

## Dear 1963 Classmates

and, ditto the 1963 members of Epsilon Lambda Sigma (ELS), and any other relevant stake-holders...

Just so you don't think I've tottered off my private cliff of rationality, let me acknowledge from the outset that this effort is wildly over-length for the 1963 Ham Col facebook redux 50 years later. Yet it also occurred to me that a lot of water goes over the dam, under the bridge and other time flies when you're having fun bromides in five decades, even two-score-and-ten years. (And if you were having fun, why would anyone want to time flies? Like watching acrylic dry, but not as quiescent.)

It also occurred to me that not only have many years of activity passed, but also on the biological clock of critters such as we, we're likely past the midpoint of our shuffling off this mortal coil. At the same time, our technologies have advanced to where, at least in printing, of which I know summat, we now have the bottomless page, digital sounds, digital sights, digital everything, not annihilated to a green thought in a green shade, but rather to binary digits in a bottomless bit-bucket. So, why not marry the muchness of our past 50 years with the muchness of binary space on hand, and expand our ruminations onto the digital page? Time's winged chariot may well be hurrying near, but why not avail ourselves of this favorable juxtaposition and carp against the day we're no longer here?" Or izzat seize the day.

I don't sense the fluttering wings of Time's chariot, nor the rustling garb of a pale rider astride a pale horse with a starched saddle-blanket. Actually, about all I hear in the high registers is the hot Ohio sound of millions of crickets courting and catching up on old friends in a hundred acres of August wheat surrounding an unpainted farmhouse porch. I assume that entomologists will certify that crickets actually do gossip about their friends and acquaintances, here, there and far afield.

Now that, in this year 2013, the Internet has been around for a score of years (in popular use, at least). And that word-processor's become ubiquitous, and found almost everywhere in the land of the bottomless page, even before the Apple ][ in 1978 (Apple II; Steve J.

was so iconoclastic and clever), the IBM PC/1 (1981), the Xerox Star before that, the itty-bitty Macintosh (1984 — remember the eponymous 1984 ad?), shouldn't we, as long-time denizens of this technological age, free ourselves from crushed trees smeared with ink or hot-melt carbon particles of "toner," move to have this 50<sup>th</sup> yearbook thing transported to the web? 2B sure, there are some attendant costs, but do not paper, ink, collating, saddle-stitching all bear costs, probably well above computer storage and organization?

I asked Don Challenger, in the Communications and Development office, if this might be done, and he offers that C&D have inquired of the alum what parts of their communications with us could be supplanted by binary digits, and that the answer returned was that digital might be OK to augment and expand, but not to replace "things as they are now." "We're faced with a conundrum," Don says. "<Sigh>," says I.

## Backing into History

Under the rubric (a red headline) of "backing into history," think of the richness of communication modalities available in this almost all-digital world. Words, pictures, recorded voices, music, video, never mind slide-shows, presentation pages, animation, charts. I'll admit I'm having to wrestle with the more obscure functions of Apple's answer (Pages) to the **word.exe** that I used for nearly 30 years (before that was **XyWrite.exe I**, then **II**, then **III**, the-at-first-\$50 version of the \$2.6+ million Atex system. Though I had to pay \$3,018 at Sears Business Center for the IBM to run that \$50 program on. (Actually, \$49 — I got a discount, and the 2<sup>nd</sup> copy sold. Can you say "Bleeding edge"?)

Fortunately, I could get RAM for free and floppy disk drives for nearly cost. Atex was a computer software and hardware manufacturing company, after all. With my copy #2 of XyWrite, btw, I wrote the first user manual for the program. Though one critic said, 'Well, I guess I can at least say that you don't talk down to us.' So, with this manual business, I guess you can say, or I can say, won some, lost some. (The second dime around, my XyWrite pals hired a "perfessinal" (I thought that was so sic) manual-writing house".)

They finally let me know that “everyone hated your manual,” and that PC users did not want to have to look for answers in any more than **one** manual, whereas I’d told them up front (like, in the preface) that it was a requirement that they have read and understood the IBM PC operating manual and the disk operating system (DOS 1.0) manual before they took on XyWrite. Was that really too much to ask? I found manuals fascinating. Ahh, customers. (This is a floppy disk. Slide the disk into the disk drive with the notch towards the top, etc.)

The short answer to the assignment given us on paper is: I liked Hamilton, got a lot out of it, didn’t really want to leave, postponed my leave-taking, which perhaps saved my life in Vietnam, allowed me to skate on and sharpen, for well nigh 45 years, the bleeding edge of the computer revolution in newspaper and magazine (and encyclopedia and law-office) publishing, I published my own *Wilt Letter: How to Succeed In An All-Digital World*, in paper and ink, published a derivative column on Knight-Ridder’s PressLink internet service (called *Wilt’s Whole-Paragraph Apothegms* — acknowledging that I could hardly write a short sentence if my wife (and children) depended on it) and that I derived great benefit and delight from my association with the school. I learned that some of my subscribers to this “free” column were printing it out and sliding it under their executives’ and editors’ doors, frustrated that their companies weren’t getting with it.

Hamilton days included being part of the four crazies that affixed the first ban-the-bomb banner to the chapel weathervane, a white sign on a black ground (which was fashioned from a South Tower Suite’s roller-blind and painted with some Titanium White from Penney’s attic studio, a choir prank or two, and even a Good bye, and good luck to ourselves and our posterity. Find out what else I crammed into these few pages by visiting my (what else) Facebook page, Bill Wilt, under another red headline (if Facebook’s cranky interface allows): *Thoughts on our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion—1963 to 2013*. And perhaps we, the Class of 1963, can, in our own inimitable way, move Ham Col a little further along the high-tech and Citizen Watchdog path in the future.

Imagine if Hamilton students/alum launched a “Little Brother Is Watching” Center, getting funds to install WebCams focussed on every seat in Congress, every Lobbyist Lurking Place in said Capitol Building, in every room of every office suite in the Official Office Buildings (Rayburn, etc.), in every room of every “district office,” in every room of the White House (except for family quarters, unless, of course, citizens’ family quarters are part of the Total Information Awareness environment, and then it’s just a matter of “What’s sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander,” and turnabout is fair play. We are, after all, “the People” in whom resides all rights and powers, except for the little the Framers supposedly thought they expressly, explicitly and “enumeratedly,” delegated to a bicameral legislature, an executive that hopefully would not immediately transmogrify itself into a monarchy, oligarchy, plutocracy or dictatorship, and a judiciary that would not supplant the Constitution with its own predilections.

Surely we can find enough lawyers, judges, scribes, scribblers in the alumni body to work on this, certainly in a “virtual organization” setup. I don’t know of any alum who went into law enforcement (know any PhD policemen, sheriffs, marshals in the alum corpus?). I know of one CIA agent, at least. I think he’s retired, but, supposedly, they never retire—they just fade away into an alternative reality of their own. I did recently find out that one of our number in the Non-fiction book club called “New investigations into 9/11/200” particularly as to the manner in which the three towers—that’s the unmentioned “half-tower” #7 WTC (a mere 47 stories), as well as the oft-mentioned WTC #2 and WTC #1, is the offspring of a once #2 deputy in that self-same CIA. She promises she’s not a mole.

Unfortunately, as a nation (who the hell came up with “homeland,” by the way? Haven’t we always been “the world’s melting pot,” our country, America — we now have the de facto case of an executive branch that is not only arrogating unto itself the powers of the legislative branch, but also, step by step, coöpting the powers of the judiciary. (I’m reflecting here on such acts and amendments to them as FISA, the Yousapat Riot Act (U.S.A.P.A.T. R.I.O.T. Act), the White House Kill List (assassination

by remote control, W/O/B due process), the Military Tribunals Act, the section of the Fiscal 2012 National Defense Authorization Act (a further evisceration, *sub-rosa*, of the Writ of Habeas corpus, the Posse Comitatus Act, the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Amendments to the Constitution. (The Second Amendment is perhaps the next target, and I don't see--unless it's a "failure of imagination" on my part, how repealing the Third Amendment (the quartering of soldiers in our homes) and the Seventh (suits at equity/common law greater than \$20 must be allowed jury trials) would be used to harm civilians.

