and with whatever integrity and quality—the future beckons, the promise holds, the potential exists.

Whether you are the tenth Editor or the hundredth, you are still only one in a long succession; but because you are the Editor *now,* with authority, truly, over the life and death of the Press, you are the most important. Do not abuse that responsibility. Find some way to continue our paper, to preserve the tradition, to save the future. (See part II of BIOGRAPHY and "Being Overwhelmed," in this section.)

Follow the Money

This is an old, old journalistic tenet which simply advises the inquiring reporter that most important, or at least interesting, human activity (and therefore news stories) is entangled with, or at least traceable to, money. That's all. Very simple. Plans for building up the alumni association came not out of love for alma mater but with the object of fund-raising. The decades-long debate over dorm cooking was (or will be) settled not because of philosophical differences but because of the high cost of the extra appliances, exterminating, and plumbing.

Etc.

Getting Started

Damn. Knew there was something I had to do after the summer was over. To soften the edge of panic for those charged with producing the Press after a now-sorely-missed vacation, an unordered how-to follows.

Meet. First, informally, the prime movers should get together to discuss the generalities and specifics of the paper, its philosophies and mechanics; followed by meetings of the editorial board; followed by a meeting of the entire staff; this sequence, which must take place before the first issue, must result in a specific and clear strategy for the year, and should cover much of the following.

Tone. The tone of both the workplace and the paper's content will be set at the outset. Try to see that they're positive. (See OVERVIEW.)

Publication Schedule. Decide when and how often you will publish, taking into account holidays, budget constraints, Polity, contractual constraints, and finals. Remember that the idea is to publish as often as possible. But be prudent: once set, the publication schedule should not be changed save for unforeseen circumstance. (See Advertising in THE ORGANIZATION, and "Credibility" in this section.)

Printer. Inform the printer of your publication schedule well in advance. Discuss deadlines and fees, renegotiating existing arrangements if necessary.

Production Schedule. Map out a system for the writing, designing, and paste-up of the paper, including deadlines and the assignment of responsibilities for certain tasks. (The mere mention of a production schedule is known to cause hysterics in veteran editors, but it's still a good idea.) (See THE THING ITSELF.)

Ideas. Draw up a list of possible stories (fewer than a dozen and hang up your typewriter). The best material for the first issue is coverage of a major topic or event; a recap of the summer's events; a preview of what's in store for the semester; a guide for freshman students and/or administrators.

In-the-Can. As much copy as possible should be written, edited, and ready to use in the future.

Recruitment. The beginning of the year is prime time for this annoying but crucial activity. (See Recruitment in THE ORGANIZATION.)

Publish the First Week. Publish the first week. Get the jump on advertising and readership. Don't allow the staffers to taste the luxury of a Pressless week before they've committed themselves to production of the paper. The sooner evil is exposed and good deeds lauded the better; the Administration is notorious for doing slimy things during the summer when students are away and the newspapers (usually) silent.

The Past. Take a look at previous first issues.

Advertising. Formulate ad policy; solicit ads, preferably for semester-long or year-long arrangements. (See Advertising in THE ORGANIZATION.)

Miscellaneous. Assign desks, distribute keys.

Purchase Supplies. Purchase supplies.

Don't Worry. It's been done before, and it'll be done again. In the meantime, a whole year of uncharted territory, of surprises and crises, schemes and disasters, triumphs and close calls, beckons. That's pretty exciting.

Girlfriends/Boyfriends

Tolerance is the key word here. Sweethearts must be reminded that the paper is an important entity and work for it is noble. Management should keep in mind that staffers are people too, and girlfriends and boyfriends serve an important function (though they may have forgotten what). Tolerance is best maintained when the Presser caught in the middle is honest with both parties: intentionally rose-colored underestimates of your work can lead only to disappointment and anger on your waiting lover's part; a stronger desire to hold a warm body than to hold responsibility may indicate your ill-suitedness for an important position. For some, a

girlfriend or boyfriend represents a relief from the pressures of the paper; for others, the paper represents an escape from a girlfriend or boyfriend. BUT NO MATTER WHAT, NEVER BLAME YOUR ACTIONS ON ONE TO THE OTHER. This is pure dynamite, and will certainly end one relationship or both.

History

Semper Eadem. (Latin for "Ever the Same."). Point: Learn from history. Read the editorial in II, 6. (See "Advice," in this section.)

Honesty

I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy.

—George Washington, Farewell Address, 1796

Boring, huh? What could be more trite and dull than honesty? Where's the excitement? What sort of challenge does it represent? Now answer this: IF HONESTY IS SO EASY, WHY ISN'T EVERYONE HONEST? Hmmm. That's tougher than an S.A.T question. Maybe there's more to this honesty stuff than I thought…

As George indicated, the two spheres of reality, into which the choice between honesty and deception enters, are the private and the public. On the Press, decisions of a personal nature are often actually a choice between integrity and duplicity. Can the too-busy editor truthfully believe that the delegation of his duties would hurt the paper—or is his ego interfering with his good sense? And the $64,000 question: Are you satisfied with your work? Can you honestly say to yourself you're doing the best job you can do? Or is your conscience on hold?

