

opinion/editorial

Journalism can sometimes by pain in the notebook

Don't let anyone kid you, being a journalist involves a lot more than just going to jail for the First Amendment, covering protesting Iranian students, getting free passes to a Bob Dylan concert or the Nebraska-Oklahoma game.

It's not all glamour. A reporter has to be in top condition to wait three hours for the winning candidate's speech on election night. He has to occupy his time somehow, so he graciously accepts the unlimited amount of free liquor at the victory party. He also is forced to mingle around the podium where every kind of obnoxious broadcaster is setting up his equipment. Because the reporter remem-

bered the gold rule: Those politicians like to talk to the camera and those tee vee bosy.

After the reporter cools his heels for three hours, the winner finally makes his appearance with his wife, four kids, his brother and sister-in-law, his mother and father.

Before the winner thanks his family for their hard work on the campaign trail, he throws up his arms and gives the cameras the victory sign.

At this point, the reporter thinks, "Not four more years of this junk."

The newly elected official proceeds to make a statement that is worthless. The crowd may sing

"Happy Days are here again." And the winner rambles on and says something like, "I want to thank my campaign workers, the people that voted for me and the election results prove the people bought my campaign." End of long awaited speech.

The deadline is approaching fast. The student or semi-reporter finds a familiar face—a real reporter. Quickly the semi-reporter asks the real reporter if he can give him a ride back to work. (This problem seems to plague semi-reporters).

The real reporter (who just got a haircut and isn't that much older, but is over thirty) says, "Look kid. You can't be messing around, your

deadline is approaching. Here's a dime. Phone it in. Make it sing and dance."

The real reporter prominades back to the party, because he works for an evening paper and his deadline isn't until 10 a.m.

The semi-reporter, disheartened, because a simple yes or no would have done, stands in the middle of the hotel lobby and screams his story over the phone.

Ten minute later. The real reporter shouts, "It's about time you got that pushed out."

The semi-reporter trots back to work, and offers to help write headlines to put the paper to bed.

Election night heat burns out journalists, parties go on

Election night for politicians is a mixture of the Mardi Gras, a Jewish wedding and an Irish wake, depending on the outcome of their particular contests.

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The liquor flows freely at the parties, Uncle Walter tells the celebrants what is happening all over the country while local polls gather results to announce to the crowd, results which determine the course of the evening.

But regardless of the outcome, the participants will continue their party, either drowning their sorrows or celebrating their long awaited victory.

Election night for the journalist, on the other hand, can be an evening of great fear and loathing, to use Hunter Thompson's words.

The constantly shrinking time before deadline does a fine job of providing the fear, the loathing is left for every individual to find.

Hurry up and wait

By nature, a hurry up and wait profession, journalism reaches the point of ridiculousness on election nights.

A campaign schedule tells you the great man will arrive at his victory party at 9 or 9:15, so you get into the old Chevy at 8:30, because you can't afford to miss anything important, and head for the party.

Arriving well ahead of time, you make the rounds of the affair, talking with the celebrants, catching a glance or two at Dan,

Harry, Roger and Walter. And you wait for the arrival of the winner.

Only about half an hour late, your man arrives, makes a few comments and then announces he will have a statement in about an hour. So, you are confronted with your first major decision, do you stay and wait or go to another party?

You make the break and head across town to another party for another race.

You press through the crowd to reach the candidate, projected to be the winner, grab him by the shoulder and ask him for a comment and receive the standard election night line, "I'll have a statement after my opponent concedes."

No comment

Given that option, you look for the opponents to see what they have to say. Your luck holds true to form and he won't comment until he sees more results.

By this time, your initial candidate is giving his statement, but you are rescued by a colleague who happens to be at the party.

You call in a story to the office and then you play the waiting game again, smoking cigarettes, cursing politicians and playing political analyst.

An hour later, all hell breaks loose, you get an interview with one winner, and then arrive at the party of another to hear his acceptance speech.

You make a final, futile attempt to contact a loser and then return to the typewriter and try to make sense out of what you have seen and heard with less than one

hour before your final deadline.