### But What Could Hamsters Do?

Imagine having tag-teams of five or six of the currently unemployed moving with our elected 537, 24/365.25, *en bloc*, wherever they go, forcing lobbyists to reach through or over the heads of the team of *We the People* with any and all of their proposals. These citizen teams would encircle the 537 at all times, to make certain that they're living up to their oaths of office, and the six general adjurations, goals, missions set out in the Preamble. I once did some back-of-the-envelope calculations to see whether there were enough unemployed in the US to staff such teams, in three shifts of eight hours each, every day, all year. Guess what: there are, esp. when you look at the [Bureau of Labor Statistics' "U-6" category](#). (It currently stands at 14.4% for December, 2012.)

But as I hadn't gotten revved up to make an offering to the 25<sup>th</sup> and, what was the last one I missed, the 40<sup>th</sup>? yearbooks, I thought I'd make some gesture of amends for the 50<sup>th</sup> should anyone be interested. John Reilly has a web log on his [Realtown website](#) that I hadn't heard of--perhaps because I'd been mis-sorting my "alumni association" mail for over a year and hadn't read any of it.

We could perhaps retreat to Facebook--not ours, but Hahvid's, though some might worry about "privacy." We can set one small part of our minds at rest about that: We have **no** privacy, at least vis-a-vis our gummint and any individuals or corporations who are friends with, contractors for, have formed alliances with, cooperate with any part of it:

The National Surveillance Agency (NSA — its new name reflecting its function, from the old, ambiguous "National 'Security' Agency") has, since early 2002, been copying every single binary digit (abbrev. "bit") of traffic that goes over copper wires, glass fibers, wireless, coax, put in place and maintained by every single telecommunications company in the US. The technology used is no longer coils of copper wire and electro-magnetic field generation, but computers, of course, and more especially, computers designed expressly designed for tapping co-ax and glass fiber "wires" and capturing our activities employing it.

Think of typing you name into the Google search-box, or -field, hitting "return" and getting inundated with all the info about everything you've done, do, say, email, text, on the street, calendars, pix, tunes, Skype and FaceTime video conferences, at the doctors' offices, banks, stores, by automobile, etc. However, the NSA facilities are not made available to you and me--unless as, in days of old, we're a member of some gummint agency, friend of a friend of some gummint agency, or perhaps an "Asset" of some gummint agency, and can borrow or prevail upon their "official capacity," to access such "secret stuff."

For one, I'd like to listen to all the tapped conversations, email, cell-phone, cabin recordings from Air Force Two, with his wife and children, to and from Halliburton, and so on, of Darth Cheney and his "energy panel," or "big oil pals" starting immediately after January 20<sup>th</sup> of 2001. (Remember, they had to hit the ground running because of the long wait for the the results of fmr. SECSTA James Baker's boys' efforts in Florida to derail the ballot counting there and the adoption of new Presidential Appointment Procedures by the SUPREMEs.

Ditto everyone in the White House, executive agencies, Congress and the courts. After all, these folks are employed by us. They've just conveniently forgotten that—and we've all forgotten that, as well. Time to start remembering "who's the boss of whom" in this social contract.

As to Hamilton and our 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion, I would love it if the Class of 1963, trail-blazing in so many ways, could once again rise to the occasion to start something new and powerful.

I have no money to speak of, nor to donate of, but “if you’ve got the money, honey, I’ve got the time,” as my favorite jazz singer, Willie Nelson, performs it.

When I see a facility/entity like “The Arthur Levitt Public Affairs Center on the Hamilton website, for example, my mind ramps up to 7200 rpm, like my stash of terabyte disk drives. Public Affairs, you say? I would not think it amiss if students, in becoming experts in the outs and ins of gummint (I hate to dignify it with the full word “Government”), became experts in, say, filing Writs of Mandamus against public servants who’re not serving the public. Or sponsoring resolutions to be passed by governments at village, city, county, state, regional and national levels. I’d want a program that combined knowledge and **action**, given that, IMHO, the nation is sound asleep at the various switches that affect our lives and those of our Posterity deeply.

We certainly could argue about the tactics that might be employed, but “petitioning the gummint for redress of grievances” has been seemingly played out. Truncheons, Mace, Pepper Spray are used without let or hindrance, much less accountability. We all saw that in the Occupy Wall Street rallies and concomitant assault and battery committed by our “official keepers of the peace.”

We’ve witnessed the flouting, not only of our constitution, but the flouting of laws against murder, destroying forensic evidence, perjury by our highest officials before our representative bodies, striking at the very heart, soul, core--you pick the word--of any attempt we might make to “establish Justice,” which is Item #2 in the Preamble’s list of instructions to our government.

So, we have a Lloyd Blankfein, a Wall Street Ponzi Bankster, imho, “doing God’s work” as he put it, but without the qualifying name of said god, which is surely Mammon. How many residences does the man have? How many does the man “need”? Particularly now that we have fewer homeless people than there are vacant houses, due to foreclosures, foreclosures due at least in significant part to the wholly aleatory activities of the banksters on Wall Street and elsewhere. I didn’t avail myself of Sid Wertimer’s courses, so I’ve had to play

catch-up on “economics.” (Fortunately that was my daughter’s major, so she’s been able to supplant my educational vacuum with her own texts and, from time to time, a short lecture or two.

Probably not as many as the Rockefeller Tribe up there in Sleepy Hollow, Tarrytown, Pocantico Hills, Kykuit, Bah Hahbah, Maine, Venezuela, Australia.... Should students not be interested in learning how to check land and corporate records to find out and publish such erstwhile public information?

Let’s help Hamilton students begin to move mountains, not just research, write and talk about it. Methinks the time for significant, active engagement in our nation’s governance by students and alumni alike.

Of course I may be wildly off the mark. But I do know first-hand that our default relationship to our civil servants, to our gummint, should be one of uniform distrust. The assumption now should be, by default, that the gummint is lying, and that it must be forced to prove, beyond a shadow of a doubt, any and all of its assertions are in fact true. As the late I.F. Stone commented many times, don’t listen to what they say; watch what they do.

Perhaps there could be formed a little study group set up to catalog all of the False Flag incidents that can be found, going back as far as possible. Ted Rall, in his *The Anti-American Manifesto*, covers the ground from 1798 to 2007, and on pp. 72 through 81, he lists 122, “as adapted from a list created by GlobalPolicy.org.” (*op cit.*).

We also have the the example of the college students and an ex-soldier managed to pull together in a full-theater-length documentary *Loose Change, a 9/11 documentary*. They were/are from what I call One Onta (really *own ee on tuh*). But we also have Lye-muh (Lima), and a couple more of those odd NYS pronunciations. One of my favorites is the place where my dad was born, Octa, Ohio. But pronounced by the non-easternized natives as “Ock-tee”. Bushes are not “buh shez” but “boo-shiz.”

But to pick up *Loose Change* again: Police claim to have arrested the ex-soldier on possession of or intent to peddle heroin to an undercover cop. This could, of course, be merely an-

other example of what happens when you try peaceably to assemble and petition [*sic*] the gummint for redress of grievances, as the Vietnam Veterans Against the War discovered. (“Petitioning” is what the practice is labeled when you’re doing your petitioning on foot.)

Discrediting your adversaries has always been a viable tactic in the shadow PR/propaganda war carried out on the public stage before an incredibly passive, poorly educated on the topic of their own gummint, non-analytical, gullible, etc., populace.

### **A Word About Our Fourth Estate: Sucks.**

Not that you should take my word-choice for it, but after working in various incarnations of it since 1963, reporting, I’ve learned a few things:

1) The “daily snapshot” or “weekly snapshot” is a terrible form imposed on storytelling by the limitations of the manufacturing processes. These destructive limitations are perfectly captured by the legendary Procrustean Bed, wherein the guest was made to fit the bed, not the bed to the guest. If a story, or a guest, was too long to fit the bed, Procrustes would lop off the protruding parts; if too short, Procrustes would stretch the guests (or “lead out the story,” a plumbic (Pb) exercise, rather than a demonstration of Procrustean leadership). In English, stories too long for the space would be edited, or trimmed, to fit, ultimately, lines of type just tossed into the remelt pot, and compositors would “nick” the tail of a comma with their compositors’ tool--a kind of flat shoehorn--turning it into a period, and snipping off the rest of the line with type shears. E.g. from above: “...stories too long for the space would be edited. <snip>” If too loose, the compositors would open a gap between lines of type and insert a thin shim of type-metal, molded for the purpose, between each line. Ideally, you would add the lead shims to the first lines of the story, the “lead”--now called the “lede,” because with today’s education, homographs (spelt the same, pronounced differently--lead, lead), homophones (pronounced the same but spelt differently (boarders-borders, red-

read) and homonyms (spelt and pronounced the same, with different meanings (rights-rights, civil rights, right turns) are just [too difficult for people to distinguish](#).