Official decisions also fall into the scrupulous/scrupleless dichotomy. Potentially outstanding staffers are alienated from the Press when met with race- or gender-hatred—unless fear and ignorance are bridled with the common sense of equality. Political debate can exhaust itself with misrepresentation and misplaced loyalty—unless the debaters ignore fuzzy predispositions and dig for the bottom line. When a professor pens a story, or an editor holds title in the club he's writing up, or whenever a writer's relationship to his subject is unusual, or would be otherwise indiscernible, notice of such should appear. Without it, the reader can't assimilate the information in context: a lie by omission will have been committed, and the paper will be practicing disinformation.

And can any writer or editor justify—to himself, to anyone—the willful publication of falsehood? As the very object of the Press is the pursuit of truth, the staffer who cedes falsehood a place here surely flays living tissue *from its very heart.*

Being honest leads to Awareness, and necessitates action based on that awareness. It provides the basis for Credibility. And it means a personal and professional life marked by Honor. The embrace of honesty at the Press will mean respect and freedom for both individual and newspaper.

Now, honestly, is that so easy?

Legalities

Like it or not, few people on the outside give two shits about the Press. Therefore, editors over the years have gotten away with incredible acts of

libel and of copyright infringement (the two areas most likely to lead to trouble). Once in a while, however, some bozo on or off campus may raise a stink about some offense, real or imagined, that he finds in the paper. Ethics aside (that is not meant literally), it is tremendously important to know the legal limits to which you as editors and the paper, as a publication and as a corporation, can go. The U.S. of A. is the home of Freedom of the Press, yet has more laws abridging it than any nation on earth. Writers and editors should be most aware of the establishment's constant pressure to confine the press (small p), and should be the most diligent not to abuse the freedom. Be prepared to fight if you're right, and to make amends if you're wrong. Most of all, remember that huge fines and jail really do await transgressing staffers. Be aware of the laws on obscenity, libel, copyright, and national security issues, and don't say you weren't warned.

Maxims

Don't use contractions.
Never use absolutes.
Avoid clichés like the plague.

Meetings

Of all the commandments set forth in the mysterious Bylaws, the one calling for general, weekly meetings is perhaps the essential one. These meetings, which anyone and everyone connected with the Press should attend, are first and foremost a time when those otherwise without a voice (peons, outsiders, et al.), get one; a time to take stock—what is the Press? Are we fulfilling the Mandate? Is the Mandate bullshit? Are we covering the right issues? Are we covering any issues?; a time to ask big questions—how do we stand on socialism? on arming Security? on war?; a time to look at what's been done—last issue, last semester—and what needs a fo11ow-up. Mostly, it's a time to develop a sense of community, of camaraderie; a time to argue, cut up, compromise, laugh, learn, and feel like a family. (See minutes of 2/11/80 or 10/19/81.)

On Credibility, Objective Journalism, and, Especially, Conflict-of-Interest

The following is a little bit of history, a passage from the minutes of October 19,1981, dealing with a number of issues central to the soul of the paper. (It is also an illustration of the open forum policy of a Press meeting at work; a glance at the actual minutes in the files for context would be instructive.)

> Scott calls meeting to order at 8:18.
>
> Motion to accept minutes: Eric W. Deb seconds. Accepted.
>
> Immediately, the question of Mike's presence on both the Polity Senate and the Press board is broached. Eric B. is asked for his exalted opinion. He delivers. His main points:
>
> "A newspaper has nothing if it doesn't have its credibility. Most organizations can function without it, but a newspaper's job is to inform the public, and if they don't view it with respect, or at least openness, then no amount of hard work is going to make that paper effective. Honesty is a very important point here. Firstly, every paper, as does every person, has a bias; a human endeavor cannot help have a bias, and in most ways it's a healthy thing. What isn't healthy is a masking or disregarding

of that bias. Until the *New York Times* in the 19th Century, there was really no such thing as 'objective journalism'; newspapers generally took one side or another, aware that another paper would take the other side. *The Federalist* printed information or rhetoric generally from the political camp of Hamilton, Madison, etc., and another newspaper—can't remember its name—printed things from Jefferson and his friends. In this crucial time, as the very republic was taking shape, people could read opposing views and draw their conclusions. Imagine the danger of the printing of 'truth.' Whose? The *New York Times'?* When the *Times* put news of peace marches involving tens of thousands of people on page 18 with two column inches of space, was that Truth? Or when they left it out completely? When the Post prints, 'What the Heck Are You Up To, Mr. President?' on the front page, is that Objective Journalism? Truth? When the *Times* prints, during the '80 campaign, photos of Carter and Kennedy, and without exception the Kennedy photo is more flattering, is that objective, truthful, honest? The point is, there is no objectivity, and there is no need to be ashamed of that. Most papers in Europe take opposing viewpoints. One is always hearing of the liberal *Times* or the conservative *Mail,* etc. Objective journalism is the very peculiar product of Yankee know-how. And with fewer and fewer papers, there can be less opposition amongst them, less of a forum. Now in the U.S., there are a few papers that are honest: the *Voice* and the *Workers Vanguard* are the only ones I can think of, though there must be more. The *Voice* is a Social-Democratic newspaper, and never lets you forget it. They have, except for Cockburn, pretty much of a unified stance liberally. Whether you believe what they're printing or not, *at least you know why they're printing it.* They will often tell you.

