Life with Steve

BY LYNN POVICH

Stephen Shepard, winner of this year’s Silurians' award for lifetime achievement, for a half century has illuminated the journalist fraternity of New York and the world. For much of that time, he has been married to Lynn Povich, who was the first female Senior Editor of Newsweek, Editor-in-Chief of Working Woman magazine and Managing Editor/East Coast of MSNBC.com. Her book, *The Good Girls Revolt*, was published in 2012. The Silurian News asked Povich, who has been by his side for so many of his adventures and accomplishments, to reflect on her journey with Steve.

Steve was born to be a journalist. It just took him awhile to realize it.

In third grade, at PS 86 in the Bronx, he fell in love with penmanship, which he conflated with writing, and decided he should be a sports writer. But was he too shy to try out for the school newspaper at the Bronx High School of Science. At City College, he majored in engineering, but also took journalism courses with Professor Irving Rosenthal, who became a mentor. Steve soon became the editor of *The Vector*, which was voted the best college science magazine in the country.

Still, Steve wasn’t ready to commit to journalism. He got his masters’ degree at Columbia in engineering and even

“Mr. Markel” and Times Gone By

BY MARTHA WEINMAN LEAR

I have been trying for months to think how Lester Markel, the late, largely unlauded Sunday editor of The New York Times, would have reacted to the paper of July 28, 2017. If he was, as many who knew him believed, an ogre, he was also a prig. I imagine him turning to page A 20. He reads “fucking paranoid schizophrenic”. He reads “not trying to suck my own cock”. What does he do? I swear I think he would have dropped dead.

In fact he did just that, 40 years ago, on October 23. The great Tom Wicker gave a eulogy at his funeral. When I asked why he had performed that duty, he said, “I guess because nobody else wanted to. I felt sorry for the old bastard.”

Markel was The Sunday Times. It was his baby. He changed the very meaning of a Sunday paper, transforming the product of a single day over the weekend into a model for newspapers across the country, and ran it as his own fiefdom from 1923 until he was eased out in 1964. He was a bully, a brat, a brilliant editor whom we minions never saw as happy as when he was inflicting torture upon us.

Abe Rosenthal—God knows, no slouch for savagery, but a cupcake next to Markel—was Abe. Markel was Mr. Markel to everyone, even top editors who had worked for him for 30-plus years. The late Herbert Mitgang recalled an office party when some madcap said, “Hello, Lester,” and Markel recoiled as though slapped.”We were all stunned,” Herb said, “because we’d always thought his first name was Mister.”

I was at the Magazine (then called The Sunday Magazine) in the 1960’s, first as an assistant copy editor, then as a staff writer. I was young and impressionable, and Markel liked to impress young women. He held a daily Magazine meeting that was for senior editors only and I, a newcomer, was as junior as you could get. Yet he insisted I attend.

It was a production written, staged, directed by and above all starring Markel, whose point was to dismember the men in attendance (there were no senior women)
President’s Report

BY BERNARD KIRSCH

Dear Silurians,

The new Silurian season is off to a fast start, with both Floyd Abrams and Jim Rutenberg drawing extremely large crowds to our first two luncheons. Both spoke — how could they not — about our favorite topic: the media and our president.

And I am delighted to write that for the last few years, we have been averaging well over 100 Silurians and guests per luncheon. We expect the rest of the season to continue to be exciting. We are hoping to have Katrina vanden Heuvel, the editor and publisher of The Nation, and Dan Rather as future guest speakers. Stay tuned.

This month we are celebrating our lifetime achievement winner, Steve Shepard. Together with his wife, the award-winning journalist Lynn Povich, they were our guest speakers in 2012. Following a long career in magazine journalism, Steve served as the founding dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the City University of New York from 2005 to 2014. Prior to CUNY, he was editor-in-chief of Business Week for 20 years, a se-nior editor at Newsweek, and editor of Saturday Review. His memoir about journalism, Deadlines and Disruption, was published in 2012.

To know a bit more about Steve, read his wife’s riff on Life With Steve that begins on page one of this issue of The Silurian News, which was put out by its editor, David A. Andelman. For those who don’t know David, he is the editor-emeritus of World Policy Journal, and columnist for CNN Opinion and USA Today after a long career at The Times, CBS News, and ABC News. More important, he is the first vice-president of our society.

