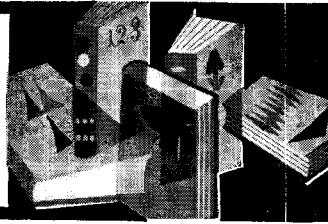


Books in Communications



The Uneasy Media

Significantly, the Canons of Journalism of the American Society of Newspaper Editors are couched in positive terms, while the codes of self-regulation of radio, television, and motion pictures consist largely of prohibitions designed to keep the front office out of trouble and, if possible, clear of controversy. This may be one reason why the informed public has generally felt "safer" with newspapers, uneasy with the electronic media.

We are in a period of tremendous self-consciousness and questioning about all media, as William L. Rivers and Wilbur Schramm point out in their revised edition of *Responsibility in Mass Communication* (Harper & Row, \$8.50). In part this is due to the accelerated technology of communications. For four centuries the printing press stood as the one great achievement in communications; in the last fifty years have come the telephone, phonograph, radio, movie camera, and

television. And in part it is due to a shift from a print to a spoken-word-and-picture news culture, and the mass surrender of the public to near total dependency on the easier electronic media.

The bigness of the mass media, the loss of an intimate identification with an audience, and the necessity for corporate control are principal causes for the uneasiness of such perceptive and levelheaded observers as Rivers and Schramm. The enormous sums of money involved in network television and film production lever the decision-making out of the hands of journalists, editors, and artists into the arms of the corporate executives, whose motives are necessarily different. The journalist may accept the guidelines set down in the late 1940s by the Commission on Freedom of the Press, in which the major mission of mass communications is seen as the raising of social conflict "from the place of vio-

lence to the plane of discussion." The electronic journalist is very personally worried—at least the best of them are—about that aspect of his function today. But the corporate executive seems to be worried more about the advertising renewals that alone can lift what Fred W. Friendly called the ten-ton pencil.

Television journalism faces a series of uneasy dilemmas. Newspaper journalism, operating out of an older tradition, provides those models of professionalism that the authors would urge on the electronic media: the "adversary" posture of the reporter toward his sources, particularly governmental; putting public duty ahead of private monetary advantage; and a confidence in the rational ability of man to separate the false from the true when provided with the facts. "The longest step that can be taken," the authors say, "is perhaps to emphasize the *individual* sense of responsibility rather than the corporate sense."

Rivers and Schramm wisely propose that the best hope of keeping the mass media honest lies in a discriminating audience motivated to step in and speak up; their own book, which reaches across the whole broad face of the media problem, is one means of alerting such an audience to the problems and possibilities of public surveillance.

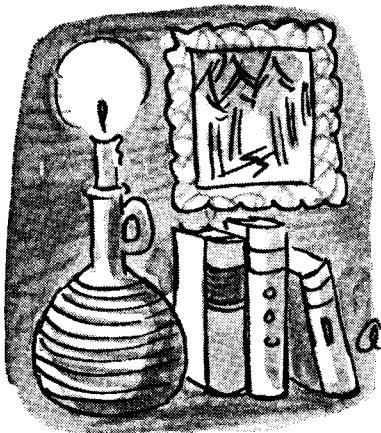
Strategist and Star: The photograph shows John J. McGraw with his hat slammed low on his forehead, a business-like fountain pen protruding from his breast pocket, a look of belligerent distaste on his face. And there beside him, returning gaze for gaze, locked in a ceremonial handshake, is George Herman Ruth, the most infuriating and dangerous of his many opponents.

The picture stands as an eloquent foreword to Joseph Durso's evocatively titled *The Days of Mr. McGraw* (Prentice-Hall, \$7.95). For the first third of this century John McGraw was a leading figure in American baseball, manager of the Giants from 1902 to 1932, winner of ten National League pennants, victorious in three World Series, —two of them at the expense of the vaunted Yankees in the days of Babe Ruth.