"To be credible with our public, we must be credible to ourselves. If we seek the truth around us, we must seek the truth within us: hence, an understanding of bias. And striving to keep our editorial voice and board honest.

"That is why conflict-of-interest cannot be tolerated. (I was tempted to say blatant conflict-of-interest, but the subtle conflict-of-interest is worse.) There are two major points to conflict-of-interest: substantive and qualitative. (Not sure which is which, but it doesn't matter!) Firstly, in being honest with ourselves, we cannot tolerate conflict-of-interest because it affects our view towards our work and the decisions we make. In this particular instance, Mike would be a member of the government, with authority and responsibility. He would be responsible to some extent to them. Perhaps his decisions on the Press would be affected by that. He would be privy to information from Polity he would not normally have, and be privy to their decision-making process. Even if it were for our own good, he might suggest not to run a certain story, or *to* run a certain story. This subtle manipulation cannot be tolerated. He has promised not to write on Polity, but this would serve to remove a good writer from writing on an important subject; or voting on matters involving Polity—perhaps he's taking the place of someone who would not be compromised, and could therefore vote on Polity. From an honest 'world view' it would be bad for Polity and us. What happens come budget time? When Mike gets up to speak in behalf of the Press—as he has always done, and that's certainly appreciated—will his views be viewed as impartial? Or at least as from just another senator? Certainly not. They will be viewed as from a Press editor. His vote too cannot be unbiased, or at least directly unbiased. If, as he has offered, he removes himself from the budgeting process and abstains from voting, he will be crippling the governmental process: perhaps someone favorable to us would have voted had Mike not been there, and now cannot because Mike has that seat. We would lose a vote, and a voice. Worse, what if one-year across-the-board cutbacks had to be made, and a Press editor on the senate decided to vote for an increase only to the Press? Is that fair? Right? The sword cuts both ways. There are many other examples to be drawn of how conflict-of-

interest can tangibly damage the parties' decision-making.

"But most importantly—egads!—there is the question of credibility. Even if we are satisfied with our credibility, we must ask ourselves if the public is. This is not to say we should kowtow to public whim—if we're right, we're right—but we should be ever vigilant to the way the readers perceive us. How can we affect change or effect it if we're ignorant of our readership? As soon as people saw Mike's name in the staff box and his name on the next page saying he was a candidate, an awful lot of questions must have run through their minds. Even if only one question ran through their minds, damage would be done. If no questions ran through their minds, the potential for damage still exists. Perhaps no reader would think of the above arguments, but only feel uneasy that an editor of the press (small p) is also a member of the government. Good for that reader. What self-respecting newspaper would allow that to happen, some might ask? (*I* ask.) In regard to the question of individual freedom, which Mike brings up quite strongly, the point is: when you take on the responsibility and authority of the position of an editor, you give up some as an individual. You take on a responsibility to your fellow editors that you will not bring into question the credibility of your common venture, that you will keep in mind the best interests of the paper, rather than excusing your actions with, 'But I had a *right* to do it.'

"We have biases, and we should understand them. Understanding them, we should then seek the truth, and seek to print it. We have no control over the events in the news, or the price of newsprint, but we have control over our internal workings. Mike's holding two positions dangerously threatens our credibility and is a direct conflict-of-interest. Further, his disregard for this indicates he does not have the paper's best interests at heart, or does not understand the Press and its job."

The Open Door

That it is instinctive is all the argument needed to explain the pervasive fear of the unknown. We reject the unfamiliar because the familiar is comfortable, safe: the unknown is a threat to that security, with its potential for upsetting the existing order. But explanation is not justification. An instinct born in a time of daily survival, in a world of grunts and growls, should not hold sway over us now. In an evermore intricate present, society can ill afford to deny itself new avenues to solutions; and in an evermore competitive society, the individual can ill afford to reject the instruments of his own progress. For it is the bracing shock of unorthodox thought that is the real impetus to progress. At the Press, the presence of a radical idea, or of a minority student, may cause discomfort—but oh, that new insight! Out of hatred—born of ignorance, born of fear—that student may be ostracized by a staffer or by tacit policy. But the loss is so much greater than the discomfort: the input of fresh viewpoint, the expanded news-gathering network, the potential leadership. The open door is an idea which must be realized to ring true: the appearance of exclusion speaks louder than statements to the contrary. New, diverse members of the campus community must be sought out. Discomfort at the prospect bespeaks fear of the new, of the different. And fear admits weakness. Show your strength. Challenge the threat of the unknown by embracing it. (See "Honesty," in this section.)