2) Life and stories about life are a continuum, in motion (until they reach entropy, or death). The bottomless page and 24/365 delivery of the web shoulda/coulda freed publishers to treat stories as continua, revising them, linking them to source information, to off-shoots, sidebars. Stories should be “followed” and “updated,” “augmented,” expanded, enriched with the other forms of digital info. Any reporter with a “beat” should be adding information to the continuum of activities on her beat every day, without need for waiting for a “good” story, and without completely dropping the story, either. Vide the JFK, RFK, MLK, Malcolm X, Medgar Evers, Pat Tillman, JFK Jr. assassinations, Oklahoma City bombing, WTC bombing #1 and 9/11/2001 WTC bombings #1, #2 and #7 (three [3] buildings), the 9/11 “reprise” in Madrid, called “11 M,” on 3/11/2004, the 9/11 “reprise” in London, UK on 7/7/2005. [Not a complete list] That these continua have been allowed to freeze up, the flow of information about our world, continent, country and counties dammed up, is bad news. Literally.

I’ve had some success as a journalist, co-founding an Albany Press Club for folks covering the NYState capital, got action lines working well at the Knickerbocker News, in Albany, and explained to the editor there, Bob Fichtenberg, what 5 USCode §552 et sequitur was all about (the Freedom of Information Act). He went from not knowing about FOIA at all to heading up the ANPA Managing editors’ committee on Freedom of Information. And using it in his skirmishes with Mayor Erastus Corning, who’d been the longest-serving Democratic mayor of any city in the US--besting even Richard Daley of Chicago (by a handful of months).

I got five action lines started at the NBC owned & operated TV stations, WNBC TV, KNBC, Washington DC, Chicago and Cleveland, did a series of editorials on restaurant sanitation in NYC which resulted in the health dept. finally making the inspection reports public, and even the NYTimes started running the “Dirty Restaurants” list. I got people’s organ donor status put on NYS driver’s licenses, almost got a state-wide computer-

based consumer complaint system implemented (did succeed with the TV action lines at NBC, and the NYU-Law School/WNET-13). And I discovered that London had “Box Intersections,” cross-hatched with wide white lines, which cost drivers a ticket if they had “blocked the box” when the traffic lights changed--so recommended that NYC adopt the practice to help with gridlock at rush hours. The city’s director of transportation liked the idea--and two days later, he started cross-hatching critical intersections. They’re now all over NYC, still being used, lo these 40 years later. He was nice enough to start with 50<sup>th</sup> St. and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, so my camera crew and I didn’t have to go far to film the very first one being implemented, though we did have to be there at 3:30 ayem to catch the action.

It was definitely a hoot researching, reporting, producing and delivering TV editorials. Definitely a “bully pulpit”. TV stations did them to meet the FCC requirements of serving the “problems, needs and interests” of their broadcast area--the Sunday morning ghetto didn’t provide complete compliance, so the extra several minutes a week topped up the tank. And the “fairness doctrine” was still in effect, so when we pissed someone off, or touched on a topic that affected one of Howard Rubenstein’s clients (he being the “ace” publicist in the city), we’d get an Editorial reply or two.

When I switched from being an adjunct to “station management” (who comprised the editorial board) and went into the unionized news operation, it was the first time I’d ever been required to join a union. I found the particular local (NABET--National Assn of Broadcast Engineers & Technicians) particularly benighted. This was a time (1971-1974) when smaller, lighter video cameras were being developed and deployed. (I’d been offered by the editorial board “free” use of Cleveland’s mobil unit, so I took it out to Bedford-Stuyvesant to get some man-in-the-street suggestions on gun control, drug control, etc. and ditto at Hofstra U. The “mobil unit” consisted of a tractor-trailer truck with hydraulic lift, generator, Ampex 2-inch tape decks, a mixing console, etc., and a second truck to haul the cables. The cameras were studio cameras, weighing a few hundred pounds. Mobil, yes; portable, no. The crew nearly mutinied when I took them into Bed-Stuy. Much

fear and trembling back in the day.

At any rate, when the so-called “mini-cams” appeared, NBC bought a batch, and cut film crews from five people to three because of the lightweight gear (relatively light-weight, I should say). The union wanted to strike. I suggested rather forcefully that “we” could be clever instead of brute force troglodytes (they also wanted to join the Teamsters Union, which covered the shipping of tapes and film to and from TV stations via air-freight--the Internet and satellite feed were still in their infancy, and leasing land-lines was expensive. ABC TV had the neatest name for their electronic system when they got it running: ABCDEF-for Am. Broadcasting Co. Direct Electronic Feed.).

What I meant by being clever was this: The union could have embraced the smaller crew size and launched a nice Rubenstein-like campaign, saying that now the camera crews could be smaller, we could actually DOUBLE the number of crews, keeping the same number of members employed, and doubling the remote coverage and stories we could do in the news operation, which would have the station do an even better job meeting the FCC’s coverage requirements, etc. Maybe setting up a remote bureau in each of the city’s boroughs (counties), and delivering a much better product.

Then, of course, if the station continued on with its plan to cut staff in half in the face of this wonderful opportunity to better serve the viewer ADI (area of dominant influence, based on signal strength), the union would have a wonderful opportunity to question whether NBC was really concerned about improving its coverage, or just being cheap. A small number of higher-ups did not like the idea at all, both from a cost standpoint (they *were* cheap) and from a workload standpoint: the news operation would have a half-dozen more film stories to edit, in the same amount of time.

I ran into the same kind of resistance when I proposed, editorially, and then as a news dept person, that the station take on the court system to make courtrooms open for TV cameras. One of the senior producers took umbrage, saying, “Do you realize how much film we’d have to process and wade through to get a

decent story?!! We'd have to keep the cameras rolling during the whole trial, lest we miss something, and then have to boil it down to 2:15. (this was the received wisdom about the attention span of the viewer).

At J-school I'd actually had an opportunity to demonstrate that the 2:15 limit could be stretched if the piece were made interesting enough. The late Fred Friendly (producer/president of news at CBS and Edward R. Morrow's "engine room," as Fred called it) was head of the CJS broadcast "concentration," and we students had to produce a 2:30 story every week, to be broadcast internally and critiqued by Fred and a couple of other ex CBS folks.

We had to pair up with a team-mate to do all of the reporting and then the filming and editing. I'd wanted to demonstrate another of my theories, that a reporter could find a story in a strange city, with no contacts, by taping into the paper trail. That is, you didn't need a "deep throat", particularly with government stories, because there were plenty of paper trails to follow (now they're mostly digital).

So I'd trekked down to the old Tammany Hall Courthouse in City Park, went in to Part 6 of the criminal court, which is where administrative type cases were tried, and among them, health department enforcement matters. I flipped through the hand-kept docket book, and found case after case where the fines ranged from \$15 to \$45. But I found one where the fine was \$4,000 and another where the fine was \$2,500. The first was the commissary of Horn & Hardarts (they were still in business then), the famous "Automats". The commissary was where all the foods were prepared for all of the Automats. And it had problems with rodent infestation, flies, mosquitoes, overall cleanliness, sanitary practices, etc.

The smaller fine was levied against Stanley's Cafeteria Corp, at 2726 Broadway, if I recall the number correctly--about six blocks south of the Columbia Campus at 116<sup>th</sup> and Broadway. How convenient! It had a nifty wrinkle, this case: the proprietor refused to show up in court and refused to pay the fine. So the court tried to sue the corporate charter, anticipating *Citizens United vs. FEC* by some 40 years. However, the problem was the same then as now: namely, that no corporate char-

ter, existing as a mere fancy piece of paper, had opposable thumbs with which to hold pen to paper and write a check. As I've said about Citizens United, and said about Stanley's Cafeteria corp. charter, a piece of paper cannot hold pen to paper, or pen to checkbook, no matter what a Part 6 judge, or the Gang of Five on the Supreme Court, might pretend.

But the Part 6 judge had been trying to coerce the document to pay the fine for about two years running.