McGraw's life reaches back to baseball's primitive beginnings and extends forward to the modern era of great stadiums and expensive player trades. A native of Truxton, New York, McGraw had his "log cabin" beginnings, and turned into a young, brash baseball prodigy, who traveled on foot ten miles to earn his \$2 a game. He made his way rapidly with paid transportation to Baltimore, where such strategies as the bunt, the stolen base,



"Damn it, Harold, must you always quote Helen Gurley Brown!"



and the cutoff throw from the outfield were developed.

McGraw took over the Giants at the age of twenty-nine, standing a Napoleonic 5 feet 6½ inches. He found them in last place and administered a resuscitating infusion of Baltimore talent. Soon his lifelong friendship began with Christy Mathewson, whom McGraw switched from first base to pitcher. Durso describes McGraw as a belligerent, brainy, poker-faced manager and quotes Grantland Rice, "His very walk across the field in a hostile town is a challenge to the multitude."

While sticking close to the play-by-play season after season, Durso's *Days* is an ingathering of forgotten moods, tones, and national traditions, and should be read as much for social history as for its rich sporting lore. In McGraw's day there was, for example, a close alliance between Broadway and baseball; actors enjoyed free passes to Giant games, and when McGraw wasn't on duty at the Polo Grounds he might well be found in the Lambs Club off Times Square. Baseball then was part of the fabric of daily life, and in the days of McGraw the whole country could become mesmerized by the elemental struggle between the canny strategist and the great athlete, as when McGraw in the 1923 World Series signaled Rosy Ryan on the mound to pitch to Ruth with bases loaded. The country held its breath in that moment, and Ruth struck out.

—STUART W. LITTLE.

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Out of the Rathole

Continued from page 23

fled along without raising my feet, I could use my elbow to keep contact with the handrail while I lit the paper. Improvising as I could, I did get the paper lit, but it was flared out in my clutch and blazed up to scorch rather than to illuminate. With my right hand I pulled the blazing paper out of my left fist and threw it into the pit, my lighter going with it. It blazed on down there, the fire providing a ghost of light for the next ten steps or so. Then we were back in mine dark.

I don't know how far we walked. Some newspapers later reported the distance as half a mile, some as a mile, some as a mile and a half. Allowing as best I can for the distortions of sense in such a situation, I guess it was a bit over a mile, for despite the nightmare circumstances, we did manage a steady trudge, and it took about a half hour to walk out of the tunnel.

The physical problems of that half hour were the choking stink, the narrowness of the ledge, the jaggedness of the rusty handrail, the dark, the occasionally broken pavement of the catwalk, and the occasional slick spots on it where water had seeped through

MAGAZINES FOR MILLIONS

The Story of Specialized Publications



By
James
L. C. Ford

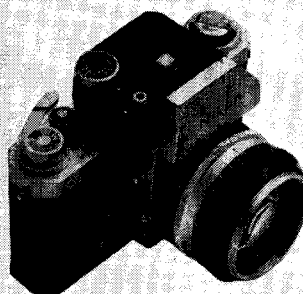
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and deposited a slimy sediment. But though our endless coughing and choking trudge through the rathole was painful, the real emotional trial, as I felt it, lay in the act of trudging while waiting to see if the oxygen content of the smoke would remain high enough to sustain life. Once on a ship for Europe, I leaned over the rail to watch the tugs haul her out of the pier. Suddenly as our backward course veered into the wind, I was hit from below by a blast of diesel smoke from a tug's funnel. I recoiled from the choking stench and was in clear air at once, though that one instant remained in my memory as an abomination. Now, in the rathole, that abomination had become an environment, except that an environment is what life develops in. We were reduced to chances that would declare themselves apart from our effort or volition. We could only cough and move on. If the oxygen held out, we could continue to put one foot before the other, and when we had put together enough steps, we would be out of the tunnel. If the oxygen supply failed, we would simply keel over of anoxemia with whatever mercy there might be in the fact that anoxemia

"We were reduced to chances that would declare themselves apart from our effort or volition."

dulls the senses; we would simply dim into sleep and keel over into nothing.