Politics

Conservative, liberal. Whig, Federalist. Republican, Democrat. Blah, blah. Staffers worried over the influence of a particular ideology on the Press should remember that labels mean little over the long haul. Members of Congress, businesspeople, professors, editors, all find themselves

combating or allying depending on the issue at hand. Tone or political bent is less important than substance; if topics are approached using the Press' credo—the bottom line—the truth should win out. (When an editorial on the advisability of a new weapons system was debated, editors quickly divided into two camps, one pushing for a stock disarmament editorial, the other pushing for a stock strong defense editorial. One editor prodded the others to look beyond the immediate question and the knee-jerk responses and recognize the underlying point: that a discussion of the validity of the weapons system would perpetuate a view of international relations as being defined by war, or at least, the inevitable threat of war, that perhaps the more constructive editorial would deal with optimism versus pessimism, and the ability to perceive a future wherein trust rather than threat informed diplomacy.) If the Press remains common-sensical, a student advocate, and progressive (i.e., for the improvement of the human condition), "objectionable" political leanings will be refreshing, not dangerous. (See "Honesty," in this section.)

Polity

The dictionary defines "polity" as being "a politically organized unit." Whether the reader is the original editor of this manual, or a staffer yet unborn, he will likely think that while his student government is certainly political, it is by no means organized. *Semper eadem*, as they say. But as the Press is a student advocate, and Polity the student representative, champion its cause we must. The proverbial monkey wrench, of course, is Polity's status of benefactor of the Press. While fulfilling our role of watchdog of government, we also must play the toady to get our handout.

Given the choice, old Tom Jefferson would have chosen newspapers over government, but he never attended Stony Brook. Each serves—or more truthfully, has the potential to serve—a separate function. As indicated below, Polity can be more than just a strong voice for the students; it can be a powerful force. Though completely exempting ourselves from comment on day-to-day issues might be impossible, indeed foolish, it is constructive to remind the students and their representatives of overarching goals and underlying potentials. Remember that stuff about a house divided? Well, remember too that while the Press and Polity are distinct organizations, they are still comprised of students, and inevitably must stand foursquare together against outside interests.

Budget time is all the time, unfortunately. It would be disgusting to sacrifice the Press' integrity for a little money—but it never hurts to be nice, either! Keep on top of the budget process, supplying no cause for technical disqualification or delay. Remember that politicians are there to manipulate and be manipulated; and whether it's in the boardroom or the bedroom (a pretty bad idea, by the way), every time is lobby time. (Two possibilities would render this scenario irrelevant. One, that Polity was no longer responsible for the distribution of activity fee monies. Following the Turbulent Sixties, students wrested control of the fee from the University, as was only right since it was their money and their activities. The disbursement of same has since been relatively fair and stable. Woe to the student body lax enough to surrender this right and unwilling to take it back! The successor to control over the fee would probably be the University—possibly the last entity a sane Presser would hope to have pulling the purse strings; or it could be the Faculty-Student Association, generally benign, but more paternalistic and less easily manipulated than Polity, what with its permanent staff and sense of accountability. With some imagination, these guidelines can be applied to applying to non-

Polity organizations for funding. Of course, the other possibility is that the Press will—has?—become financially independent. **If** this is the case, skip the budget info, and rest assured that the Founders are dancing delightedly in their graves.)

The following (including the footnotes) is a supplement to the minutes of April 6, 1981, a transcript of a budget presentation made to the Polity Senate earlier that evening. It is preceded by a short background piece.

> This is our second year of existence. Our position on campus is both tenuous and misunderstood (awww, poor us). Anyway, additionally, factions there are—particularly within Polity—that would like to see us bye-bye. So after budget subcommittee hearings, we were told that the budget committee's recommendation for us was $11,000, about less than half what we need. As a twist of the knife, *Fortnight* [the campus feature magazine from '75 to '82] was proposed to be given $13,000! (They are really pukey this year.) Now, a number of promises were broken as to our rights to appeal at every step of the way in the budget process, so the last resort—oh, all right, having Chris Treasurer does give us some hope, but it doesn't give us any guarantees—so the last resort was that Senate meeting. In the old days, a group could go in front of the Senate, make an impassioned appeal, and the Senate, acting out of emotion, would grant large sums of money to the group. Of course, only a few groups could do this, otherwise they'd run out of money pretty soon. But since only a few groups ever did, it was okay. This year, however, a strange beast called the Committee of the Whole appeared, and would vote in private after hearing all the impassioned pleas. This, of course, is unfavorable to what we wanted, but whaddaya gonna do, right? Anyway, the following is what was said. It was carefully constructed. It builds—both in content and delivery—it mentions the investigative articles ('cause they're exciting), and lies several times: we received only one letter—from BFSA; we were not told we were one of the best at that conference, but who's to tell us it wasn't the case?; etc. Very importantly, we had the staff spread out, surrounding the Senate members (who were seated) and at the close of my oration, started applause which—thank goodness—was picked up by the Senate members. The importance of this is obvious, but cannot be overemphasized. Instead of just a request, the Senate then felt they had just heard a noble speech. Immediately following the applause, a friendly council member and senator jumped in, first agreeing with me, then praising the paper; this set the tone for the ensuing conversation. Also, we made sure we went immediately after Statesman—Ben Berry gave a poor presentation, alternately boosting and criticizing Statesman (honesty goes just so far!)—and so we looked good by comparison. Speaking, I made sure the audience was settled and attentive, that I stood still, that I made eye contact with many people and not just one, that my voice was clear and direct, that my thoughts were unclouded and concentrated, that my tone was serious (though a few jokes helped), that I was emotional without being strained or sentimental, that I appeared confident and stayed on the offensive. In a situation like this, when financial solvency may very well ride on one representative, you've got to be damned sure you know what you're doing. At the meeting, I represented the Press, so I had to appear honest, sincere, knowledgeable, in command, presentable, unwilling to take shit—and, of course, needy. But though the situation was desperate—we need money!—it was important not to sound like we were begging. Pride may goeth before the fall, but better to fall with dignity.
>
> The transcript:

"Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. May I get right to cases, and explain our budget request. Last year, we requested $26,000, a fair and honest representation of what we needed to put out the paper. Then, a deal was devised by which typesetting machines would be purchased, and would benefit both papers. In anticipation of that deal, we agreed to cut our budget down to $17,000. Well, due to a variety of reasons, that deal fell through. However, the budget was not restored. As a result, we are stuck this year. The fiscal problems we have run into have been documented earlier, and are very real. We have been forced to cut back in several areas due to lack of money. Now, coming up, this year, we're asking for $22,000.[1] This is less than what we really want, but knowing the political climate, it is a more realistic request. It is a bare bones budget. I would like to state that. This is the minimum we need to function, to put out the paper every week next year. Now, in the budget committee's proposal, we were allocated $11,000 and *Fortnight* $13,000. I don't wish to put down *Fortnight*—I think they're doing the best job they can, and they certainly serve an important purpose—but they've printed maybe five, six times this whole year, whereas we've put out nineteen issues, every week, throughout the year.[2] So obviously, that amount—allocated to us—is a ridiculous figure, and should be disregarded.[3]

"There is quite a bit of confusion regarding what the Press is and what it does. I'll try to clear that up now. Two years ago.[4] half of Statesman's editors, disappointed with Statesman, broke off from it. They felt there was a need for a different type of journalism on campus, for different issues to be heard. So the Press was started. Now, there is a very big difference between Statesman and the Press, and this must be stressed very much. Statesman is a daily paper; though it comes out three times a week, it still serves the function of a daily paper, giving out the daily news, the day-to-day events. The Press is a weekly paper: it should always be weekly. It takes, it has the time to dig into a story, behind the story, to find the real story.If someone is run over by a train—if someone is run over by a car,[5] Statesman will report it the next day, with the details. The Press will print a story about *why* that person was run over; was it hit-and-run, was there a history of accidents there—was it the infamous Langmuir Curve? That's the feature aspect. Statesman is a *newspaper;* we are a feature paper. Statesman is in the same vein as the *New York Times* or the *Daily News;* we are like *Newsweek,* or the *Village Voice,* or Boston's *Real Paper.* It would be hoped that the informed reader would read both papers, Statesman to get the day-to-day news, the Press to get the stories-behind-the stories. The Press is not a supplement to Statesman. It is a complement to Statesman.

"When the Press started, production took place in Melissa Spielman's hall in Kelly E. We had two typewriters, and about ten staff members. And our business office was my National Public Radio shoulder bag. Now, we have tripled our staff, we have gone weekly, we have our offices in Old Bio—of course, our file system is made up of milk crates, but you can't have everything.

"But more importantly, this year alone, the Press has uncovered: the truth in the civil rights mess at the beginning of this year; that $130,000 worth of Stony Brook money is invested in nuclear utilities; that SUNY is seeking tighter controls; the fact that Liz Wadsworth was pressured from her job; improper procedures at the Psychiatric Department; a four-part in-depth article on the faculty at S.B.; chemical contamination on Long Island. We've had exclusive interviews with Tom Hayden, Dick Gregory, AI D'Amato, Jacob Javits, and Abbie Hoffman; the interview with Hoffman was the only major published interview with him in the country. And that's just this year! Last year, we uncovered: the

fact that the University was seeking tighter controls; pervasive institutional racism on campus; we printed an immensely popular story of a Cambodian undergraduate's escape—under gunfire—from his country; a series on vandalism at Benedict that both residents over there and Public Safety members have said helped greatly in the resolution of the problem; documented State Department lying on the admittance of the Shah into the U.S.—we were again the only paper in the country to pick this up, even though the documents were sent out to other papers, including the *Times* and the *Village Voice;* we documented discrepancies in a Nuclear Regulatory commission report. This is not to mention bringing home to the campus issues of national and international importance, including articles on Afghanistan, Iran, Cambodia, and El Salvador.

