
From: Paul Stevens [stevenspl@live.com]
Sent: Saturday, May 17, 2014 10:14 AM
To: stevenspl@live.com
Subject: Connecting - May 17, 2014

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Connecting

May 17, 2014



Colleagues,

There are only a few New York Times-related stories that would top the ouster of executive editor **Jill Abramson** and the promotion of **Dean Baquet** to replace her, but one broke almost simultaneously this week: the [leaked innovation report](#) looking at the paper's digital strategy. As Joshua Benton wrote in a widely-shared story for the Nieman Journalism Lab, "You can sense the frayed nerves and the frustration at a newsroom that is, for all its digital successes, still in many ways oriented toward an old model."

That print-focused culture is, ["in a nutshell,"](#) why digital journalist **Liz Heron** said she left the Times to join the Wall Street Journal. She added she hopes leak of the innovation report "promotes some positive transformation at all the traditional media organizations struggling with the transition to digital."

The report, given to BuzzFeed, likely is being carefully scrutinized in newsrooms and corporate offices throughout the industry, including at The Associated Press. AP Global Sports Editor **Michael Giarrusso** shared two archive-related tidbits:

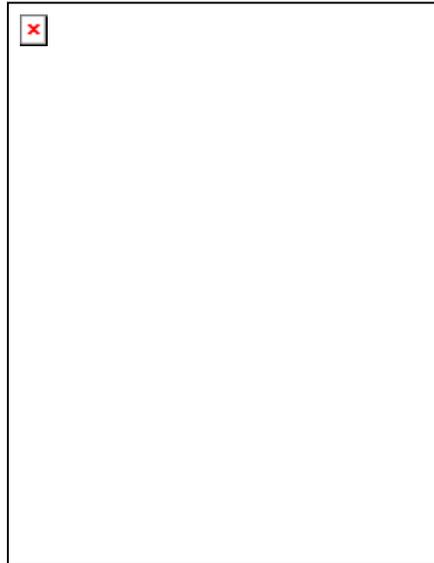
- There are about 14.7 million articles in the Times' archives dating back to 1851. The Times needs to do a better job of resurfacing archival content. The report cites Gawker repackaging a 161-year-old Times story on Solomon Northup timed with the release of *12 Years A Slave*. "We can be both a

daily newsletter and a library - offering news every day, as well as providing context, relevance and timeless works of journalism." (p. 28)

- The report proposes restructuring arts and culture stories that remain relevant long after they are initially published into guides for readers. They give an example of a reader wanting to find the Times' initial review of the play *Wicked*. "The best opportunities are in areas where The Times has comprehensive coverage, where information doesn't need to be updated regularly, and where competitors haven't saturated the market." They view museums, books, and theater as the best options for that. Travel and music would be more difficult, the report says. These guides should supplement, not replace current pages. (p. 29)

A journey home

Connecting Editor **Paul Stevens** is spending a couple days back in his hometown of Fort Dodge, Iowa. He shared a poignant moment that reminded him of his editor emeritus father, who died last July at age 96: "A lump in the throat when my dad's final federal income tax refund arrived in the mail Thursday, addressed from the IRS to me as his executor and to Walter B Stevens Decd. Dad began paying taxes in 1933 so this was his 80th and final return - nice that it was a refund. Miss him much."



Embarrassing moments

Red-faced over Adult Entertainment

[Mark Mittelstadt](#): In my role as an executive director on loan to the Associated Press Managing Editors, one of my tasks was to organize board meetings plus arrange off-hours activities -- Broadway musicals, Yankee games, trips to the museum, group dinners -- for the visiting member editors.

