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Connecting

May 20, 2014



Colleagues,

The recent **death** of Jeb Stuart Magruder, Watergate conspirator-turned-minister who claimed in later years to have heard President Richard Nixon order the infamous break-in, prompted these memories from a pair of Texas journalists.

AP Dallas chief of bureau [Dale Leach](#) shares this bit of AP lore with his fellow Connecting colleagues:

It was 1988, and Jeb Magruder (in photo at right) had recently been hired as a minister at a Presbyterian Church in suburban Columbus, Ohio. Then-Columbus COB Jake Booher invited Magruder to speak to our state broadcasters annual meeting in Athens.



As the ACOB, it was my job to 1) entertain the broadcasters at the bar and 2) keep an eye out for Magruder, who was arriving late Friday evening to the Ohio University Inn.

I was multi-tasking, of course, sitting next to the bar entrance off the lobby so I could watch for Magruder. I intercepted him as he walked into the hotel, introduced myself and invited him to join us for a drink after he checked in. He accepted.

Back in the bar with Magruder and the increasingly woozy broadcasters, I tried to make conversation by asking Magruder for his impressions on the just-completed vice presidential debate between Dan Quayle and Lloyd Bentsen. Magruder said, "Well, my only regret is that I can't vote for Lloyd Bentsen for president." A radio news director who was sitting at the opposite end of the table - and had had one drink too many - shot back, "Why can't you vote for Lloyd Bentsen? Are you a convicted felon?"

Magruder was clearly peeved and asked, "Does she know who I am?"

"She doesn't have a clue," I said.

AND

El Paso Times editor **Bob Moore** recalled a brush with Magruder and his dog:

Jeb Magruder was probably the first historical figure I ever met in person.

I was 18 years old, doing door-to-door fundraising for the women's Olympic volleyball team in Colorado Springs. I went to his door (I didn't know it was his house) and his Bernese mountain dog burst through the door and bit me square on the ass. Magruder's daughter pulled the dog off of me as he made another charge. She took me inside and put me on the kitchen table.

While I was laying there, this guy I had seen on TV came in from the garden. I said, "You're Jeb Magruder." He looked a bit surprised and said yes. I went to the hospital and got patched up, with my pride hurting almost as much as my ass.

In hindsight, I have determined that a Watergate criminal's dog sensed I was a journalist, years before I discovered it myself.

Connecting mailbox

Bob Daugherty: This is how you keep readers from cancelling their subscriptions:

— — — — —
TAKE WARNING.—A man in this country, who stopped his paper since the first of January, has since died. We do not know that the act was the cause of his death, but we have known a number who neglected to pay for their paper and have since had sickness in their families; one man's little boy had his fingers cut off; and another delinquent lost a good horse; another's wife died, and two others have gone into insolvency.—*Ex.*
— — — — —

AP Sports, 1968

This photo of some members of the AP Sports department in New York appeared recently on Facebook, and I asked one of those pictured, Hal Bock, for IDs.



Here is his start:

From left, front is Bob Green, then Tom Saladino. Behind Green is me. Holding trophy (for what I don't know) is Ted Meier. Behind. Meier is Ron Rapoport. Can't name others.

Anyone care to help fill out the identifications?

Project Wizard: Dick Nixon's Brazen Plan for Post-Watergate Redemption

[Mark Mittelstadt](#) spotted a story in The Atlantic, which dug into the picture files and came up with one taken 40 years ago by Connecting colleague **Bob Daugherty** to help illustrate its story last week on the "brazen" plan Richard Nixon had to remake himself as a statesman. The photo showed Nixon waving goodbye as he boarded a helicopter outside The White House on Aug. 9, 1974 following his resignation as president. Here is the photo, and click [here](#) for the story.