"We often talk about improving the school. There is often talk of this. Our editorials, in some way, are always geared toward this. We looked at the guidelines of FSA, and found that they were doing only half the things they could be doing, and pointed that out, with suggestions on things they could do. We look for solutions, not just complaining. The existence of the Press itself has been called a solution, an improvement. When we first appeared, we received this letter from the Black Faculty Staff Association, one of about twenty we received. It says:

> 'The Stony Brook Press is a welcome addition to the campus. The superb reporting characterized by accuracy, fairness, and a balance of viewpoints make it a showcase in journalism.
>
> 'On behalf of the Black Faculty and Staff Association, I wish to convey to you that your paper has our blessing for continued growth and an endless life.
>
> '(Signed) Frances Brisbane, BFSA President'

Last weekend I went down to the Investigative Journalism Conference in Washington, D.C. I was amazed at the response to the paper. I talked to people from allover the country, and many top investigative journalists from major papers. There are a lot of good student papers, but I was told that the Press was amongst the best. I was amazed at the response at how good the paper was. It was, there were…it was a nice response.

" Almost every problem in this school can be traced to its age. It's a young school, only about 19 years old. There are no traditions here, no lasting—everything's new. There's a lack of scholarships, of plaques on the walls, of paintings. I mean, in fifty years, there'll be portraits on these walls. Keith Scarmato, Dave Herzog, and Rich Zuckerman[6] will be on this wall [a little laughter]—I hope it's their portraits, not them! [Lots of laughter.] But what this school doesn't lack is potential. It's missing a lot, but it's got plenty of room to grow. There's a promise of greatness here.

"The Press, in only its second year is considered and treated like an established paper—for different reasons. We've accomplished a lot, but we've got a ways to go. Remember, it's only our second year. If you cut us off, we will find things ridiculously hard. There's a lot of potential on the Press, a lot we can offer to the University and to the University community. That is why you must fund us—give us what we need. Give us the $22,000, which is just the bare bones minimum. Fulfill the potential. Keep the promise. [Burst of applause.]"

[1] *If you'll check the original request, you'll find that we asked for* $26,000. *But during the questioning of Berry, an ill-informed senator asked him how they could justify giving Statesman almost six times what the Press got if they printed only three times as much. (Obviously, this is ridiculous, but he was going by the proposal which listed $60-thou for Statesman, and*

11 for us.) Statesman people were quickly prodded by us to point out that the guy was going by the wrong standard. Nevertheless, it was decided to be politically prudent to cut our request down to appear closer to one-third that of Statesman.

[2] *Actually, we skipped a few weeks. A white lie.*

[3] *Those on the budget committee and subcommittee really had it in for us. They would have liked to have given us nothing, but lack of balls, and the chance to stick it to us made them give us* $11,000. *See, giving us something, but making it less than* Fortnight**,** *made it obvious the contempt in which they held us. I would have made this point more explicitly, but remember that the group to which I was speaking was made up to some extent of the people I would be insulting.*

[4] *Actually, a year and some months ago, but a) putting some distance between us and the politics, and b) giving us some respectable age, couldn't hurt. Hyperbole. White lies. Lots of 'em.*

[5] *I changed this, as a girl had just recently hurled herself in front of a train—and because Statesman had been blasted for its coverage; I didn't want to even mention something tied into negative feelings for the Rag.*

[6] *Presidents of Polity in* '78-'79, '79-'80, '80-'81, *successively.*

Precedent

Simply because it's never been done before is a terrible reason for doing something for the first time. Yet not doing something for the first time simply because it's never been done before is equally foolish. Precedent is a powerful thing. Much emphasis has been placed in these pages on the importance of referring to earlier issues of the Press. Precedent allows the current staffer to act with a degree of impunity, as previous implementation of his idea argues for its validity. Though each generation can and must break new ground, remember that reverberations of your decisions—good and bad—will echo down the many years that follow you. (See minutes of 10/19/81, particularly page 4.)

Publication Notices

Notify as to publication.

The first issue of a semester, print a little box announcing the fact. Before taking an issue off, announce that too. And the last issue of the year. Or if a special issue is coming up. The idea is to cover yourself against accusations that you're a bunch of incompetents with a grip on events so limited that you can't plan more than two days in advance. A moral debt (to the readers) and an economic debt (to the advertisers) are owed to at least appear reliable. Credibility (see "Credibility" in this section) is paramount.

Reference Books

The same writer who thinks nothing of shouting to the nearest warm body, "Hey, what's another word for 'said'?" would curse indignantly at the suggestion that he might consult a thesaurus. Obviously, his pride is wounded by the implication that he cannot store and summon at will all 500,000 words of the English language. Hmph! Nietzche's theory of the Power of Oblivion helps explain why we cannot remember everything, and the preeminence of the written word in civilization proves the importance of extra-somatic learning. Reference books are tools, not crutches; they allow the writer's energies to be directed towards the spirit and impact of his work, rather than be dissipated on fruitless searches inward for the right word, or racking his brain for a good quote. The professional writer, the purposeful writer, will avoid false pride and will forever be checking thesauri and books of quotations. As Winston Churchill once ~~said~~ wrote:

> It is a good thing for an uneducated man to read books of quotations. *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* is an admirable work, and I studied it intently. The quotations when engraved upon the memory give you good thoughts. They also make you anxious to read the authors and look for more.