Paul Stevens joined his father Walt at the 150th anniversary celebration of The Messenger of Fort Dodge, Iowa, in 2006

In the winter of 2002 with not a lot new in the New York theater scene, AP's late critic **Michael Kuchwara** suggested a new play opening off-Broadway that was generating some buzz. Written by **Elaine May** ("The Birdcage," "Heaven Can Wait") and directed by **Stanley Donen** ("Singin' in the Rain," "Royal Wedding," "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers," "Funny Face" among other credits), "Adult



The cast of "Adult Entertainment"

Entertainment" was a comedy about four adult film stars who get tired of working for others and decide to make their own porn. Frustrated in their initial efforts at writing, they bring in a Yale graduate who has a grand idea to create a movie that will sell to the art house crowd. When he realizes that won't work, he tries to educate the troupe on art, familiarizing them with everything from the classics to contemporary literature. The humor grows as the aging adult stars come to embrace a new creative atmosphere.

As described, the play held a strong interest for journalists: the First Amendment; freedom of expression; the role of art in contemporary life; parallels between the classics and issues in modern society.

While previews were mixed, a surprisingly strong one in The New York Times combined with the involvement of known names May and Donen and a cast that included **Danny Aiello**, **Jeannie Berlin** and **Mary Birdsong** ("The Daily Show,") made it worth pursuing with then APME President **Ed Jones**. Jones, a Southern gentleman in the truest sense of the word, was editor of The Free Lance-Star in Fredericksburg, Va., and a deacon in the Episcopal Church. He agreed it might be worth taking the chance, so I called AP's broker and ordered tickets.

As the group was being seated at the small Variety Arts Theatre in southern Manhattan, it took only a matter of minutes to discover that other patrons also had tickets for our seats. In a few more seconds, we realized the \$90 tickets were for the following weekend. I had failed to check the tickets for the correct time and date when they arrived from the broker, as had the AP administrative assistant who helped me. And no one had noticed until we were being seated. The performance was not a sell-out and the theater was able to move the APME group of 20 to other seats. The play started rough and unfunny, but became moderately humorous as the plot unfolded ... to most of the group, at least.

Jones opened the next morning's board meeting by explaining to those who had gone off in other directions the night before that it had been a "bad news/good news/bad news" evening. "The bad news is that the date on the tickets was wrong. The good news is that Mark and the theater managed to get it worked out so we could see 'Adult

Entertainment.' The bad news is that we saw 'Adult Entertainment,'" drawing laughs.

Several board members told me later they enjoyed the play.

Connecting bits

Retired AP lawyer **Dave Tomlin**, his wife, **Pam**, and their young daughter recently returned to southern New Mexico from their winter haven in Mexico. In his blog "Heading West," Dave writes about [trying to lure birds](#), especially hummingbirds, to their mountain home and the life parallels he sees in some of their behavior.



Scott Charton, meanwhile, noted the rush to wind up the session of the Missouri Legislature by Friday's deadline and the work the news media did to stay on top of the hectic action. "Kudos to the Missouri Capitol watchdogs who had full plates this legislative session," he wrote on his Facebook page. He added this button from the Missouri Press Association.

Stories of interest

[Arends: Why New York Times chairman Arthur Sulzberger must go](#)

Now that the New York Times has fired **Jill Abramson**, they need to fire someone else: **Arthur Sulzberger**, the chairman. ...No matter what the details behind Abramson's sensational dismissal as Times executive editor last week, a trail of sheer incompetence still leads directly to the chairman's door.

[AdAge: Will Baquet's 'Teddy Bear' style extend to NYT's ad department](#)

On Wednesday, the same day that **Jill Abramson** was removed as the top editor at The New York Times, the paper's ad sales chief, **Meredith Levien**, appeared at an ad agency forum to discuss the Times' new native ads. Ms. Levien told the audience that its "Paid Posts" ads attract roughly the same attention as its editorial content. The claim surprised some of the audience members. It also chafed the newsroom, one reporter said. "It was like sticking a sharp object into the eye of the newsroom," a former Times executive agreed. "Plus, it's an unfair comparison. An editorial story is off the homepage after maybe a day, while a promotion can live there for weeks."