We were able to film ourselves ordering "proscribed sandwiches" (the cooling tables didn't keep the food cold enough, among other things the health department cited Stanley's for). I researched the statutes & regs (the one thing you absolutely learn in law school is that "the law" is nothing more (nor less) than a bunch of language--to deal with which Ham Col students were well trained. It's also one of the most thoroughly annotated bodies of lingo you'll ever come across, with the exception, perhaps, of the "real" sciences and "maths."

Then we arranged to interview the city health department's head of inspections (couldn't get Dr. Mary something, the com-mish. of the dept, as we were, after all, "just students."

Our subject excused himself until we should have our tripod and lights set up, and as we're "trained observers," (or snoops), and some of us can read things upside down and backwards (you learned that to survive in "hot metal days" when there's no time to "pull a proof" on a little proof press (the galley of type is clamped in its tray, the type inked by hand-roller, and a long, narrow sheet of paper laid on the type, which is then run over by the rollers of the press. Such proofs are called, as you no doubt already know, galley proofs. But there was no time to do that on deadline, so you learned to stand on the other side of the made-up chase, full of lines o' type cast by the Linotype machines in the composing room, and read the type that way--upside down, because the compositors didn't like folks breathing down their necks, and backwards, because that's the way hot metal lines are typecast).

On the chief of inspections' desk was a little report, about 25 pages, the cover of which

read: “Stanley’s Cafeteria Corp, 2726 Broadway, NY, NY.”

We were both able to read a good bit of the report, the burden of which we already knew. It was a great interview--these mere students knew as much as the Health Department. And we’d shared duties being on-camera and behind the camera, and had some nice footage.

So we edited the pieces of film, videotape, wrote and recorded and mixed all that stuff. We didn’t have video editing equipment, just 16mm film editing gear. So we had to “edit on the recorder,” by cueing up one recorder to Play, and the other to record. We had to back up the source roll, hit playback, leaving enough tape so the player would be “up to speed,” and then turn on the recorder exactly at the spot that would let it get up to speed, then we’d hit the record buttons. We got better as we practiced.

Friday’s Critique Session is looming. We’ve edited the piece down to 15:00. This is a little bit over the 2:30 limit. Fred’s teaching assistant almost launched himself into an airborne trajectory, *i.e.*, he nearly ‘went ballistic,’ as the cliché goes. A simple formula for calculating the trajectory of a ballistic missile or projectile is:

$$\theta = \arctan \left( \frac{v^2 \pm \sqrt{v^4 - g(gx^2 + 2yv^2)}}{gx} \right)$$

At any rate, we resisted Fred’s TA as well as we could, and finally wore him out at 13:25, or thirteen minutes, 25 seconds.

Each team did its thing, followed by Fred’s critique. The first thing Friendly did after our piece faded to black was ask around the room, “How long do you think it was?” The answers came back, “It was really long, like five minutes or so.” The longest estimate was six minutes. Then Fred asked me: “Wilt, how long was it?” “13:25,” I replied.

Fred then said, “This is the exception that proves the rule: if you have a really interesting piece, people don’t even notice how long it is, because they’re engaged in the story.” I can tell you that it was difficult to keep from grinning, but we both managed.

[pickup here]

So I did a bit for TV news after J-school, did a little bit of radio while at Columbia J. school (I once got Jimmy Breslin in for an hour-long chat on the Columbia university radio station, if you remember that name [check call letters and aet), I, prevailed on the NYC city council and health department to make restaurant sanitary inspection reports public (New Jersey followed suit, state-wide), but the cruise ship industry, under mixed jurisdiction, was unwilling to respond to my ever-so-reasonable arguments. Outbreaks of cruise ship salmonellosis and shigella, etc. has been the result, imho. New York’s congenitally short, cleverly rich and infinitely meddling “enhanced” my dirty restaurant lists by requiring not just the notice that the latest Health Dept. sanitary inspection report was available, but put a letter grade on a nice page-sized card and had restaurants post that in the window. Actually, New Jersey had hit on that idea back in 1972, trying to improve on the NYC effort.

Unintended consequences department: Now that sanitary inspection reports were made public, in the NY Times and other surviving papers, the inspectors became just that much more powerful. And some exercised that newfound power, umm, badly. And because not a few restaurant managers/owners recognized me, I was made completely aware of the new problems (many times) and quietly urged the department’s AG to check further.

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Don’t remember why/how these blank columns got in here, but typists, abhorring a whiteness....

### **The Preamble Project thing.**

No one in this country seems to know a damned thing about the US Constitution. Certainly not the President and the Gang of 537. And the so-called “pledge” is a bullshit effort dreamed up by Francis Bellamy, Rev., in 1892 to tie in his *Youth’s Companion magazine* tchotskas as an award for selling subscriptions to their parents & relatives with the 400<sup>th</sup> celebration of Columbus Genocide Day (it wasn’t called that back then, though--who could care less about 15 million Arawaks?) and the little promotional flags *Youths Companion* gave out

for subscriptions received. Bellamy was promotions director, among other things.

My view is that the so-called pledge turns the relationship of We the People to the gummint we did ordain and establish, right on its arse (a legal term, oft used in animal husbandry and government). We don't need no stinkin' flags; we need employees, prexy on down, who will support and defend the Constitution. While the flag, and patriotism (and trying to brand those who disagree with them as "traitors") is the first refuge of the scoundrel, being concerned about the Constitution is definitely NOT a refuge for scoundrels--as a Denver FBI pamphlet tried to make out. (And I don't think the FBI agents who took it on themselves to make that little flyer were even fired, despite the violation of their oath of office. Sick.

Preamble Project's goal: School kids every morning, officials before every meeting, recite, in unison, the Preamble. Tell me someone is going to complain that it's "unconstitutional." I can fairly rejoin, "It IS the Constitution." About which the 99% obviously understand nothing. I have draft legislation on the site. Personalize it (I have to shorten it, too). Get it passed in all your Middlesex Villages & Towns.

Another local initiative: Have your municipal council pass a law that prohibits "Drills" and "War Games" on municipal soil, using municipal resources. These "drills" seem lately to provide the cover for setting up False Flag attacks. Remember, 16 war games going on 9/11; three train bombs and one double-decker bus bomb "exercise" or "drill" in London on 7/7/05 (slightly under 100 hominids killed: "Is this an exercise, or is this real-world?"--line from the 9/11 script.

Any ideas for the Psymons (pronounced Simons) and the Theater of Terror? Psymon is the statuette, shorted to Psy or Si. Will be black, with cloak and dagger. Think of the analogs to American Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences, or whatever it is. Best actor in a supporting role: Nominees are: Dubyuh, Obambi, Cheney, Rice, Wolfowitz, Feith, Addington & so on. Best makeup: for Boston Bombing Play. Most complaisant Community: Watertown, Mass. Best Casting,

Best adaptation of a sixty-year-old CIA Script; Longest coverup of a Memphis Assassination; best special effects, and so on.

City Council resolutions, and up to the state: Officials who torture prisoners of war must be prosecuted. Make these a feature as well as a requirement for school "student councils," Teen Government, whatever those things are called. Contests for students who memorize the entire Constitution. Demerits for members of the Gang of 537 who cannot recite it.

### **Too much money in government, buying and selling solons?**

My solution:

1) Absolutely no limit on campaign donations, whether from home or abroad or a broad, in goods or services, jobs, etc. Use your imagination. Heck, even George Washington (?) bought barrels of whiskey for the boys (as only they could vote back then).

2) Absolute requirement for overnight posting to the Web of all contributions given and received.

3) Anyone who even makes a phone call or sends postcard, etc., to elected/appointed officials must have donor account online. No intent to "influence legislation" required. Just the act. Most people won't have accounts much larger than \$10, I figger.

4) All legislation, regulation, court decisions must have Statement of Financial Benefit as Article II, after Article 1, "Short Title", etc. Statement of Financial Benefit lists all donors, recipients and amounts (these will add up to amounts previously posted, mostly).

5) Statement critically includes the amount of benefit received/provided by these legislative, regulatory and judicial acts, with sums to be continuously updated, no less than daily (that is, with the overnight updates to these Financial Benefit accounts.

6) Come tax day, determination made by all accounts as to their profit or loss, their financial benefit. Profits allowed for up to the maximum of the average Prime Rate for the year (which right now is very low). Any Return on Political Investment (ROPI) **above** that prime rate is subject to the ROPI Windfall

Profits Tax. (RWPT) The RWPT is a simple, flat rate tax of 100%. That goes back to the Treasury.