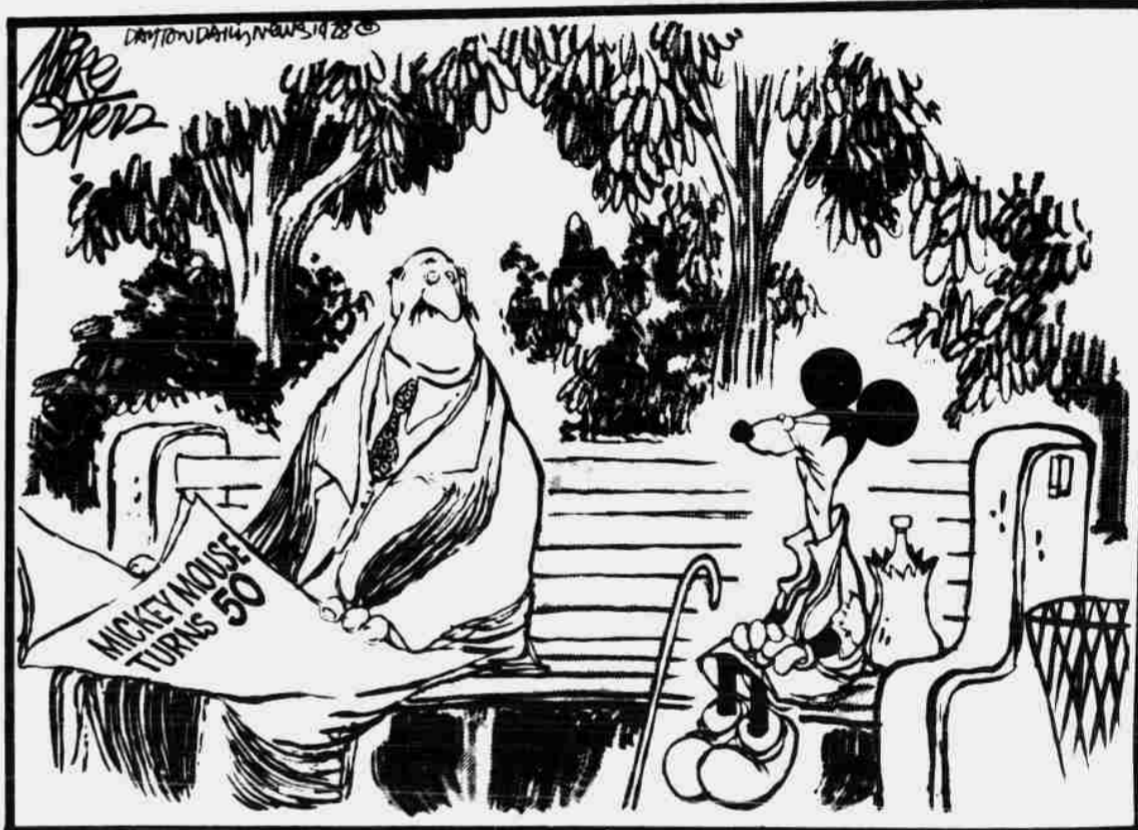
So, seven hours after you started, you have finished, you feel like someone has used Drano on your brain and you're not sure what happened anywhere.

But you don't complain, because you are, in the learned words of Joe Starita, "in seventh heaven" an event which only

happens every two years.

For a political reporter, covering an election is the high point of your job and election night is the grand finale of the campaign.

It may indeed be by a trial by fire, but it is a fire you enter over and over and enjoy the heat.



THEN, AFTER FANTASIA, THE BIG MONEY WENT TO LIVE ACTION...MY ROYALTY CHECKS STOPPED COMING IN...MINNIE LEFT ME...I HAD TO HAVE PLUTO PUT TO SLEEP...HUEY, DEWEY AND LOUIE BECAME MOONIES... BUT, I HEAR THE DUCK'S DOING WELL, HE'S A BIG SHOT AT THE GAO.

Unfulfilled health nuts turn to newest craze—drinking

A new health fad is sweeping the nation—drinking.

Writing in the current issue of *Human Nature Magazine*, Dr. William J. Darby, professor of biochemistry at Vanderbilt University and president of the Nutrition Foundation, cites a number of recent studies indicating drinkers are at least 30 percent less likely to have heart attacks than teetotalers.

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Given the preoccupation of Americans with their bodies, these statistics have, of course, created a new craze among health nuts. Their guru is unquestionably Dr. Milton Haberdash, Phys. Ed., author of that new bestseller: *The Three-Martini Lunch and Other Keys to Keeping Physically Fit*.

In his forward, Dr. Haberdash candidly admits that for years, he depended solely on a daily regimen of eight miles of jogging, 17 macadamia nuts and a casaba

melon.

Missing something

"But I had the feeling that I was missing something," he said. "And it wasn't until I took up drinking that I knew what it was. Since then, I've been a new man."

In his first chapter, "Getting Ready", Dr. Haberdash notes that drinking requires a minimum of equipment. "All you need to start," he says, "is a glass, some ice and a bottle of gin. Any kind of comfortable clothing will do, although you might wish to spruce up a bit if you plan to drop in on

your neighborhood health spa or, as they are more accurately called, 'body shop.'"

"Don't gulp that first martini down all at once or you may be heading for trouble," he warns. "Try alternating between sipping a little and resting a little until you determine just how fast and how far you can comfortably go."

He goes on to say that no one is too old to take up drinking, and it is an activity that the whole family can enjoy, except for tiny toddlers. But he does caution the beginner to pace himself.

Dr. Haberdash recommends that the novice ingrain his drinking habit by picking a certain time of day and sticking to it—"like before breakfast or when you're listening to the Six O'Clock News."

Don't go too far

"You'll be pleasantly surprised by how much better even half an hour's drinking makes you feel," he says. "And many drinkers reach a state of euphoria in which they can completely forget the worries of the daily world."

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