Dean Baquet

[Editing while female: field notes from one of journalism's most dangerous jobs](#)

(Latrice Davis via Facebook)

We like to pretend it's different now, that **Hillary Clinton** really did shatter that glass ceiling into thousands of pieces. But it's not true. There are shockingly few women at the top anywhere in America, and

it's a deficit that is especially pronounced in journalism, where women leaders remain outliers, category-defying outliers who almost invariably still face a comeuppance.

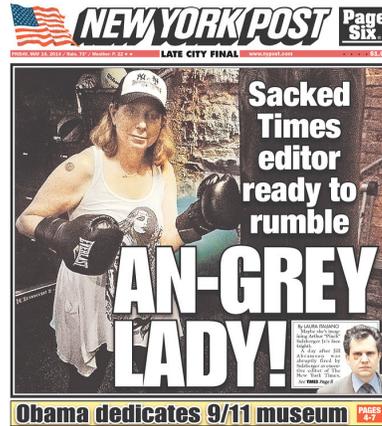
-also-

[As Jill Abramson exits the NY Times, a look at how women are faring in newsrooms](#)

[Abramson bests Times in PR fight](#)

[New York Post puts Abramson on its front page](#)

[The week in review: Behind the Times' big change, and the FCC's net neutrality proposal moves forward](#)



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[The newsonomics of spring cleaning](#)

Ken Doctor says from wire services to classifieds to news networks, some key elements of the news ecosystem we know are changing - often without much notice.

[Why digital tools are missing in most newsrooms](#)

Many U.S. newsrooms are not taking advantage of the emerging low-cost digital tools that enable journalists to report and present their work in innovative ways. Editors and producers cling to familiar methods and practices even when they know better, more engaging digital alternatives are available, often for free.

[CNN fires serial plagiarist](#)

CNN has terminated news editor **Marie-Louise Gumuchian** after discovering "multiple instances of plagiarism." Gumuchian was based in London.

[Financial Times names Gillian Tett U.S. managing editor](#)

Gillian Tett is the Financial Times' new U.S. managing editor, replacing **Martin Dickson**, who is retiring. Tett, an anthropologist by training, sounded an early (and mostly ignored) warning about the financial crisis.

[Newspaper uses web site's article, claims most of it is "public domain"](#)

The Newnan (Ga.) Times-Herald reproduced an article **Dan Whisenhunt** wrote for the Atlanta-area news site Decaturish, which he also edits. After Whisenhunt complained, the Times-Herald removed his article. Whisenhunt also noticed the paper had offered his article, which the Times-Herald ran with his byline, for sale in the archive, and sent an invoice for \$1,000.

[National Journal eliminates comments from non-members](#)

As of Friday, National Journal's editor-in-chief writes, "we'll join the growing number of sites that are choosing to forgo public comments on most stories." Comments are currently disappointing: "For every smart argument, there's a round of ad hominem attacks -- not just fierce partisan feuding, but the worst kind of abusive, racist, and sexist name-calling imaginable."

[What happens when a photographer takes the same photo from a different angle?](#)

You've probably already seen the world's most famous landmarks through photos that show them in all their beautiful, historical glory. Here's what happens when the photo is taken from another angle.

["Was" versus "were" -- on usage of subjunctive verbs](#)

Today's topic is the past subjunctive, or in terms you might recognize, when to use "I was" and when to use "I were."

[A tornado? Doesn't that belong on The Weather Channel?](#)

A Sioux Falls, S.D., TV anchor got fed up with viewer complaints about having their favorite TV shows interrupted and let them have it on air.

[Reporter grabs human waste, smells it on air](#)

Elizabeth Matthews of KSDK in St. Louis recently reported on an Illinois farmer using sewage sludge, which is basically human fecal matter, to fertilize his crops. And when it came time to show her viewers what the fertilizer looks like, well, Matthews dug right in.



APME UPDATE - May 15, 2014

SAVE THE DATE

May 31, Deadline for Applying for Community Journalism Grant
June 30, Special 2-for-1 Membership Offer Expires
Sept. 15-17, ASNE-APME Conference, Chicago

PUBLIC SERVICE REPORTING GRANTS: APPLY NOW

APME wants to showcase the outstanding work of smaller news organizations through its Community Journalism Public Service Initiative.