A look at Jill Abramson's commencement speech



Associated Press: Former NY Times editor: Leading newsroom was honor

In her first public appearance since her dismissal from The New York Times, former executive editor Jill Abramson compared herself to a new college graduate: "scared but also a little excited." "What's next for me? I don't know. So I'm in exactly the same boat as many of you," Abramson told the Class of 2014 at Wake Forest University's graduation ceremony on Monday, to laughs and applause. Click [here](#) for the AP story.

And here are several other takes on her commencement speech:

Washington Post: Five things we can learn from Jill Abramson's commencement speech at Wake Forest

Former New York Times executive editor Jill Abramson spoke at the Wake Forest commencement this morning, taking the podium at a moment when the debate about why she was really fired from the paper shows no sign of concluding quickly. Given the recentness of her departure - and presumably, the terms of whatever settlement Abramson reached with her former employers - the speech was a bit awkward. Abramson could not have really made a detailed case for herself without looking petulant, and besides, Bloomberg's Al Hunt did that for her in his introduction. "It is said she can be a tough, no-nonsense, even pushy in her passionate commitment to truth and accountability, no matter rank or party. That's what makes a great editor," Hunt told the graduates. An inspiring message might have seemed deluded, platitudinous or even hypocritical. Click [here](#) for the story.

Poynter: Abramson at Wake Forest: 'honor of my life' to lead NYT newsroom

Ousted New York Times editor Jill Abramson took the high road in a Wake Forest University commencement speech Monday, saying it "was the honor of my life to lead the newsroom." She told graduates to "show what you are made of" in the face of rejection. "What's next for me? I don't know. So I'm in exactly the same boat as many of you," she said. Click [here](#) for the story.

Politico: Fellow journalists laud Jill Abramson speech for wit, resonance

Her ousting may have been bloody, but Jill Abramson's first public comment since her

swift departure as executive editor of The New York Times last week was well-received by many in the media world. Click [here](#) for the story.

Wake Forest: Abramson speech 'masterful'

Jill Abramson "deftly" managed to speak to the concerns of Wake Forest graduates while also addressing her own controversy at The New York Times, university president Nathan Hatch said on Monday. "She really did speak to our students but didn't ignore the elephant in the room. And by focusing on resilience, by telling stories of people who had overcome great things, she did a masterful job of negotiating a supremely fine line," Hatch said. Click [here](#) for the story.

New York Times: In First Public Remarks After Firing, Jill Abramson Talks of Resilience

Jill Abramson, the former executive editor of The New York Times, made her first public appearance since her abrupt dismissal last week, speaking about resilience in a [long-scheduled commencement](#) address on Monday at Wake Forest University. In an 11-minute speech greeted with applause and laughter, Ms. Abramson said her father had always emphasized that it was as important to handle setbacks as to embrace success. "I'm talking to anyone who has been dumped - have not gotten the job you really wanted or have received those horrible rejection letters from grad school," she said. "You know the disappointment of losing, or not getting something you badly want. When that happens, show what you are made of." Click [here](#) for the story.

AND

Arthur Sulzberger's First Interview About the Turmoil at The New York Times: "I Would Have Done It Differently"

A week after the firing of Jill Abramson as executive editor of The New York Times, the newspaper's publisher, Arthur Sulzberger Jr., sat down with Vanity Fair's Sarah Ellison for an exclusive interview about the controversy. He had much to say about the coverage thus far (some of which he characterized as "lies")-and revealed second thoughts about his own decision-making. Click [here](#) for the story.

Stories of interest

[On his retirement, a fond farewell to Carl Kasell of NPR's 'Wait Wait ... Don't Tell Me'](#)

We knew Carl Kasell's last taping of "Wait Wait...Don't Tell Me" was going to be a big deal, which is so not Carl.

After 16 years as official judge and scorekeeper of the NPR quiz show, and 60 years in radio, he wanted his last show to be just like any other. As if. Sprinkled throughout the hour were tributes from Stephen Colbert, Tom Hanks, Katie Couric and President Obama, which caused the 80-year-old veteran newsman and the 1,800 people packed into the Warner Theatre on Thursday to get all verklempt. (You can hear the broadcast at 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday on WAMU-FM; you'll have to take my word about the tears.)