Most of our board members have had long and distinguished careers in journalism, or as writers — which, of course, is true of most of our members. Our most recent board member is Clyde Haberman, former foreign correspondent and columnist at The New York Times. He is not to mention proud father of Maggie, whom we read most days on that paper’s front page.

The Society of the Silurians is in good financial shape, and our membership is growing; we are now at 310 or so. And if you know of anyone who qualifies, please recruit her or him. Moreover, we have been doing good things with our money, as we continue to award two scholarships to J-school students at CUNY and NYU. This year’s recipients are Comice Johnson of CUNY, who’s chronicled her career in this edition of TSN, and Kat Rendon at NYU.

All the best, and see you soon, Bernard

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Life with Steve

Continued from Page 1

Steve and covers in his first six months as Editor-in-Chief of Business Week.
Floyd Abrams: Champion of the Press

On September 26, the Silurians welcomed back Floyd Abrams to kick off their Fall season, the man who president Bernhard Kirsch described as “the premier first amendment lawyer of our age. In this era when the president of the United States is not really on speaking terms with the Constitution, Floyd Abrams is needed more than ever.” Abrams, of the firm Cahill Gordon & Reindel, described his vital work for the past half century and his hopes for today and the future.

When I hear someone say there’s important news, my breath is taken away as I wonder what it is [President Donald Trump] did this morning. But nothing bad today. When I look around the newsrooms, a few hours I’ve represented at last one who got out of jail finally, but all in a good cause, I can’t help but think of the line that Reuven Frank who headed NBC News in the middle of a case I was doing for NBC told me. When the other side was arguing that what was in question was not investigative journalism, I sent him a note saying give me a definition of investigative journalism. And he wrote back “sunshine is a public document, a report, a flood is news….period.” So I think of that often when there are press related cases.

I thought I’d start today first with an historical observation. People don’t realize how much trouble the Bill of Rights, the first amendment at all, or even a bill of rights. When the framers met in Philadelphia in 1787, they wrote a constitution to create a government. But there was nothing of the sort of reservation that would allow a government to bar journalists from using confidential sources. My firm represented Jim Risen. Confidential sources were sought because of Floyd Abrams’ fine defense work, the government claimed was his source. He urged Comey to investigate leaks of non-classified information. He’s also said people who burn the American flag ought to lose their citizenship or spend a year in jail. But the Supreme Court has concluded that following the American flag is a form of free expression which is protected by the first amendment.

I want to talk about three areas where I think the dangers are real. One is the Espionage Act. The first amendment provides protection for free expression which is protected by the first amendment. The other area I want to mention is more about the Espionage Act, which has never been viewed as a crime. It’s likely way that could become a very public issue if they go after Wikileaks and Julian Assange. The Obama Department of Justice looked very closely about indicting Assange and ultimately decided there was no way to prosecute him without also imperting The New York Times or any journalist who obtains classified information and publishes it. There has never been a prosecution of a journalist under the Espionage Act. But it’s there, and it remains a risk I think is real.

A second relates to confidential sources. We were on the very brink a few years ago of having a new law adopted which would have been a federal shield law. There is no federal shield law. States, like New York, have very broad protection for journalists with respect to confidential sources. But the area where it comes up most often is national security situations. The law at this moment is not good in terms of whether the first amendment provides protection for journalists who assert their right not to reveal confidential sources. My firm represented Jim Risen. Confidential sources were sought from him in a criminal trial of someone who the government claimed was his source. He refused to answer. We argued in District Court that ruled for us, a Court of Appeals

Abrams for the Defense

BY ANDREW FISHER

For more than half a century, Floyd Abrams has preserved the news freedom of journalists and others trapped between the often-inequitable wheels of justice and the press by his indefatigable defense of the first amendment. Abrams is held in high regard by his fellow journalists and others who write material based on confidential sources under federal law.

In October and November 1980 and June 1981, NBC News broadcast investigative reports by Brian Ross and producer Ira Silverman, suggesting links between Wayne Newton and organized crime. Without FM, the network may have been willing to air the story.

Floyd Abrams, lawyer for the press

Wayne Newton and his manager say he’s innocent.

