

think of a magazine that has not shown changes in response to the spirit and mood of the times. The ladies magazine of today is going to be as much a curiosity and a mirror of era as *Godey's Ladies Book* was of its era.

It seems to me that American taste is pushing the magazines into an upward spiral of quality. That certainly the "mass" magazines are eternally vulnerable to a circulation decline. "Formulas" wear thin, bad taste and bad writing drive readers elsewhere, weekly or monthly, the editor knows that what he has published will be subject to a vote—Yes or No—and he is therefore in constant search for ideas and for the people who can make those ideas readable.

If the mass magazine has its problems, the "class" magazine is, I am happy to report, having welcome and unaccustomed success. The circulations of magazines like *Harpers*, *Atlantic*, *The Saturday Review*, *The Reporter*, and *The New Yorker* have more than held

their own against the bigs. Proportionately, their circulations have increased far more in relation to population, than the circulations of the big magazines. *The New Republic*, for example, which by the way, celebrates its 50th anniversary next year, is enjoying a remarkable growth in circulation. It is now the largest weekly journal of opinion by a good margin, and is growing at a rate that would please the most commercial of publications. I think there is a good reason for this. I believe that the number of thoughtful and perplexed Americans is increasing. I believe that far from being an "affluent society" we are an impoverished society in the area of solutions to our problems. I see it as the function of *The New Republic* and other magazines of opinion and criticism to hold out the constant hope that the application of man's intelligence to his government and his society will in time produce the greatest good for the greatest number.

In this job, a full share of the responsibility lies with those of us who profess to be articulate about the events, the people, the issues of modern American society. Those of you who stick to it are going to be the editors, the writers, the book publishers, the TV script writers, the city editors, the dramatists, the film producers, of tomorrow's "mass" culture. There is room for advance, as I have tried to point out to you. There is room for innovation. There is a need for courage and for excellence.

You will be discouraged. You will be exasperated. You will be in conflict with censors, and at war with the public taste. You will compromise. You will despair of your ability to accomplish the best that is in you.

But I have a suspicion that you, too, are "hooked." That this fast-moving, complicated world of communications will keep its hold on you. Be of good cheer.

# Image in the College Press

By JEFF GREENFIELD / *Wisconsin Daily Cardinal*

A convention of student editors is almost guaranteed to produce, in addition to a number of morning-after regrets, one rip-roaring discussion on Freedom of the Student Press. This topic has been knocked about, tromped on, danced around the room, and battered about so much that most student editors have ignored another, equally important, question: what kind of paper should the student editor produce?

At the February Overseas Press Club—USSPA meeting in New York, the editors did manage to touch directly on this question. And an apparent split was evident between the "imagists" and the "crusaders"—those, that is, who felt a student paper should reflect the goals and policies of the college and its leaders, and those who believed a student paper must "alienate" itself from the college, and report and comment on the news irrespective of the effect that such news would have on the school's "image".

*Jeff Greenfield, editor of The Daily Cardinal at the University of Wisconsin, is a senior majoring in philosophy. He worked during the summer at the Wisconsin State Journal (Madison) as their Roy L. Matson newsman, a position given to one Wisconsin junior every year in honor of the Journal's late editor.*

This is a very real dilemma for most student editors. Though conditions on some campuses may make the question academic (no pun intended), every editor must ask himself whether he is going to function as a house organ or as an organ as independent from the college as is possible.

For some editors (and a good many more school administrators), the question is absurd. A student newspaper is, after all, a creature of the campus, with news directed exclusively to the student body and in most cases dependant directly on the school for financial solvency. To suggest that such a publication undertake to supply a dissenting or consistently critical role is as absurd, in their view, as the General Motors house organ extolling the merits of the Volkswagon.

The "imagists" hold, briefly, that the student paper must consider above all else the effect that a story or editorial comment will have upon the school's reputation with the students, the alumni, and the community. It must support the basic policies of the college's leaders, and must seek to enhance the image of the school. As a consequence, news play and comment must keep in mind the effect on the college's reputation, as well as the customary criterion of news value.

The "crusaders" on the other hand hold a very different view of the role of the student press. News affecting the

campus must, in their view, be reported if it is of interest and importance to the campus community; whether it makes the school look better or worse is irrelevant. The "expose" story—the revelation and criticism of conditions on the campus—is to be encouraged, and the interest or importance of the story is the sole criterion for publication.

Naturally the two positions are not absolute. No student editor worth his salt would ignore an important campus condition if it was so well-known as to be unavoidable, even if that condition did not reflect well on the school. Similarly, no editor would run a story or editorial without doing some pretty serious thinking on the effect of its publication. The difference between the two groups, rather, is the propensity of the editor to ferret out unpleasant conditions, to expose and to criticize them, and in the willingness to sacrifice image for the presentation of the truth.

For some colleges, this dilemma is absent in practice. The small size of the campus, infrequency of publication, or severity of administrative control makes dissent or exposure practically impossible. For the large dailies, however, with considerable editorial freedom, and especially for that handful of papers with financial and editorial independence, the problem is a real one.

When the *Harvard Crimson* reveals that a professor was fired for experi-

ments with the drug LSD-25, when the *Michigan Daily* exposes rampant race bias on campus, when the Wisconsin *Daily Cardinal* reveals a case of apparent censorship by the school's head librarian, these stories cannot help but shake the carefully sculpted image of the peaceful, intellectually enlightened and unfettered campus.