From my days in the Army Air Corps I remembered watching my fellow guinea pigs in the vacuum chamber, feeding them questions from the luck of the open valve I had drawn by lot, and noting the progressively inane answers they gave to the simplest questions, their minds dimmed to the point of not knowing the difference between sense and gibberish, until the instructor opened their oxygen valves and let them come back from somewhere they didn't know they had been. I knew that if I were beginning to slip over, I would not be aware that I was slipping. Should I try to make it down onto the tracks on the chance the air might be better there? Irrationally, I decided that so long as I was rational enough to think about it, I was still in control: I had already short-circuited the fact that the slippage from rationality to maunder is undetectable. But there was also the fact that I could not find the rungs in the darkness, and beyond that, there was my fear of the third rail.

At long intervals, and for the time it took to cover about twenty steps,

small signal lights shed a dim halo on the smoke, and in those intervals I picked up the pace hoping to regain contact with the line ahead. I remember feeling reassured by the first time I was able to move ahead at a fast walk: The fact that I could make the extra exertion was proof enough that there was oxygen in the stink. I remembered, too, how brightly the *Post* had blazed. For the first time then, I knew certainly that, barring some new obstacle, we were going to make it.

The new obstacle, when it came, was a minor one and soon conquered, but for an instant it almost threw me into the track pit. I had reached the edge of one of the infrequent dim halos cast by a signal light and had started to speed up again when I hit the first of the muddy slicks and felt my left foot start to slide out from under me. I clenched the hand rail and regained my balance, simultaneously sensing that I had gouged one side of my index finger. "Can't be all that bad," I told myself, "if you're still hauling that damned attaché case." The thought was an instant's flicker. I called back a warning to the man who was following me, and through the coughing and gagging, I could hear the warning being called back to each man in line.

Was I beginning to feel a coolness in the non-air? I was soaked with sweat and might simply be overheated, my thermostat shot. But wouldn't overheating leave me more sensitive to any change in the draft? "Is it getting colder?" I gasped to the man behind me. "'S what I was wonderin'," he choked back. In the yellow halo of the next signal light (shouldn't they at least have turned red?) I made out the enlarged shadow of a man's head and shoulders cast on the stinking mist. Despite my earlier slip, I picked up the pace again while the light held, but the next dark came on, the gap was not closed, and there was still nothing but the act of putting one foot before the other while catching what breath I could between spasms of coughing, moving on as the rathole allowed, and waiting for what light would come.

When the light did come, I thought at first it was only the halo of a brighter signal light. Not till I was within three or four steps of the opening, did I realize that what shone through the smoke was the unbelievably blessed daylight.

The Weehauken end of the Penn Central tunnel is an ugly gash in a destroyed piece of countryside. The embankment to the left, as one emerges, is shored by a prison-like stone wall. The embankment on the right starts as a dusty slope of weeds, continues in another stone wall, and is fittingly crowned by an automobile junkyard

that has shed some of its rusty wrecks over the edge where they have been caught by a dented link fence. About thirty-five feet above the tracks, up another barren slope of wirelike grass, and beyond another dented link fence, a road crosses above the tunnel. The tunnel itself is a huge semicircular gape through which—as I recall the scene, perhaps imperfectly—six tracks run, each sealed in a conduit of its own within the tunnel bore.

At about 7:30 p.m., as I came out of the rathole, well over a hundred gasping refugees were strewn over the barren scene. Many of them were sitting on whatever offered itself as a perch, their heads between their knees as they coughed and retched and gulped in, as they could, the comparative blessing of the dirty air of industrial New Jersey. Some roamed the tracks. A hardier few had climbed the embankment to the fence beyond which the road ran over the end of the tunnel. They were, as I guessed, trying to communicate with the world and the world was not responding.