In the question-and-answer session that followed, I was very impressed by the way Newton carried material of this sort. Under existing federal law, they don’t run any risk of libel simply by carrying without comment and without editing the vilest sorts of slurs and libelous defamatory information. My own view is that their problem is

After graduating from Columbia University Law School at the top of her class, Paula Franzese had begun work with Cahill, Gordon, and Reindel. Floyd Abrams’ firm. Abrams had assigned her to establish Wayne Newton as a public figure, which would change the legal landscape on which Newton’s case had been built. “One day,” she recalled, “I was getting on a subway train in lower Manhattan, and through the closing doors of the subway car, I saw a magazine cover on a newsstand: ‘Wayne Newton: Entertainer of the Year.’” Case closed.

Andrew Fisher’s memory of the Newton case was refreshed for the purposes of this article by contemporaneous accounts in The New York Times and The Los Angeles Times.
The Origins of The Voice

BY EDWIN FANCHER

At Village parties in the 1950s, people had been talking for years about starting a new Greenwich Village newspaper to rival the old-fashioned weekly The Villager. They said there was a need for an independent voice, and theatrical people living or hanging out in the Village, who were not represented by the major daily papers, had been wounded in our first battle. At such gathering my good friend Dan Wolf turned to me and said everyone has talked about starting a new newspaper, but no one has done it. Let’s start one. Maybe my friend Norman Mailer will join us.

Indeed Mailer did. I had offered an investment of $5,000, part of a small inheritance from my grandfather. Norman matched it. So, Norman was in. The three of us had decided to make a publication with a $10,000 budget, or $90,000 in today’s dollars. None of us knew anything about either journalism or business. We must have all been, my Dad would have said, a bunch of fools. How do I explain such folly. My conclusion is that it had a lot to do with our experience in the military during World War II, our service in the Pacific with the United States Marine Corps in New Guinea to Korea. Norman’s battle experience was that it had a lot to do with our experience serving in that war. In the end, we were all lived under the fear of horrible death. But no one has done it. Let’s start one. Maybe my friend Norman Mailer will join us.

My only journalism experience was based on meeting E. F. Jessen when I was an 18-year-old freshman at the University of Alaska in Fairbanks. It was January 1942 and he had just arrived in Fairbanks to start a weekly newspaper called Jesse’s Weekly. [http://chronicle.dailyalaska.com/news/2000-01] to compete against the local Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. He asked me to write a weekly column of news about Alaska and the North. I did so, and he said I did a good job, and asked me to do a column for his paper, which I did during the spring of 1942. Then came the war, and now the Fairbanks Voice.

Dan Wolf defined our orientation to journalism most clearly in his Forward to The Village Voice Reader (1962) which he and I edited. “The Village Voice was originally conceived as a living breathing attempt to demolish the notion that one needs to be a professional to accomplish something in a field as purportedly technical as journalism.” He wrote. “It was a philosophical position. We wanted to jam the gears of creeping automatization. Our method was to operate an “open newspaper,” welcome to a wide variety of would-be writers and artists.”

We rented a small office on Green-


dwich Avenue, and started calling friends to tell them that we were starting a new Village paper in the fall and invited them to contribute. And when we did open our doors, they did come. They had a lot to say, and they found an open forum for whatever they wanted to write. Our first issue appeared October 26, 1955.

Soon we were joined by another writer who had written for The Nation. In many ways, Jerry might be considered a fourth founder because without Jerry there would not have been a Village Voice. He was the only one among us who really knew how to put the new paper on a foundation. He had been the editor of his college paper, the Dartmouth Daily. He became Associate Editor and edited the “back of the book,” writing about off-Broadway theatre, and founding the Obies in the spring of 1956. As our first employee, he was also directly related to the war. He had been my former Squad Leader in the 10th Mountain Division and had been wounded in our first battle. By the time Wolf and I decided to launch the paper I had just finished an internship in clinical psychology and had been offered a full time job as psychologist in a mental health clinic. Wolf suggested that I work half-time at the clinic year and half-time as publisher of the new paper for a year to get the new enterprise off the ground. I agreed, but actually ended up working at both jobs for 19 years, until both Wolf and I left the Voice in 1974.

Mailor left after about six months when he had a dispute with us over a typo in his column in the Voice. He also believed the paper was not sufficiently radical. He described this incident in his book Advertisements for Myself. Many years later Mailor said to me that Dan Wolf and I were right in the way we ran the paper, and that he had been wrong.