They also prove points

Research

This is considered by many to be a bad word, due to our bloodless, mechanized educational system. Research is not culling facts from your *Encyclopedia Brittanica Junior* in support of a thesis that you might prefer to ram up the professor's rear but won't because the whole thing's so unpassionate it doesn't even make you mad enough. Research is exploration, ripping the shells off malignant organisms, beaming a flashlight on creatures who've never seen the day; research is working a puzzle, making connections, inventing solutions then finding the steps; research is expanding your mind; research is proving you're right, or proving someone wrong. Research has less to do with books than with the quality of your mind—and the quality of your work.

The great intellects, the best muckraking reporters, are all voracious readers, seekers, do-ers. A good story (and we're not talking about what your editor thinks is good, but what is good: makes sense, gets at the bottom line, is verifiable, changes the world) isn't easy—can't be easy. But the fun's in the work, so doing no research is like having sex with no penetration. The best stories and editorials in the Press have been backed by the time and effort to support the copy. Sometimes it's quick (a report that the University owned stock in nuclear utilities needed only two hours in the reference room and two hours of interviews); sometimes it's protracted (a 10,000-word series on campus racism required three months to interview and re-interview three dozen people, resulting in 60 pages of typewritten notes; read a dozen books; sift through ten years of old Presses and Statesmans; and check with campuses across the country for comparisons). Sometimes research is tedious and sometimes it's backbreaking. It's always worth it.

Scandal

If you see it coming, avoid it. If it's already here, rise above it. (See "Honesty" in this section.)

Scavenging

Beginning with the first desk stolen from Old Bio and the Yellow Pages lifted from Statesman, scavenging has held an honored place at the Press. Mainly a result of insufficient budgets, but also an outgrowth of the staff's larcenous streak, scavenging is an art with material benefits. Always be on the lookout for a discarded typewriter, an unnoticed ream of paper, a resigned Statesman editor. Finagle old filing cabinets from offices being refurnished, milk cartons (for shelves) from the cafeteria, a fridge from a dorm at year's end.

And keep the number of the lawyer with you for that one free phone call.

Sections

Every once in a while, someone (usually the head of that department) will propose that a department get its own section (i.e., a pullout or similar with its own cover). When this happens, apathy is usually enough to whither the proposal, but common sense should also be up to the task. Fact: unlike the Washington Post or Statesman, for instances, the Press is a *feature* paper—all feature, with little need to note so strongly the difference between, say, news and arts; stories on them should differ in subject and style mainly, but the approach should be the same; kickers suffice to denote a new subject. Fact: the Dearth of Copy Curse is inescapable; a section with only two or three stories is ludicrous—even more so when the rest of the paper has the same amount! Fact: the staff changes, and the people and copy which seemed to justify a new section, or even a new thrust for the whole paper, will soon disappear, leaving an albatross around the neck of next year's staff. Fact: Glory-seeking gambits are often disguised as well-intentioned proposals. (See " Awareness" and "Precedent" in this section.)

Seriousness vs. A Sense of Humor

The outline of this manual was quite serious, both in purpose and in design. But its first draft was shot through with sophomoric one-liners, scatological emphases, and apocryphal tales, all superfluous but far more fun than preachy prose. The end result—let's all hope—Is a balance of the two. Without losing its sense of humor, it maintains its sense of purpose, and thereby is effective. There is no secret formula to the balance. The ability to laugh at yourself should be matched with the capacity to take yourself seriously; hilarious satire and cold analysis can be equally devastating and equally inappropriate. A proper perspective should indicate the propriety of the approach.

Statesman

Chris Fairhall, the first Press editor, would often exhort his staff to ignore Statesman, its editors, and its articles, completely—yet he read that paper thoroughly and without fail, and often visited the Statesman offices. There is no wise counsel as to relations with Statesman, though there is much potential for calumny and ruin. Scooping the other paper at any expense serves only false pride, and withholding information does the (presumably) common cause no good. Petty rivalry can flare into vicious confrontation simply because the combatants have at their command the powerful weapon of the press. One preventative to these is a constant reassessment of the job of the press in general, and the jobs of Statesman and the Press in particular. Because Statesman is an event-oriented daily sort of paper, and the Press a weekly feature sort of paper, the opportunities for stepping on each other's toes are blissfully infrequent. But because the two papers are run by acquaintances, funded from the same source, compete for the same advertisers, and pander to the same audience, conflicts can erupt. The trick, of course, is to contain the conflict, to channel the antagonisms into competition, and leave room for cooperation. (Obviously, that becomes difficult when their Editor-in-Chief is a low-life muddleheaded scumbag. Just remember the Founders' strategy of disregarding the idiots and idiocies and thereby appearing to rise above them.)

Now is a good time to mention other periodicals that might be floating around the campus. Avoid the mistake the Presstaff made in Fall,

1982, of attacking a minor newspaper for some perceived transgression ("Taking Responsibility," Vol. IV, No.7). Regardless of the fact that they got their facts wrong, they neglected the first rule about these other papers: no one gives a shit; secondly, attacking a weak organization only makes your own look weak; thirdly, initiating criticism of one paper will inevitably ease the way for criticism of your own; fourthly, most importantly, these papers—new or established—need support, not hostility. There was a time when we were the new kids on the block, and were subjected to the most vicious and sustained sort of attack from the established paper. Have we come so far only to become our own enemy?