7) Enforcement. Only for failing to file timely and accurately. Prison term of 3 x the involved officials' time in office. Fine of 100 x the Financial benefit involved. Finally,

8). Free Media Advertising. The airwaves belong to We the People. Under the Ninth Amendment, We the People have retained the right to use the best and niftiest means of communication that exists at the time. (Back in 1789 and 1791, you'll remember, the means of communication were: 1) Broadsheets from printing presses and 2) Chin music, and letters-in-the-mail, even though they were steamed open in the NYC Post Office. Wartime, dontcha know.) Now we have the internet, Telecom reconnaissance satellites, wireless (Don't forget "citizens' band" radio--did you know that a couple of crusty old dudes made a very cheap set of repeater stations out of CB radios that covered the valley from Denver to Old Denver? You need quite a few of them, as the signals aren't too strong. On the other hand, they're not so large that they can't be powered by the 2 x 2 solar panels in use for highway emergency calls.

In the meantime, commercial broadcasters are either forbidden from taking campaign ads, or forbidden to charge for them and required to air all of the commercials for all of the candidates for all of the offices/positions, in the same block. Order of broadcast drawn by lots. If there're too many ads, the stations just have to cut back on content. To Zero, if necessary. Or, they can tell the would-be advertisers, Hey, you've got free advertising on those We the People stations. 24/365 political advertising.

### **Now, the Piece of Resistance (to the 99.9%) People are corporations too.**

If any of you would like to help with numbers, that'd be great. I hate "numbers" qua numbers. As constructs, I love them, but have but limited facility/speed with them.

Two huge hurdles: 1) All employer/employee relationships shall disappear. Everyone's a corporate EO (exec officer), contracting with other corporations. This could be done in a really swell foop by state statute (I've outlined

a couple of scenarios in my time), or arduously, with each now-employee having to negotiate for a separate contract. Of course, those outfits formerly known as Trade Unions (now there's no trade, and certainly no unity) could help the new cadre of businesspeople draw up contracts, learn about the, learn about negotiating, that "manufacturing consent" of Edward Bernays and Hermann Göbbels, the parents of pernicious PR, now known as Psy-Ops and MK-ULTRA--and definitely being used today more than ever before. It's effective. It works. It's (ta daaaa) Terror Theater. (terror being a more elemental Crocodile Brain function than love, empathy, and all that shit. See also, Falsehood In War Time, Sir Art. Ponsonby, the British head of Psy Ops for WWI.

OK, that's hurdle one, relationship change between "employees at will" and "employers at won't".

Hurdle 2 solves the problem of gummint interference with interpersonal relationships, aka marriage. It's another one of those glorious alligator brain issues that the pols find so effective in taming the sheeple. And distracting them, of course, from noticing that they're getting poorer and poorer and poorer and the 99.9% export what used to be good enough factory/assembly/manufacturing jobs and the whole supply chain thereto, for one wage earner to support one non-nuclear nuclear family of, say five, without the other wage earner having to join the workforce for **money**, not "fulfillment".

Hurdle 2 is corporate status. The states modify the ordinary business/social laws to note that from parturition to final placement, burial, inurnment, People are Corporations, too.

I'm sure I've hit on this topic somewhere below, but the major impacts are:

1) Personal income becomes corporate income. Personal income tax has nothing to tax. That 60% or so of the 58% budget that is military drops back to, oh, zero. Gummint won't have any money to do all the black ops and psy ops. They'll have to make up for it running guns and drugs, full-time, 'stead of half-time. If they try to raise our taxes, our **corporate** taxes, the Big Oil, Big Pharma, Big Bang-sticks

outfits will be protesting right along with you and I and the rest of our executive **corporate** staffs.

2) What were heretofore “living expenses,” are now business expenses. Food (corp. Cafeteria); clothing (uniforms); shelter, or home (corporate headquarters; weekend cabin (corporate branch office); Paris *pied a terre*, ditto. Transportation (corporate motor pool); education/schooling (corporate training program(s)).

As an illustration of the thoroughness of the change, you know that household mortgage interest deduction you used to get as a homeowner? Well, you'll still get it. And so will business that work out of apartment-style corporate headquarters. In addition to interest being a deduction, now principal becomes a deduction. And depreciation. And maintenance. And property taxes. All deductible as ordinary business expenses. Same with vehicles--interest, principal, depreciation, maintenance, excise tax (as we have here in New England: Motto: Pay Fees And Die. But no personal income tax, no, no, no.)

For imagination-challenged government officials (the ones that “couldn't imagine an airplane being used as a weapon, even though we're today running six “war games” with planes being used as weapons. Oh, Condi and Shrub, do you really think we're all of us that stupid? Failure of Imagination? \$32 Trillion defense organization and no defense?) For those imagination-challenged officials, we point out that states regulate corporations. They set corporate fees, minimum taxes, etc. For the short-fall of “skimmed Federal aid” they just raise corporate tax rates. Everyone on the level playing field will howl, and be an effective counterweight, in 50 states, to the attempt to raise taxes too high. (Quiet. I know I'm being unrealistic.)

Schools will have to teach “home economics” with a vengeance, but now it will be called Small Corporations, the Constitution and Corporate Law. And it'll be for boys and girls, with evening classes for men and women.

For those of you baroque music lovers, this comes right from Godel, Escher and, of course, Bach--as we're trying to train people to think

out of the Bachs', all of 'em. I mean, how many times can you listen to the Goldberg Variations or the concertos for the apres ski, alpen snifter crowd (The Brandied Berg, not so far away from Picture City of Bilder-berg.)

By which I mean, puns aside, that there could be world harmony developed out of this approach--certainly could be once we are forced to return the bold bars our gummint stole from France, Germany, Italy, Russia?, Japan, Indonesia, China, Korea. Don't know about India. Take a gander at Benjamin Fulford's website. I almost think I can understand it, but am't all that sure.

I think that waas a preface, up there. This is more form-al.

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Facebook: Bill Wilt. Web logs: ThePreambleProject, Wilt's Whole-Paragraph Apothegms,<sup>1</sup> (inspired by Bill Henderson's Lead Pencil Society)

*L'Histoire*: Left HC in 1963 w/ one paper due. Saved my life. Really. Keep reading. Worked as Kelly Girl (Is the only work you have for males either shoveling coal and hauling sacks of flour and cement? "But I can type!") setting up & box-making machines for printers in Rochester. The only typing job was mailing labels for the George Eastman House. Got cub reporter job at Watertown (NY) Times in October. Wrote obituaries (can't libel the dead, though now you can "cause emotional distress among the survivors"). Most people didn't hang around after the deadline/end of shift at 1:00 p.m. (people started work at 5:00 & 6:00 a.m., some earlier). Some stayed and ate lunch at their desks; I economized w/ cheese crackers at mine. About half-past one of the teletype machines started dinging like crazy. It was the AP "A-Wire." Curious, I went into the wire room: *BULLETIN Dallas. Nov. 22 (AP) President Kennedy was shot today just [as] his motorcade left downtown Dallas....* I pushed down the red line-feed but-

ton 'til I had a foot of copy paper, then tore it off. Managing Editor Fred Kimball was eating at his desk, and I gave the copy to him. He started calling people back in to get another edition out, along with City Editor Frank P. Augustine (a curmudgeonly editor who was rigorous w/ cub reporters). After a couple of months, I was sent up to the St. Lawrence county bureau in Canton, NY, while the incumbent did his reserve duty. That winter, there were 108 standing inches of snow on the ground in Watertown. Canton didn't get the full brunt of Ontario lake-effect snow. 108 inches meant that the roadways were canyons, and pedestrians on the sidewalks had to take care that we didn't trip over or crack our shins on the highway signs, which stuck out of the snowbanks by only a foot or two

The phone, typewriter and teletype were in the converted attic over the incumbent Canton reporter's parents' garage. I was drafted from there. But not before I'd tried to enlist in the Navy (to become not "an aviator," but "a Navy-ator" trying to live my life as a pun, at least insofar as the military went), but was turned down for a minor phys. defect (broken coccyx). I thought I'd be clever and next try to enlist in the Army, to get my "pick" of jobs. The docs found the same thing, and wouldn't let me enlist, and they'd be estopped from drafting me.