A girl of eighteen, disheveled, barefoot, and covered with enough soot to be noticeable even in that sooty company, stumbled from group to group in what seemed to be an anxious search. I saw her turn and look at the tunnel just as a young man came out. For some reason, he was bare to the waist and was pouring sweat that washed river courses in the grime of his torso. He, too, seemed to be more anxious than relieved. "Eddie," the girl wailed. "Where's Ma?" The boy gave a despairing start, then turned back toward the tunnel. "Eddie, no!" the girl screamed, the cry doubling her up in a new fit of coughing. The young man turned his head, looked at her in a way that suggested a silent scream, then turned and disappeared again into the smoke, running in on the crossties as more passengers descended from the catwalk above him.

From a man who sat coughing beside me on a concrete block, I learned that the passengers up by the roadway had been shouting for help for at least ten minutes but that no answer had come. I looked about at my fellow refugees as best I could through the persisting spasms of coughing. Everyone I saw was sooty but none seemed to be suffering from more than a coughing fit, though a few were bleeding from minor cuts. A few were simply strewn on the dirty grass where they lay helpless, the coughing jerking their abandoned bodies. I moved over to my right and tried to help one man sit up but he pushed me away, rolled over, and went on gasping and coughing.

From one of the tunnel conduits the Washington Express emerged, coming

Nancy and John Seletti aren't trying to save the world. Just a little piece of it.

About a mile outside the Korean village of Ku Am there are a few dozen young, still-tender mulberry trees growing on a small hill. Someday these trees and their succulent leaves will be the heart of a new village industry—a silk raising farm. That day is still many months off, but it doesn't stop the village men from making daily inspection treks up the steep hill, just in case. Just in case something miraculous has happened since yesterday. After all, it wouldn't be the first miracle to happen in Ku Am. Everyone in the village knows the story of Chang Sook, the daughter of the widow.

Ten years ago Chang Sook's chances of survival were as slim as he was. Her father had disappeared during the family's flight from North Korea. Her mother, a seamstress, worked a backbreaking day and most of the evening to earn \$10 a month. Barely enough to keep them from starving.

But today that's all changed because an American couple named Seletti are sharing a little of their good fortune with a girl to whom a little means everything. Nancy, John and five-year-old Alexandra Seletti are New Yorkers. They're not fabulously wealthy as the villagers of Ku Am believe. But, they're not poor either. *Comfortable* probably describes them best. They have everything they really need, but give them ten minutes and they'll come up with ten things they want that \$15 a month would buy. Luckily, they thought of Chang Sook first.

Through Save the Children Federation, the Seletti's \$15 a month is doing a remarkable number of things. First, Chang Sook's immediate needs and future schooling are being taken care of. The family is getting help, too: Enough to enable Chang Sook's mother to start a small knit shop.

And with all this, there is still some money left over. This money, together with money from other sponsors, was borrowed by the village to start its precious mulberry farm. Someday silk raising will mean a permanent increase in the village's income—and permanently



end the need for charity. That's what Save the Children Federation is all about. Although contributions are tax-deductible, it is not a charity. The aim is not merely to buy one child a warm coat, a new pair of shoes and a six month supply of vitamin pills. Instead, your contribution is used to give the child, the family and the village a little boost that may be all they need to start helping themselves.

Sponsors are desperately needed for children in Korea, Vietnam, Latin America, Africa and Greece. You can select the child's nationality. You will receive a photo of the child, regular reports on his progress and, if you wish, a chance to correspond.

Chang Sook writes to the Selettis. She also sends small homemade gifts to Alexandra. And she tells them of her dreams of becoming a nurse. She'll probably make it. If she

does, the Seletti's investment in one girl will be repaid a thousand-fold.

The Selettis know they can't save the whole world for \$15 a month. Just a small corner of it. But, maybe that is the way to save the world. If there are enough people like the Selettis. How about you?

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a good bit too fast and sending frightened passengers running from the tracks as it braked and stopped. Had no signal been given? The express had come within a hair of piling bloody disaster on black.