Wolf, himself was an unorthodox editor. He rarely used a red pencil to edit copy, but rather edited by talking to writers about their stories, often challenging their assumptions and points of view. He liked particularly to work with young writers and preferred English Department graduates to anyone trained or schooled in journalism. It is hard to believe that this Village Voice enterprise has survived for 62 years. Now it is giving up its print identity, which makes me sad, but hopeful that it will continue to be The Village Voice— in spirit—just in a new form, online.

I can’t do justice to all the hundreds of people who found an outlet for their creativity by contributing to the Voice over the years. I can only thank the many writers and artists who stuck with the Village Voice through hard times, and made it the great newspaper that it did become. I firmly believe that the Voice had an enduring influence on New York journalism as a truly original, unique and enduring voice in itself.

From the Dish Pit to CUNY
Graduate School of Journalism

Comicon Johnson

C omicon Johnson is the 2017-18 recipient of a Silurian scholar- ship to CUNY Journalism. The Silurian News asked her to describe her path to CUNY and her hopes for the future.

“Can you get to those pots please?” “Yeah,” I sighed, looking at the moun- tain of dishes that surrounded me. I was wearing a long black plastic apron that resembled a tarp. Foamy dishwasher dripped off its hem into my foul, sodden tennis shoes. I was 18 years old, working as a dishwasher and trying to set aside my minimum wage earnings. Once I had managed to save a thousand dollars, I left my hometown of Eugene, Oregon, and went on a backpacking trip through Europe with my two best friends. Following my first year, I spent several years alternately working restaurant jobs and going on trips throughout Southeast Asia and South America. Traveling was a truly inspiring educa- tion for me. However, eventually I grew ready for a different kind of education. I wanted to learn more about the histories and political landscapes of the places I had visited. Crafting long emails about my trips became part of the adventure and I wanted to improve my writing. So, in 2014, I enrolled at Portland State University. At 22, I had the maturity to make col- lege my focus. I threw myself into my studies with absolute dedication, always aiming for straight A’s. I also worked at restaurants to support myself throughout college. During my junior year, I had the good fortune to study abroad in Quito, Ecuador. To maintain my financial aid, I had to take five upper division classes, all taught in Spanish. It was a very demand- ing curriculum and it seemed there was no end to it. After those months, I finished the program well-grounded in Latin American history and culture, and with solid Spanish skills.

As time went by, I became interested in journalism. I have always enjoyed writ- ing, and I have always felt intense curiosity about the lives of people with backgrounds different from my own. I believe certain stories have the power to change the world. Of special interest to me are the experiences of marginalized groups within society. In CUNY, I interviewed and wrote about undocumented immigrants, transgender women, strippers, plus-size fashion models, and striking brewery workers. In 2014, I graduated summa cum laude. Excited to start my writing career I moved to New York City with the goal of finding internships and other opportu- nities. I struggled to navigate the world of freelancing, and eventually decided that returning to school would be the best move for me.

Last fall, I applied to CUNY Graduate School of Journalism because of its di- versity and unique students, the affordable tuition, and because it is among the top journalism programs in the nation. Now I am well into my first semester at CUNY, and I feel incredibly grateful and excited to be here. Every day is in- teresting and challenging. I am learning how to code and create websites; how to find sources and do beat reporting for a specific neighborhood; and I have also developed a new-found love of creating news stories for radio. During the next year and a half, I will be working very hard to become a skilled reporter.

I want to thank the Society of the Silurians for its generous contribution to my education. The scholarship I received is helping me achieve my dreams. When I graduate, I hope to find a position as a foreign correspondent covering Latin America for a major U.S. news outlet.
BY ANNE ROPIE

There was a fake news where the left is right and wrong is good and good is bad we are all falling down Alice’s rabbit hole. And who knows when this is going to stop? And how? How are we to understand ourselves, how are we to create a community of selves if we cannot know what actually is happening behind closed doors, in basements, in bedrooms, husbands, children? How can we protect the vulnerable, learn to trust or not trust our leaders if we cannot know what is happening behind closed doors, for whom, for what, for where, for when, for why, for how? How do we want to create the community of selves, how do we protect the vulnerable, learn to trust or not trust our leaders, and how do we create a community of selves if we cannot know what actually is happening behind closed doors, for whom, for what, for where, for when, for why, for how? How are we to understand ourselves, how are we to create a community of selves if we cannot know what actually is happening behind closed doors, for whom, for what, for where, for when, for why, for how?