Ha. I was drafted a month later, and thenceforward I always filled in the "Branch of Service" box on forms as "USD"—which always got me called out to explain that it stood for the US Draft. When the inevitable sergeant would insist that I was in the Army, I recited my enlist-

<sup>1</sup> XIVA is meant to acknowledge the difficulties which arise when the argot, slang, patois of various "disciplines" brought together by the digitization of everything. And it's meant to be an exemplar of unnecessarily complex acronyms. XIVA, expanded, stands for XIV, or Roman number 14, and the letter A for itself, as in Fourteen "A"s, which stand for "The Association of August Americans Agitating Against Asinine, Adscititious, Addeleated, Ambiguous Acronyms, (& Almost Always Avoiding Aliterations: Aliteration)". I usually add a 15th "A" to try to bring a little levity to this very serious topic (Serious because ambiguous acronyms are roadblocks to hominid communication. Membership is free.

ment story and pointed out that obviously the Draft was a different branch of service, with its own admission standards—also, our serial numbers started with US, not RA (regular Army). “Siddown, private!” was the usual reaction.

I was sworn in @ Buffalo, NY. The “enlisted men’s oath,” by the way, is the standard federal oath, to “support and defend the Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic,” but unlike ossifers, we had to promise to follow the orders of our superior officers and our commander in chief (Or Liar-In-Chief, as I took to calling the office during the Cheney/Bush administration. Sad to say, I see little reason to rename it now that Obama and his AG think it’s OK to assassinate US citizens abroad.<sup>2</sup> Officers had merely to promise to “support and defend” the Constitution. Nothing about “obey.” And the USO gave us a movie pass to while away the few hours before the train left for NY, and then on by bus to Ft. Dix. The matinee was *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*. Perfect start.

Was hospitalized for a month w/ pneumonia — Ft. Dix was, perhaps still is, the pneumonia capital of US military bases in its lung disease site in the New Jersey “pine barrens,” or swamp. (But for the last couple of weeks of recuperation, we became nurses’ aides in Walson Army Hospital. My favorite wing was the maternity ward, billed mostly with happy mothers and fathers, if they weren’t overseas.) I had just finished “train-fire” and found that though I’d never fired a rifle before, I was a fairly

decent marksman. (We didn’t wear protective ear gear then as they do now. Which almost inevitably leads to early-onset tinnitus, esp. if you go through the training twice. (“What say, sonny?”))

I had to start over with another company that was just beginning train-fire. But I couldn’t pry an M-14 out of my new company after three or four days of asking. So I stood up in the class on sighting in “our weapons” and asked the instructor if he had any special instructions to sight in your rifle when the rifle is absent. “You don’t have a rifle, private?” No, sergeant. “Get this soldier a rifle immediately, Staff Sergeant [whoever was leading us].” Surprisingly, I was only ordered to memorize my weapon’s serial number by nightfall—but was never tested. (Why “rifle”? “My rifle’s for killing/my gun is for fun,” similar to “What’s the spirit of the bayonet, men?” [In unison, company]: “KILL!”)

However, because I’d used up five or six weeks between hospital and being “recycled,” my orders to Redstone Arsenal for training in rocketry and deployment with missile units in Germany (oh, drat—and how I’d loved those dirndls in high school German class!) were cancelled, and I was shipped to Aberdeen Proving Grounds (Maryland) and it’s USAOC&S — United States Army Ordnance Center and School, for a shorter course in firecrackers (what I called conventional high-explosive ordnance, though we did deal with one battlefield “tactical nuke”. This was Advanced Individual Training or AIT. I was the designated class leader and had the job of

<sup>2</sup> That reminds me of another little project I’m calling (working title) either The Falsies, or The Flaggies. I’m concerned that the individuals responsible for what we now know to be the “false flag” operation of 9/11/2001 will not get the recognition they so richly deserve, before they shuffle off this mortal coil. If you haven’t looked into this matter, a good, professional place to start is the [Architects and Engineers for 9/11 truth web site](#), particularly concerning the obvious controlled demolition of WTC #7, with it’s insignificant fires, its lack of an airplane strike on it, the fact that news organizations, like BBC and CNN, reported its collapse 15 to 20 minutes before it was “pulled” by Larry Silverstein, the lessee of the three buildings that collapsed (and WTC #6 took a huge bomb blast, as well,, but I haven’t looked into that.) As I’ve never been an aficionado of the Golden Globe or Oscar awards ceremonies — I got rid of all my TV sets back when we converted to digital transmission, and use the Internet instead) I could use some help in establishing categories. Easy ones would be For best Special Effects in a false flag operation, for best supporting role in a 4th Grade Classroom in an FFO; Producer, best FFO in the history of mankind, Best and most sensitive portrayal of capability challenged military generals, and so on. You no doubt get the drift. Also, will need help in making nominations, obtaining clips to montage the “and the nominees are:” bits. Not sure we’d want any dance numbers, though Silverstein and the as-yet-uncovered stock market players could do a “dancing all the way to the bank” number.,

marching 100 or so students to class in the morning, to lunch, back to class, and then back to the barracks, and tried to keep the trips interesting, going close to trees (when the persimmons were ripe, they smelled a little like turpentine, but were “OK”— an acquired (mostly Southern?) taste) and mulberry trees, as well as various other obstacles, half-flank and full-flank maneuvers to cross highways quickly, and if “our hungry needed beans, on a stomach full of empty” (I’d ask), we’d go double-time.

I mention this military stuff because not very many people these days know anything about it. For me, it was an opportunity to meet really smart, funny, creative and generally outstanding people from walks of life I would never otherwise have met, and I got to interact with “the officer class,” too. Quite an education.

Out in the fields at Aberdeen there was a modest museum of tanks and artillery. One of the Germans’ infamous railroad guns was there — Anzio Annie, it was called. It became the model for the military’s first 290mm “Atomic Cannon,” as I recall. The recoil of the weapon would drive the cannon on its rail car about one mile back up the tracks. Just a few miles away from our classes, where we were learning the vagaries of stockpiling high-explosive ammunition, plastic explosives (C-4), detonating cord, fuses and fuzes, etc., was Edgewood Arsenal, home of our US CBR—chemical, biological and radiological weapons — the anthrax used on TV news operations and Sen.’s Daschle and Leahy’s senate offices, for example, was “weaponized” there. Thought we were done using “weapons of mass destruction”? Think again.

At Aberdeen, we learned how to dispose of old, rusted, leaking high-explosive artillery shells by wrapping a half dozen or so of them together with “ammo tape,” (duct

tape, but in green), slapping some C-4 around the noses of a couple of the shells in the center of the bunch (where the “surgical steel” shell is thinnest, to aid in the development of curly bits of scalpel sharp shrapnel, sticking in a blasting cap, running the wire behind a bunker, and then blowing them up in place, just as the Iraqi “opposition” did/is doing with all the shells that were looted or “liberated” from Saddam’s 1,000-or-so distributed ammo dumps in the Iraqi deserts (he had the notion of emulating Rommel, the Dessert Fox from WWII). Our senior military commanders had been ordered by the Liar-In-Chief to visit all of those ammo dumps, in their search for the non-existent WMDs. Finding none, they neither guarded (not enough troops) nor blew up the ammo dumps, which the Iraqis thoroughly looted thereafter, and used the looted ordnance to cause about 75% of our US casualties. But I get ahead of myself.

From Ft. Dix to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma (near Lawton, and the Washita Mountain (a hummock) wildlife reservation, home of a big bunch of bison. Ft Sill is the artillery training base, where the military goes through a whole lot of ordnance, day and night. We were so used to the explosions there that when we got to Vietnam, it wasn’t until three or four days went by and we noticed tracer rounds going over our heads that we decided to re-dig, deepen and zig-zag our mortar trenches. (“Disperse! Disperse. One mortar round will get us all!” we cried, only half in jest) At Ft. Sill, I was assigned to personnel, along with a handful of other draftees who could type, and became the officer records clerk. (We were in the HQ and HQ Detachment of an ammo battalion, which had regular ammo “humpers,” a rocket unit, and an EOD team. Most of the EOD folks had IQ scores above 160 — the highest was 171—and why

would men who tested so high go into such a dangerous line of work?)

I learned I could get speedy turnaround to any questions I might have about the records-keeping function if I addressed my questions **to** the chain of command, rather than **through** it. If I had questions about how to enter new courses in officers' records, for example, I'd send a copy of the request to Brigade, 4<sup>th</sup> Army and the Pentagon's chief officer records clerk. Simultaneously. On one inspection, the 4<sup>th</sup> Army inspector asked me how I'd learned to do one particular entry, when he'd just gotten the word. "The Pentagon chief officer records clerk told me how he wanted it." It turns out that, even in 1964, the army had telephones. And their own phone book, too.