A fire truck wailed to a stop on the road above the embankment, and I heard a fireman shout through the fence. "Whassa matter?" he called. "We need inhalators," someone shouted. "Hell," I heard the fireman call back, "we ain't got any." I heard the engine wail off, and I guessed it was going for inhalators. If there was help to be had, it was in no hurry to get there.

A second express had come out of the tunnel through still another conduit and stopped on a curve, with a sharp list to the left. The doors were now open to the rear cars of both trains, and passengers were hauling themselves aboard for the ride to Newark. I started for the nearer train and was cheered to see the barefoot girl and the bare-chested boy sitting on a concrete block with their arms around a woman who had to be their mother. She had cut both knees slightly, and a thread of blood ran down each shin into her shoes. As soon as I had climbed aboard the Pullman, I found a water fountain and some paper cups. I gulped two cupsful instantly, then filled two more and took them to the family group. I also gave them what had been

a clean handkerchief. They could drink the water or wash the mother's wounds with it, but at least they knew where more water was to be had.

I was feeling a bit dizzy but my cough, I discovered, had subsided from a spasm to a painful but low-keyed regular hacking. I started back for the Pullman and for more water just as our local edged out of the tunnel, the motorman still at his post. It was somehow good to know that motormen, too, can refuse to abandon ship. The fire was out, though the third car still smoldered. I wondered how the train had recovered power. Then I saw that it had been pushed out by a train which had come up behind it. It ground to a stop, and from the fourth car I saw a group of surprisingly unsooty people descend to the track, a number of my familiar unknown fourth-car faces among them. It was then I learned that the smokers had simply sat it out down-draft from the stinking smoke to which they had continued to contribute their own ripe emanations. I crawled back on the Pullman vowing never again to surrender any vice while I could yet manage the energy for it. At the moment, the only vice available consisted of drinking up all the water in roomette C, and between coughs, I gargled what I could not swallow as we rolled to Newark.

At Newark, the police and first-aid

squads almost outnumbered the sooty refugees, clamping oxygen respirators over the mouths of the worst stricken and putting them on rolling litters for the trip to the hospital. I had no need of hospital treatment. I stood back looking for a Penn Central man who might give me information on how I might continue home, but there was no railroad man to be found.

I had more or less stopped gagging when a man with a respirator came by like a salesman who had run out of customers and shoved the mask at me. "Might as well take a few whiffs," he said. "Nobody else is using it." By that time, the litter cases had been hauled away, and the remaining passengers were down to being hungrier and tired and dirtier than hurt. I inhaled the oxygen for a minute or two, and it did seem to clear my head though my cough was still hacking away in a rhythm of its own. Through a waiting-room door I saw a telephone booth, and when I had finished with the inhalator, I went inside to phone home. My wife would have been waiting for me at the Metuchen station. "I'm all right," I told her. "There was a mess in the tunnel." As it turned out, she had been listening to the radio and knew, as I did not, that more than two hundred people had walked the rathole, and that an off-duty conductor had died under the wheels of our local as the train behind it pushed it out of the tunnel. "Shall I come get you?" she said. "No need," I told her, "I'll make it."

I went back on the platform and finally found a Penn Central man who was taking down names of the sooty. I gave him my name and address, and asked how I was to continue home and from what track. He didn't know, but he asked if I wanted to go to the hospital. I told him I didn't need a hospital, and he turned to another sooty figure I recognized as a dimly known neighbor. "Want a ride to Metuchen?" I asked. "I'm going to take a cab."

On the way out of the station we stopped for a cup of coffee disgustingly laced with cream because I had read somewhere that drinking milk is part of the treatment for smoke inhalation. It did turn out to be a soothing syrup. The woman at the stand-up counter suggested I could clean up in the men's room, and I thanked her for the suggestion, but it was instantly unthinkable to go home without my badge of grime. A touch of drama was all that remained of the experience, and I was not about to spoil my entrance by removing the make-up. In the cab I tallied one foully dirty shirt, one torn suit, one no-longer-wearable necktie, a lost shoe shine, a \$14 cab fare (which



"No, I'm not a wise man. I just came up here for a breath of fresh air."

my neighbor split with me), and one right hand scratched no more badly than I have known it to be after pruning the roses. As disasters go, it was less than total.