Media companies in metropolitan areas (MSA) of 100,000 or fewer people are encouraged to apply for the grant, offered for the third year. The recipient will receive \$1,000 to jump-start the initiative and

a trip to the annual APME conference to present the project.

It's easy to enter: Draft a proposal of 500 words or less and include examples of how you would approach the project. It should be multi-platform, include social media and address a long-standing community issue.

Last year's winner was The Sedalia Democrat in Missouri for its "Meth at the Crossroads" series. City Reporter **Emily Jarrett** presented the newspaper's work at the APME national conference in Indianapolis in October. The first winner was the Beaver Dam News of Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, for its series on mental illness in its community.

The 2014 winner will present its work at the joint ASNE-APME Conference Sept. 15-17 in Chicago.

To apply, go to <http://www.tfaforms.com/232227> and fill out the online form.

The deadline for applications is May 31. The grant will be awarded in June.

For more information, contact Joe Hight at joe.hight@gazette.com or David Arkin at darkin@corp.gatehousemedia.com

SAVE NOW! SPECIAL 2-FOR-1 MEMBERSHIP OFFER

Special offer: Join APME at our \$150 rate in May and June and add another editor or broadcast news leader free. The 2-for-1 offer is a limited-time special until June 30.

This is a great time to join APME.

The Associated Press Media Editors remains the practical voice for news leaders. For the \$150 cost of membership, you'll receive a substantial discount for the first joint conference with the American Society of News Editors and the Associated Press Photo Managers Sept. 15-17 at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Chicago.

Sign up now at: www.apme.com

WE NEED YOUR HELP: DONATE NOW FOR CONFERENCE AUCTION

APME and ASNE are joining forces for a live and silent auction to benefit both organizations during their joint conference Sept. 15-17 in Chicago.

An annual conference auction is a staple for APME and benefits the APME Foundation, which helps fund NewsTrain and other programs. ASNE will share the stage for perhaps the biggest auction to fund journalism initiatives in recent years.

The live auction - featuring vacation getaways and more - will be held during the opening night reception at the Tribune Tower. A small silent auction also will take place that night.

A larger silent auction - featuring donated books, regional gifts,

jewelry, sports and event tickets and more - will be held during the conference at the Hyatt Regency, the conference headquarters.

How can you help now? We're looking for donations that will stand out.

To donate, [download the pledge form](#).

Bob Heisse of the APME Foundation and George Stanley of ASNE are coordinating the auction. You can contact either of them at bob.heisse@sj-r.com or gstanley@jm.com.

You also can contact Sally Jacobsen of APME at sjacobsen@AP.org and Arnie Robbins of ASNE at arobbins@asne.org.

WATCHDOG REPORTING:

SUMMARY OF IMPACT JOURNALISM FROM PAST WEEK

Arizona Republic: System failed to alert hundreds to evacuate

Los AngelesTimes: Cutbacks in California court system produce long lines

Idaho Statesman: Governor's boast about Idaho's economy doesn't add up

Baltimore Sun: Pockets of segregation remain in Maryland's schools

Boston Globe: Justice in casino case has past ties to gambling industry

New York Times: New York police recruit Muslims as informers

Dallas Morning News: Lawsuits against Dallas police costing city millions

Seattle Times: Obscure law is freeing county mental patients

Read more [Watchdog Reporting](#)

INDUSTRY NEWS

Helena, Great Falls, television stations sold

News Corp profit drops; results top Wall Street

Board postpones decision on SIU student newspaper

CBS 1Q earnings rise despite lower ad sales

Fox 3Q earnings top expectations

NBC extends Olympic deal through 2032 for \$7.75 billion

Jet to stop printing, change to digital app

News media challenge ban on journalism drones

Newton newspaper fires editor over anti-gay blog

Top Springfield News-Leader editor stepping down

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