When our unit crossed over to Qui Nhon on the USNS William S. Weigle in December of 1965, I was the troopship newspaper publisher (I called it the Weigle Wig-Wag, naturally) — and reporter, and typist, stencil-cutter, printer, collator, stapler and delivery boy. The chaplain nominally my boss showed me the printing press (a mimeograph machine w/ wax-paper stencils to "cut" using a typewriter with the ribbon disengaged), and never visited again. I wish I'd saved the last edition. I wrote a front-page editorial hoping we all returned safe & sound, reminding that "laughter lightens a heavy load," and that, if we still had questions about why were being sent to — or, hell, had arrived—in Vietnam, I urged all aboard (I had pretty good circulation as I had exclusive daily sports scores, transmitted by Morse code to our radio shack) to remember that we all have freedom of speech, and the right peaceably to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances. I did not suggest how these retained and enumerated rights might be exercised. Nor did I know then of the Ninth Amendment "The enumeration in the Con-

stitution of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people."

I was paged on the squawk box. PFC Wilt, report to the Captain's Quarters. When I got there, the Navy captain of the ship, the Army troop commander and the Marine troop commander, all three, were there, sitting in a crescent banquette, holding my little 8 1/2 x 14, two-sheet, 4-page paper in their hands. Long interview ensues, w/ PFC Yrs Trly standing at parade rest (feet slightly spread, arms behind back, my glued-on stripes partly peeling off, fatigue pants rolled up revealing my WWII boots modified with zippers for quick on-&-off to "fall out" of your barracks and "fall in" for Reveille (pron. REV-illy, not REV-elry — this is a sunrise thing) and taking attendance for the "morning report."

Then my CO, then my 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt, my Adjutant, Capt. Cledie Bob Russell, and finally, my very own Staff Sgt. Sleet. I did not get a court martial or an Article 78. But I later heard that several officers in my little "chain of command" got "letters" placed in their 201 files. DD-201, the personnel record for all troops. The DD-214 draftees await with foreshortened breath — abated, or "bated" breath — is the honorable discharge certificate. which I also received. And which gives one access to the VA medical system. And oh, BTW, the VA gets to negotiate pill prices with Big Pharma. Where have I heard that that's a good idea to promote the general Welfare? Anyone?

Best part: a squad mate, Wallace A.M. Kunukau, who'd gone over a month earlier as part of our 14-person advance party, greeted me with "*Ave...et Vale!* I'm out in two weeks." (I don't think we did high-fives in 1965). "But Wally, your ETS is April 13 (mine was April 14). How...?" "Early-out to go back to school," said he.

“But I put in for that at Ft. Sill, and they denied my request (Dean Tolles had sent the letter I needed and said I needed to finish my last semester to graduate. And that I'd paid my \$50 non-refundable registration deposit to the school as proof of my *bona fides*. But stateside, it appears, everybody was “essential to the unit's mission,” whatever that mission turned out to have been, as would perhaps be revealed in the fullness of time and the Tonkin Gulf non-incident. (Oh, drat; just another one of those seemingly ubiquitous, no-respecter-of-nationalities-or-borders-or-governments False Flag Operations we hominids haven't yet learned to detect quickly enough. (See Herr Göring on the topic: “*Naturally, the common people don't want war; neither in Russia nor in England nor in America, nor for that matter in Germany. That is understood. ... [T]he people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same way in any country*”)).

[http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Hermann\\_Göring](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Hermann_Göring), jail cell interview, 18 April 1946).

But I digress, and Tristram Shandy's grandfather clock is ticking.

Wally asked if I'd brought all my papers with me. I had, along with my half-height, robin's egg blue Olivetti Lettera 32, elite, purchased at the Ft. Sill PX for \$48. Wally said, “Just retype the chain of command on your first page and resubmit it.”

“But Wally, I was already turned down.”

“Stop worrying. They don't give a damn about anything over here. Just re-submit it.”

I did. I think it was Thursday, 13 Jan 66. I heard nothing about it, until Sunday morning, when one of the sergeants popped his head into our tent and said, “Pack up, Wilt. You're going home.”

This was my itinerary:

16Jan66, Depart H&HC, 184th Ordnance Bn, 10:30, via government vehicle (GV)

16Jan66, Arrive HQ, QNSA, (US Army Support Command, Qui Nhon, Provisional) Qui Nhon 11:15, (GV)

16Jan66: Depart HQ, QNSA, Qui Nhon 13:50, via Government Plane (GP)

16Jan66: Arrive Tan Son Nhut AB, Saigon, 14:30, GP

16Jan66: Depart Tan Son Nhut AB, 17:20, GV

16Jan66: Arrive 90th Replacement Battalion, Camp Alpha, Saigon, 18:30, GV

(I'd sold my \$25 Lawton, OK, pawnshop guitar to a tent-mate for what I'd paid for it, so there wasn't much to do but read and write some letters.)

18Jan66: Depart 90th Repl Bn, Camp Alpha, Saigon, 05:15, GV

18Jan66: Arrive Tan Son Nhut AB, Saigon, 05:45, GV

18Jan66: Depart Tan Son Nhut AB, Saigon, 08:45, GP

18Jan66: Arrive Clarke AFB, Philippines, 11:00, GP

18Jan66: Depart Clarke AFB, Philippines, 13:30, GP

18Jan66: Arrive Honolulu, Hawaii, 04:30, GP (picking up the day we'd lost crossing over the International Dateline)

18Jan66: Depart Honolulu, Hawaii, 05:30, GP

18Jan66: Arrive Travis AFB, California, 12:10, GP

18Jan66: Depart Travis AFB, California, 14:30, GV

18Jan66: Arrive Oakland Transfer Station, 15:30, GV (in mi-lslang, Repple depot, or ReppleDepple)

I flew back to Rochester on the 19<sup>th</sup>. My parents didn't bring along a brass band along. I'd been “boots on the ground” in Viet Nam for about 19 days.

Almost every night I'd been home before heading back to Clinton, one or the other of my parents would wake me up and tell me to get back into bed—I had very active nightmares and would throw myself out of the bed. Fortunately, it was a low, antique rope bed (whence the expression, “Sleep tight...”), so no bruises, etc.

It has since been my observation that with our current military, serving multiple tours of duty, the VA should make a binary shift, or 180° turnabout, in the way it screens for PTSD. If you look in DSM IV, you'll find that of all of the traumatic events after (post) which the symptoms "present," the first listed is "combat." So rather than screening **for** PTSD, the VA/military should screen for those with **no** symptoms, under the nearly 100% correct assumption that **all** returning veterans **have** PTSD and need care. How the dickens would our troops **not** have PTSD given the theaters they've been dropped into, with inadequate armor, insufficient numbers and zero language training. Hell, our military wasn't fighting the last war (Vietnam or the penultimate "police action" in Korea). Nope, instead it was fighting our antepenultimate adventure, WW II, all over again, I suppose because the brass "liked" that war.

I've heard it asked whether our military "learned any lessons from Vietnam." I and others have replied, "Yes. If you're going to keep on having hobby wars, you must have an all-volunteer military." (I recalled the Weigle Army colonel telling me, at the end of our rather uncomfortable tete-a-tete, "That's the trouble with you damned citizen soldiers; you still think you have rights when you're in the military!" Of course we do, and so should we all — among the militarized citizenry, the responsibility not to engage in, or follow orders to be engaged in, violations of the Geneva Convention(s). That you were ordered to do so, at threat of execution (pistol pointed at the head, etc.), can only be offered in mitigation of any sentence.

Of course, for the military to acknowledge that PTSD affects almost all of our troops we've exposed to looted ammunition in the form of IEDs, the illegal use of

torture (just putting a blind-fold "bag" over the heads of "suspects" is, officially, Torture, per the Geneva Conventions), and would probably triple or quadruple the cost of treating our combat veterans. We wouldn't want to pay the full cost of our gummint's little hobby-horse-, albeit lethal, wars, would we?