A man had died behind us. That was one house with its windows blinded by time. The rest of us had walked out of the rathole, a few to be hospitalized, but none in serious condition. Yet, had the draft been slower, had the smoke been denser, had the weather been smoggy and oppressive without a breeze to help the draft along, had the distance been greater, had panic not been averted—change any detail only slightly, and what would have come out of the tunnel then might easily have been a parade of masked men bearing blanket-covered objects on litters.

The Penn Central, certainly, had no emergency equipment available even within a few miles of Penn Station. Nor was ours the first breakdown of a commuter train: I have myself been on several that died by the way, one of them giving off a sickly smoke smudge, though in the open air. Any railroad concerned for its passengers' safety might have foreseen the possibility, even the likelihood, of a tunnel fire. The railroad, though it was running ancient and badly inspected rolling stock, was meshed in its own intricacies, and simply preferred the assumption that nothing would go wrong. That assumption was itself intricately meshed into the railroad's distaste for passenger service, which was in turn meshed into a fiction called accounting. Depending on what the directors wanted to say about passenger service, that fiction could arrange its permissible options to show a profit or a loss, and it had been arranged to show a loss. The greater the fictional loss the better the position of the directors when they refused to invest in better passenger equipment, or when they demanded higher fares, or when they clamored for tax breaks.

The Penn Central, however, is not more intricately diseased than the society it more or less serves. It is not sicker than the New York school system, or than the city government, or than the ghettos, or than the relations between the State House and City Hall, or than the corporate assumptions that the buck will flow for one more quarter and one more year, that all retirement plans will be honored, and that there will be time enough to plan against environmental poisoning when the sky turns green and the water turns yellow.

Not even near disaster will shatter the unharmonized monads of megalopolis. Even when they have been shattered, most monads seal themselves

back into the reflecting surfaces of their own habit. The repair job does leave hairline cracks in that inner mirror, but it takes only a slight squint to make the cracks disappear. Habit is a sure way of life while it lasts. What happens after habit is shattered be-

yond repatching is not on the scale of monad time.

Such were the reflections that were forming in my mind when I awoke on May 27. I had slept badly, not to the point of nightmare, but uneasily. I was still smelling soot. The odor of it

Cousin

By Joan Scott-Tallman Reid

days of tired negro skin
morning like an awning
on a penthouse
the hot water faucet is on the left
like the heart
like Israel she went
to the defeat of him
her arms were like vines
she was not a sportsman
yet he could murder for her thighs
which pulled out from the mirror of her belly
until she caught the humid night
in it, like a marauding panther
myths chased her like butterflies
I wondered if she could picket to write a sonnet,
a man could be an invader to her
tendrils pushing island,
she was the afternoon in the heat of the patio
with nothing to do but call the servants
when passion, the guest, called
she could reach her roots into his soil
if the sun was warm he was stunted
she controlled the wind
the attraction between the sun and moon
keeps the world going
each state of her mind was like the
locks of a canal
allowing the ship of mind
a progressive maturity
but the seas were hot
and the wind was bottled in silence
one docked her with a commerce
of luxury
the mind, like the suffragette, annexed her
she waited to volley
passion for other things
than thighs making pillars in God's arbor
she floundered before her port,
anger mutinied
she wanted to play a violin in a garret at night
she would send bulletins from her soul
to all available news outlets
as yet she had found no landlord
for the place she was planning to vacate
night was a bed
she had breastfed her children
to show your hand in a game of cards
was unfair
to avenge yourself upon the enemy
in a peace treaty
is senseless
any country wants to live in peace,
why annex?
why trade with myths?
in a modern country, love
is an elevator
pulling the man up or down