A terrific outlet for competition (and some much-needed exercise, to boot) can be found in challenging the other guys to softball. Traditionally, the Press has played Statesman each spring in a "friendly" game. A keg or lunch can be agreed upon as the winner's spoils, but occasionally it is that the loser must report the outcome. From the Press, II, 22:

> **Papers Play Thriller Softball Game**
>
> The second annual Stony Brook Press-Statesman softball game was played last Saturday, and in the chill air and overcast of April, the Pressers trounced the Statestaff, 72-1.
>
> Umpired by V.P. for University Affairs Jim Black, the game was a model of softball finesse. Leading off, Press Managing Editor Scott Higham belted a line drive for a two-baser, and was driven home by freshman Debbie Silver when she clouted a fastball into the tennis courts for a home run. From there on, it was a rout.
>
> "We had a great time," said Larry Feibel, the Press' decisive Assistant Arts Editor.
>
> "We didn't," said Statesman Sport Director Lisa Napell.
>
> Statesman's sole run came when the Press forgot to take the field one inning.
>
> After four innings, and victory out of sight, the losing team called a forfeit, and…
>
> Oh, all right. We lost. The Press lost. We were winning the whole game, then Statesman Editor-in-Chief Ben Berry got up to bat with two men on, and belted a Press Editor Eric Brand pitch into the distance to drive in the winning run. The score was 9 to 8.
>
> Maybe we should get a sports department.

Stipends

"But Statesman editors get stipends." Ugh. It is ironic that Pressers have traditionally cited Statesman's bad example on stipends, because the Press has traditionally provided no stipends as a result of the bad experience Statesman has had with them. Stipends set a bad precedent: if you're giving 'em out because you have a little more money this year, what happens next year or the year after when you have less? What do you tell the new staff when they expect stipends? When they *joined* to receive stipends? If you're giving 'em out *simply* because you've got extra money, where's the sense in that? Does extra cash turn a bad idea good? The Press has existed without 'em; you can continue without 'em; excellent years and mis-

erable years have occurred without stipends, so they obviously make no difference. That money can be better put to other expenses. "But Statesman does it." Still at it, huh? Maybe you feel deprived because *those* guys get *paid* for writing, and *you don't.* Awww .Is their writing better for it? Would yours be? Honesty, folks. Honesty. And what about apportionment? Does it get parceled out by responsibilities? By actual work? By title? Who decides? The same people getting 'em? And how much? By who needs it? By who *wants* it? What a goddamn can of worms. And the poor business manager, overworked handling all those checks. (Because, after all, the rationale of a stipend is to facilitate work on the paper by offsetting some of the costs incurred, and unless payment is frequent, say, once a week, it's a sham—and illegal.) And what about appearance? Does it look right for "club members" ('cause face it, that's how they view you) to receive club funds? How do you justify it in your budget? *Would you defend it in someone else's organization?* Think credibility. And who needs it as an incentive? Did you? And if those enticed by promises of money are suddenly cut off, will they continue on the paper? Improbable. No, the true enticement is the camaraderie, the muckraking, the responsibility and authority, the free stamps. If you want to give the editors something they can *use,* something to make their lives easier, arrange for academic credit for their Press work, or something else constructive. Don't parcel out lunch money. (See "Credibility," "Honesty," and "Precedent," in this section.)

Why

Why. Why why why. That word, or at least its import, should be on everyone's mind and lips. We don't publish next week. Why? That word doesn't belong there. Why? Polity is screwing up, this week's editorial states. Why? Why are they screwing up? Why do we state it? Question. Argue. Defend. No illogical or malicious argument can stand up under intelligent questioning. No reasonable or virtuous argument should be allowed to stand without it.

Postscript

Eighteenth Century philosopher David Hume's maxim—that tradition is the great guide of human life—notwithstanding, Pressers should not feel shackled to the many exhortations set forth here. On the other hand, Ralph Waldo Emerson, writing a hundred years later, probably went too far when he declared, "I have no expectation that any man will read history aright who thinks that what was done in a remote age, by men whose names have resounded far, has any deeper sense than what he is doing today." For as a Press editorial once pointed out, "Human advancement has been predicated on building upon others' achievements. Obviously, things would be rather slow and cumbersome if we had to rediscover electricity every time we wanted some reading light." So probably the best advice on the subject comes from T.S. Eliot: "Tradition by itself is not enough; it must be perpetually criticized and brought up to date."

Reading List

Business law (recent volumes)
Constitution of the United States
Future Shock, Alvin Tomer
The Golden Bough, Sir James George Frazer
Handbook of Student Journalism, Arnold & Kriegbaum
The Jewish and Christian Bibles
Libel law (recent volume)
Other SUNY school newspapers
Old Press meeting minutes
Old Presses and Statesmans
Policies and Procedures Manual, Stony Brook University
Polity Constitution, PSC and Election Board Guidelines
Stony Brook Master Plan, Stony Brook University
Torts of New York State
Up the Organization, Robert Townshend
Words Into Type (published by Prentice-Hall)