BY OWEN MORITZ

The New York Daily News has been sold again...this time for $1 to a newspaper conglomerate called Tronc—and for what its oral competitors (The New York Post, some gracelessly observed) take for a stroll down memory lane for some gracelessly observed.

This is the real drama was going on at the Carlyle Hotel in Manhattan to track down someone named Joe Allbritton who was intent on buying our paper, the Daily News.

It was a strange assignment, as were the events that followed. Allbritton, a Texas financier and next-to-last publisher of the defunct Washington Star, had put a tentative deal to buy The News from the parent Tribune Company of Chicago. The News, at the time, the nation’s top-selling newspaper, with a daily circulation of 1.5 million, was nonetheless losing an estimated $12 million a year. Allbritton’s deal was contingent on reaching an agreement on layoffs and job cuts with the newspaper’s union.

He was, he was reminded everyone, “the buyer of last resort.” A previous suitor, who made his fortune in real estate, had bowed out of contention after being passed over for Allbritton. His name was Donald Trump.

Allbritton, who had an unsettling effect on morale. In the middle of the newsroom, a monk Kool-Aid stand was set up, channeling cult leader Jim Jones and his unhappy, water laced with cyanide. What some on the staff consumed that day was a lot of water.

And the curious code about how Chicago has finally taken over New York—all those years later—

The upshot was that the would-be buyer of last resort, “the buyer of last resort.” A previous suitor, who made his fortune in real estate, had bowed out of contention after being passed over for Allbritton. His name was Donald Trump.

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By Herbert Hadad

Ruth Gruber, awarded the Silurian’s Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011 for her daring witness-to-history journalism over 70 years, is being honored at the Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU (Florida International University) in Miami Beach through an exhibit. She died at age 103 in November 2016.

“Ms. Gruber called herself a witness, and in an age of barbarities and war, left countless Jews displaced and stateless, she often crossed the line from journalist to human rights advocate, reporting as a photojournalist in faraway places that others avoided. She spoke Yiddish, their stirring words, their stirring stories. The fact that she spoke Yiddish allowed her to capture these very first stories of the Holocaust survivors. And she continued to document the history of Jewish people seeking freedom well into her 70s, when violating the law was also recording, in words, their stirring stories. The newspaperwoman Joseph Medill did was the holding company for the two newspapers run by their sons—Joseph Medill Patterson, the former Socialist firebrand who later worked for The World and The Sun, and another who ran the tabloid New York Herald Tribune in 1919, and Robert McCormick, the Chicago Tribune’s self-described “Old Right” editor and publisher for 40 years. The paper was the first to acquire The News around the same time, and Post got the contract to survive and told McDonald his basic position was whether to sell the Post to get it, too. As a result, he continued to publish the newspaper and to sell its parent company.”

Gruber Lives in Miami

Continued from Page 5

front, the craft unions and Newspaper Guild were assessing their future in the print business. So was Kheel. He knew, as did other labor leaders, that newspaper companies were in precarious situations. It had bought the storied Chicago Cubs plus Wrigley Field the year before and was struggling. The Cubs’ owner, the former Socialist firebrand Joseph Medill, was the newspaperman Joseph Medill, was the newspaper company in a precarious situation. The New York Times Company was under the control of an employer stock ownership plan. Most employees were assessing thei...
A pioneering newswoman who practically invented street reporting on television and whose career as a reporter stretched for more than six decades, Gabe Pressman died on June 23. He was 93, a longtime Silurian, and winner of the 1988 Peter Kihss Award. An affable man whose collegiality toward his fellows extended even to reporters from rival news organizations, he was ferocious when it came to holding politicians’ feet to the fire and relentless where the First Amendment was concerned. Along the way, he established a reputation for honesty and integrity, and a passion for getting the story and getting it right that remains unmatched. Hypocrisy and bully-boys and crooks and phonies got his juices flowing and he was always ready to nail them for it.