In the view of these editors, of which I am one, the importance and value of the story is primary—if the image of the school is hurt by the exposure of such conditions, then it deserved to be hurt. Speaking personally, this is the principle upon which I have been editing the *Cardinal* for over the year; print the facts and discuss them irrespective of who those facts offend. If a toe gets stepped on in the process, it probably belongs to someone blocking the road to a better campus.

This principle, of course, implies that the student editor is honest enough not to report distortions, lies, or half-truths about his campus. A paper that undertakes to criticize conditions on a campus must first of all present those conditions factually—otherwise, it disqualifies itself from the right to criticize. It also implies (a point most of us forget) that the paper must present the happier, as well as the less pleasant, aspects of campus life. An important research project, an inspired job of teaching, a successful resolution of a student-administration wrangle, must be reported along with the disputes, the intellectual slothfulness, and the administrative machination that some of us are forever finding.

But the campus "crusade" remains a legitimate—in fact, a necessary—function of the student paper. It is an axiom of college life that the student body as a whole is ignorant of campus affairs. Even dismissing the majority who don't give a damn for any event not intimately connected with their social or economic lives, the alert minority cannot keep up with what is happening on campus—and at a large university, with its pockets of activity (dormitories, fraternities, commuters) it is even more difficult to be informed about campus events without the student paper.

Thus, if the paper does not report the event, the campus as a whole probably will not hear about it. If the paper does not initiate discussion about an unjust condition that requires alleviation, that unjust condition will in all probability remain. If the newspaper does not support, or at least cover, the launching of a student protest, that protest will probably fail. These facts of campus life make it imperative for a student editor to reject any role as an "imagist", as one whose success or failure is determined by the lack of protest or argument his paper stirs up. An editor must feel free to report and criticize official

policy without the uncomfortable feeling of having committed treason.

Some will object that this is not the function of a student paper. What, then, is its function?

To publicize campus functions? If that were its sole purpose, a huge bulletin board or a mimeographed sheet could work just as well.

To present a pleasant, positive reflection of the day-to-day life of the campus? That job should be left to the public-relations experts (which most universities, by the way, seem to be employing with disconcerting eagerness). A student paper must be basically an organ of information, communication, and controversy. As the sole voice reaching almost all of the campus, the paper has an obligation to inform those readers accurately, and without fear of tarnishing an "image", of what is going on, both good and bad. It must also be the spearhead of any student demand which, in the staff's judgment, is a reasonable and justified grievance.

The question of editorial policy is an especially difficult problem in this question. The newspaper is a monopoly on the campus; it is undeniable that for the community as well as the students, the expression of editorial policy is the only direct statement of student policy that will be seen and read in any degree.

The problem, then, is to give all sides a fair chance to be heard through this monopoly medium, yet at the same time to mount an effective editorial campaign. A number of solutions are available. *The Daily Iowan*, *Michigan Daily*, and several others use the "open editorial page". There are no "official" editorials; rather, they are signed by the individual staff writer.

*The Daily Cardinal* is one of many papers which has unsigned editorials reflecting the paper's judgment. But we utilize minority editorials written by any staff member who wishes to dissent, as well as the "soapbox" column, in which any reader may express a non-libelous, non-obscene view on virtually any subject.

In addition, we refrain from endorsing candidates for campus office. Other papers do endorse, but then open their editorial columns to rebuttal from opposing viewpoints.

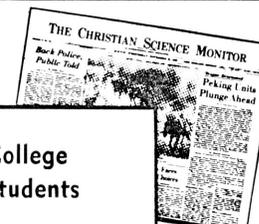
The one inexcusable way out of this dilemma is to abandon the editorial page. Since no other medium can generate any kind of consistency in campus discussion, a paper without an editorial page is abandoning a vital function which it alone can perform—the preservation of an arena for a genuine, campus-wide dialogue on events of local, and broader, problems.

What I have been arguing for, essentially, is a concept of what a student paper is supposed to do. In my view, it emphatically is not supposed to be a

mouthpiece for the college, nor a showpiece to demonstrate the cleanliness, reverence, obedience, and politeness of the campus populace. If any editor can get satisfaction out of producing such a journal, he is a better editor than I am—or at least, he has a stronger stomach.

I regard the student press as essentially the guardian of the students' interests. The student has a right to know what is happening on the campus, he has a right to protest against injustices on the campus, and he has a right to seek redress of those grievances. The student paper should strive to be the primary source for attaining these goals—if a "crusade" is necessary, let it be undertaken fairly, and with pride that the paper is at least doing its part, however small, for an improvement in campus conditions. The paper which does not seek to perform these functions, which refuses to damage a school's image, is a fraud—a fraud perpetrated on the readers of the paper, who expect to find out what is going on at the campus where they are spending the most important years of their lives.

At the February convention, I offered my own crude portrait of the relationship between a college and its paper. The college is a mule; behind that mule stands the student editor, armed with a pitchfork and a shovel. He can either take the pitchfork and prod the mule to get moving, or he can pick up the shovel and start shoveling out what the mule is depositing.



**College Students**  
**Faculty Members**  
**College Libraries**

Printed in  
**BOSTON**  
**LOS ANGELES**  
**LONDON**

**SUBSCRIBE NOW AT HALF PRICE**

Clip this advertisement and return it with your check or money order to:

**The Christian Science Monitor**  
One Norway St., Boston 15, Mass.

1 YEAR \$11     6 mos. \$5.50  
 COLLEGE STUDENT  
 FACULTY MEMBER

P-CN