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[Stephen Colbert Calls Out CNN On Their Inability To Report Actual News](#) (Carol Riha)

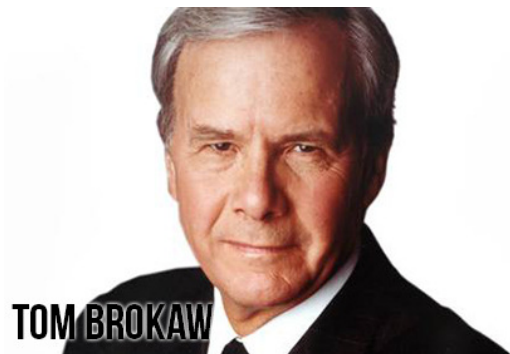
Being a 24-hour news station is hard. You have to find ways to fill 24 hours of airtime without being redundant and without there being breaking news every single day. Stephen Colbert decided to get to the bottom of CNN's latest story - the story of whether there was any story left about the tragedy of the lost Malaysia Airlines plane. He nails it.

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[Peabody Awards Salute Tom Brokaw, Storytellers Across the Media Spectrum](#)

Thesps from "Scandal," "Breaking Bad," "House of Cards" and "Orange is the New Black" mingled with documentary filmmakers, news producers, Tom Brokaw and Anthony Bourdain Monday at the Peabody Awards, the TV industry's most eclectic annual kudos ceremony.

Veteran NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw received the achievement award recognizing his long career in journalism. "This is a humbling moment for me," Brokaw said. "If you live long enough these kind of awards come to you and/or you get cancer. Turns out, I ended up getting both.



It's going to work out. Life is going to be OK because I'm in the enviable position of getting the best treatment in the world and it has made me much more conscious of what a privilege it is to have the kind of job that I have." Brokaw went on to tell the crowd that "we are living through the most transformative time in the history of journalism." "It's not just about 140 characters," Brokaw said. "It's not just about who you are going to meet for coffee. It's about serving mankind with the information they need to know to make good decisions about their lives."

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[Missouri Prisons Ban Magazine For Article Critical Of The Death Penalty](#) (Bill Beecham)

Missouri's Attorney General Chris Koster (D) once suggested reviving the gas chamber as a method of execution due to legal uncertainty over whether his state could execute prisoners through lethal injection. Last February, it executed a man named Herbert Smulls while Smulls still had an appeal pending before the Supreme Court of the United States. Last year, Missouri - in its zeal to put some of its inmates to death - nearly triggered an international incident that could have deprived every hospital in America of drug that they currently use 50 million times every year.

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[Guardian hires digital editor from NY Times](#)

Aron Pilhofer will be The Guardian's executive editor of digital, the Guardian announced Monday. Pilhofer was the Times' associate managing editor for digital strategy. The hire follows the Times' attempts to hire Guardian U.S. Editor-in-Chief Janine Gibson to run its digital operation, a process that by some accounts played a role in Publisher Arthur Sulzberger Jr.'s decision to dismiss Jill Abramson as editor. Gibson said she declined.

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[White House Reporter Sent To Shed During Obama's Golf Game](#) (Mark Mittelstadt)

A reporter got stuck in less than stellar surroundings Saturday. As President Obama golfed at the fancy Robert Trent Jones Golf Club in Gainesville, Va., an exclusive course that has hosted four President's cups, the reporter was put in a maintenance shed. On the way to the shed, Houston Chronicle's Kevin Diaz first waited in the equipment shack cafeteria (whatever that means). Later, he was sent to a "maintenance shed" to wait out the President's golf game.

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[The New York Times' digital challenges, in 5 charts](#) (Bob Daugherty)

The New York Times' internal Innovation report, leaked after the unexpected ouster of top editor Jill Abramson, brought to light a newsroom culture out of step with changing consumer reading habits. Here, five charts tell the story of the Times' struggles as it

tightens its embrace of digital media.

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