Bill O’Dwyer was the mayor when Pressman started covering City Hall for the World Telegram & Sun in 1949 and he hasn’t stopped shooting questions at all the mayors since then. Some wouldn’t dare start their press conferences unless he was there. He moved into radio in 1954 at WRCA (now WNBC) as the station’s first “roving reporter,” and then to television in 1956. With the exception of eight years at WNEW-TV in the 1970s, he was with NBC ever since. He never retired, but held the title of senior correspondent for WNBC-TV and kept reporting until he died.

Reviewing the scope of his coverage is like reading a history of our times: the sinking of the Andrea Doria, all the New York City blackouts, the tumultuous Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968, civil strife and transit strikes, riots in Newark and New York, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, endless campaigns for mayor and governor and president. In addition, there was all that reporting from Israel and the specials about the homeless and the mentally ill that he did. And a series traced illicit drug traffic from Turkey to France to the U.S., he worked for several organizations, he was ferocious when reviewing the scope of his coverage is like reading a history of our times: the sinking of the Andrea Doria, all the New York City blackouts, the tumultuous Democratic National Convention in Chicago in 1968, civil strife and transit strikes, riots in Newark and New York, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, endless campaigns for mayor and governor and president. In addition, there was all that reporting from Israel and the specials about the homeless and the mentally ill that he did. And a series traced illicit drug traffic from Turkey to France to the U.S., he worked for several organizations, he was ferocious when he returned to the assignment desk himself and, on this one memorable day—four stories from the Bronx. At each spot, Gabe shot interviews, scribbled notes, fashioned stories to the Bronx. At each spot, Gabe shot interviews, scribbled notes, fashioned stories to

But I recall particularly his modus operandi. For Gabe would not content himself with a single story on each evening’s newscast. His goal was to dominate the broadcast. So, Gabe picked himself into a network crew car, complete with cameraman, soundman, driver, himself and, on this one memorable day, yours truly. Off we went, tethered to the assignment desk at 30 Rock by a two-way radio nestled next to the police scanner. We hit at least four locales that day—four stories from the Bronx. At each stop, Gabe shot interviews, scribbled notes, fashioned stories to the Bronx. At each spot, Gabe shot interviews, scribbled notes, fashioned stories to

—Mort Sheinman —David A. Andelman

PETE BOWLES

Gabe Pressman

HERBERT DORFMAN

CHARLES DELAFUENTE

Gabe: A recollection

In December 1965, a frightfully cold winter as I recall, I was assigned to NBC News for my one-week off-campus internship from the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism. One day I spent in the company of David Brinkley, co-anchor of “The Huntley-Brinkley Report,” who I remember being immensely tall. But my most memorable day was in the company of Gabe Pressman, then at his height as the best-known and most accomplished local television street reporter of his era, and indeed, as it would turn out, of many eras. Gabe, as everyone from the most obscure doorman or cop on the beat to the mayor, governor and beyond knew him — intimately, they believed — since he came into their lives more every night before dinner, was the voice of the voiceless, the heart of so many in this often cold and heartless city. But I recall particularly his modus operandi. For Gabe would not content himself with a single story on each evening’s newscast. His goal was to dominate the broadcast. So, Gabe picked himself into a network crew car, complete with cameraman, soundman, driver, and presented to himself and, on this one memorable day—four stories from the Bronx. At each spot, Gabe shot interviews, scribbled notes, fashioned stories to

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“Mr. Markel” and Times Gone By

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and leave their jaunty pieces on the floor. For this he needed an audience, and for readers, he needed a numerically twopenny Freudian to speculate upon, it had to be a female audience. Which was me.

I'm one of the last men, but his favorite target was the picture editor, the late Rick Fredericks, who stuttered. At the first meeting I attended, Rick presented his choice of photos for the stories we were working on.

“You call this a picture?” Markel held it ostentatiously away from his face, as though the stake of玻璃的 stupid picture I ever saw.” He grinned around the table, warming up. “What’s this? What is this? For God’s sake,” checking the date on another photo, “this is last year’s picture!”

Rick said, “B-b-but…”

"Don’t but me. Here’s the date. Can’t you read? And what does it have to do with the story?” Silence. “I want you to explain to me what this picture has to do with what?”

“I-4-…”

“What do you call yourself? You call yourself a picture editor?”

Rick sat twitching. None of else moved. Markel was red and near-apoplectic, working his way up to nirvana. “Answer me. You call yourself a picture editor?”

And took his glasses, ripped them up, and flung the pieces into Rick’s face. Meeting adjourned.

Soon his secretary came to my desk. “He wants to see you,” she said.

My neighbors came to attention. In that bulb, everyone could see and hear everything, and I felt eyes following me toward Markel’s office.

He sat at the far end of a ballroom, his desk deftly angled for sunlight to approach it. I blinked my way toward him. He peered at me through his steel-rimmed specs. Finally he spoke: “Well? How was I?”

“I beg your pardon.”

“In the meeting. How was I? What did you think?”

I do not know if I understood back then what he was asking me. I paid him back, I’m sure. Many young women in journalism, as elsewhere, were in certain ways dumb about gender things until the women’s movement, exploding just a few years later, sharpened us up. But certainly I understood that I had an assignment, and that this was some sort of game. I did a fast review of my position. He might fire me, but I was single, not responsible for anyone else, could be said to be a threat. Besides, I wanted to be brash. His behavior had outraged me.

"Mr. Markel,” I said, “you were awful. Awful. You have that instantly that, despite myself, I’d hit paydirt.

He pounded his desk and harrumphed. "Why? Why was I awful? What do you think of me now?”

So I gave him the scolding he wanted: how he’d savaged poor Fredericks and how terrible it was to treat people brutally and so on, and he kept nodding and saying “Hm? Hm?”., and never stopped beaming. Our contacts expanded. Sometimes he would take me to lunch at Sardi’s, and elicit my lecture du jour. He didn’t try to hide these meetings—half The Times had lunch at Sardi’s, effectively the corporate dining room—and in fact there was nothing to hide. For all the psychological toses, there was never any sexual move. Sexual would have been normal. This was creepy. But what it did for me was to make the ogre vulnerable, even pitiable, and I was never able to feel for him the unmitigated hatred that many of my colleagues felt.

In those days, The Magazine had great cachet. It carried the bylines of important people who could not necessarily write. It was read (scanned, at least) by everyone in New York and Washington who wanted to be able to work the room, and it was a bore. (“I made Barbara Ward rewrite her piece three times,” Markel boasted to a editor of the daily paper, who said, “Yes, and you ran all three.”) It was not much fun but it was good for you, and this was because Lester Markel had one function in the magazine to educate the reader as to the meaning of events. The daily should merely report the news, he said, and this is a good way to get Markel. But certainly I understood that he wanted Markel flown south for a brief vacation.

At the moment of the airline’s scheduled departure, he would whip out a paper plane, set it afire and voodoo-like send it soaring over the bullpen, to wild acknowledgement, “Mr. Markel,” I said, “you were awful. Awful.” And saw instantly that, despite my outrage, he was absolutely correct. All that editing was especially hard on Gilbert Millstein, a staff writer who specialized in complex sentences. He would appear at my desk and say, “What do you think of this?” and, read me an essay, an architectural marvel of a sentence, two pages long and not a clause of which was familiar. Years later, Gil said, “You’d break your ass on a piece. Markel would say, ‘This is no good damn.” You’d do it over and over. Still no good, and up to the end, he made me feel that I was a miserable bastard was usually right. But what he put you through….You’d want to kill yourself. You’d want to kill him.”

Some of my chief chores were assigning features, interviewing and, if possible, forcing the music out of the prose. But certainly I understood that I was to make the ogre vulnerable, even pitiable, and I was never able to feel for him the unmitigated hatred that many of my colleagues felt.

New Members

William Berriman retired from The Times in 2006 after a 46-year career as a foreign correspondent in Africa. He earned a master’s degree in African Studies from Cambridge University and later joined The Times as a copy boy in 1973, becoming a reporter in 1975, when he was named a senior reporter at Time Inc. ’s Magazine. He remained at Magazine until 2001, then became a freelance journalist until joining the CUNY Magazine website in 2011.

Arielle Perry-Farah is the founder and publisher of Pop Fashion magazine, and was senior editor from 2010 to this year, writing extensively about politics and policy in the New York Times. She is currently a freelance editor.

Joanna Hernandez is a freelance reporter who for more than 20 years has focused on risk topics and emerging technologies and their impact on corporations, financial institutions, professional investors and individuals.

Katherine Heires is a freelance reporter who for more than 20 years has focused on risk topics and emerging technologies and their impact on corporations, financial institutions, professional investors and individuals.

Society of the Silurian Officers 2017-2018