Back to the Hill. Got AB in June, started to work for the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle and the late Times-Union as solo "bureau chief," Wyoming County bureau (between Erie and Livingston counties), providing news and photographs for the two papers. I wrote my stories on a roll of shelf paper I cut to 8 1/2 inches wide, (so I wouldn't have to change sheets of paper), edited them, and then "keyboarded" them into the teletype, which would accept input no faster than something like 56 words per minute, governed by a motor and rotating disk. If you went faster than the limit — typing "the" for example—the disk would block the "h" and you'd lose a couple of characters and have to CX, correct them.

As I learned from an old-time AP guy whom I'd replaced, you'd start transmitting by tapping your foot, like a metronome, to help keep a constant speed. That way, you could type up to, but not over, the maximum speed. The Rochester editors liked this, and when I was dragged out of the field and put to work on the night copy desk — it was Gannett's wedding gift to my spouse and me — I found out why. The teletype machines were right behind the editors' desks, and those reporters who "composed on the teletype," with all the starts and stops, pauses, deletes, do-overs, would, um, *impinge* on one's concentration.

Almost forgot.... So how was it that Ham Col saved my life? About a month after I'd been back at Hamilton, I got a letter

from the PFC who'd taken over the morning reports (military attendance record, body count, etc.). Think Radar, from M.A.S.H. Ed (forgot his last name, but he had attended U of Miami, Ohio — and was another guy who could type — perhaps it was a bad thing for women to learn to type — the secretary trap — but it was definitely a good thing for draftees. And back then, not everyone had one or another device with a QWERTY keyboard) said that when I submitted my “early out” request, none other than our adjutant, Capt. Cledie Bob Russell, hand-carried the paperwork the 15 or so miles out to the coast where the higher headquarters was encamped. Ed said Capt. Russell had ordered the E-6 personnel sergeant to cut orders transferring me to Pleiku, which, at the time, was launching great quantities of ammunition into the local neighborhood and receiving similar quantities in return. It was not a high-survival post at the time. A VC sneak attack blew up a whole bunch of helicopters — Pleiku was the main northern helicopter base at the time.

At any rate, Ed related the tale of how the E-6 demonstrated how sometimes an EM (enlisted man) can outrank an ossifer, by taking my application to Saigon on Saturday, getting my discharge orders cut, and returning with them overnight. I was packing up and gone on Sunday. A young ossifer was in the group in our “shuttle service” deuce-and-a-half from Valley C (our temp. base) to Qui Nhon; he said, “I bet you think you're pretty smart, don't you?” I thought silence the better part of valor, but thought, No, just lucky.

So, reporter/photographer to copy editor and page layout, then GI fellowship to Albany Law school, learned about the 9<sup>th</sup> Amendment, and so much more, aced Administrative law with a full-course-credit paper recommending newspapers take on

the job of *ombudsmannen* for the US citizenry, because Congress had then, and more so now, no intention of making things work right for citizens. Why? Because it would make “constituent work” obsolete.

At the time I was doing research for my Admin. Law paper (1969), the congressional offices I visited called interventions on behalf of constituents “favours” for their “voters.” In one office (that of Dan Button, from Albany, former Times Union ME), I was shown a desktop file of 4 x 6 cards, labeled “Favors.”

Also did a summer's-worth of PR for Nelson Rockefeller's re-election campaign (he was hot for methadone clinics, you may recall, as well as for his *Abishag the Shunammite* (though that was some years later, I think — Megan Marshak, you may also recall. His wife, Happy, wasn't — and allegedly scattered his ashes over their Dobbs Ferry property and threw away the urn, so there'd be no discernible “resting place” for ol' Nelse.))

And then *Consumer Reports* magazine funded a seminar and a fellowship-cum-stipend in consumer reporting at Columbia Grad School of Journalism. My X1 saw the notice in the Style section of the Albany papers (where I'd also worked part time and summers 'til I got my JD), so I literally re-typed my application to CJS (they'd turned me down the first time around, as my marks were “a little too inconsistent for our taste,” the dean responded to my importunities). This time, they paid me to go to school. Then gave me a Pulitzer Traveling fellowship on the way out the door with my MS-Journ.

I'd already started working at WNBC-TV doing the reporting, writing, producing and presenting some of the station's editorials. It's an odd sensation to be

“recognized” by people on the street—not completely pleasant but not altogether unpleasant, particularly when people are willing to engage in conversation about what editorials they’d like to see. But I finally got to use the fellowship in two chunks, first w/ a trip to Scandinavia to visit with a couple of Sweden’s ombudsmen and women and attend an International Conference of Consumer Protection Agencies.

Turns out that Sweden started out with just one ombudsman, watching over legislative activities, but found one was needed also for the courts, for social services, education and consumer affairs. In the US we’d need all that, plus an Impeachment Ombudsman or two, to hold the Gang of 537 to their oaths of office. [See my comments on current projects, *infra*. You’ll find the info, I hope, not *infra dig*.]

When the NBC O&O division decided to expand their “local news” operations from half- to one-hour-long, I sent up/over/around my admin. law paper *Newspapers As Ombudsmen*, with with a proposal to start up “Action Line” consumer segments at all 5 TV stations with their expanded news slots. The O&O programming veep, Wes Harris, stopped by my windowless cubicle (next to studio 3A, where the *Today Show* folks performed) a couple of weeks later and gave me a press release. “You might be interested in this,” he said. The release announced that NBC’s five O&Os were launching consumer help Action4 news units. I took the opportunity to help set up the New York unit.

The late Betty Furness was our on-air “talent.” [Historical aside: 5 TV and 7 radio stations was the limit back in 1971; the “fairness doctrine” was also in play.]

We had more spacious offices than my editorial digs, but in it we had to fit a staff of four for editorial (my group), and

three for video. I had even had a window (could see the Rockettes sunbathing at Tar Beach (the roof of Radio City Music Hall, some seven stories below across 50<sup>th</sup> St.). I wanted to find a file system that would let us “file once, find anytime” as we began to get inundated with letters. And we did. One summer in Albany, I’d castigated the ME, by mail, for running such a lame complaint column (my neighbor’s dog barks all the time, and annoys me) when folks like Jim Blakely, at the Rochester D&C *HELP!* column, took on serious stuff, just shy of bringing lawsuits. He had gotten my GI bennies re-started after they were cut off in Sept. of my 2<sup>nd</sup> year. I figured that it was because a full-page advertisement in the Sunday NY Times §4, *News of the Week in Review* it was called then, had my name in c. 18-point type at the bottom of a list of about 80 other x-military folks

News director Earl Ubell, formerly science reporter at WCBS-TV, suggested microfilm, so I called the Kodak rep, who told me about their mug-shot database: 16 frames of “key” data, 2 frames of mug-shot. I didn’t like the serial nature of the search, like any film-based system. “Well, talk to Dr. Nygreen at your place; he knows about our systems.”

So I did. I told him what I wanted—file once, retrieve any old which-way. Could computers do something like that? “You’ve come to the right spot,” he said.

Meaning?

Look at the office door.

I got up and looked. It said M.I.S. I was no wiser; what’s that, I asked.

He swiveled his high-backed office chair (he was a vp after all) to reveal what I thought was just another large TV monitor—everyone had at least one TV monitor

in his (or her) office. It was a TV station operation, after all. But he tapped the screen with his Princeton ring: “Computers, man. Computers.”

Then he took me on my first-ever tour of a computer installation. Two Univac 11/08s that took up a whole floor of the 30Rock tower, except for one room that had a half dozen “minis,” RCA Spectra 75s. He kicked the sheet metal of what I learned was a disk drive—hard. I jumped.

Dr. Nygreen, or Ted, said, “People think these things are smart. They’re not. They’re stupid, but incredibly fast and reliable. So they make great tools.” Well, I’ve always been handy with tools, so that, um, *framing* raised my comfort level.

Over the course of the next few months, I made up a forms and a work-flow for my “investigators” and me, and Ted wrote an 18-field database program, in Assembler, COBOL and FORTRAN. He taught me enough so that I could change field names and lengths, recompile and relink the program, and he loaned me a portable terminal (CDI Tele-Term) with “earmuffs” in the rear to put the telephone hand-set in after you dialed up a computer tone. I could take it home with me and work with it at night and over the weekends, as I input “cases” to build up the database (and keep up with work).

That was my introduction to computers, with all the paraphernalia that’s now so passé — refrigerated computer room, Halon fire suppression system, key-code boxes on the doors, raised floors, ranks of half-inch tape drives — the video side used large, aluminum reels of 2-inch Ampex tape on huge “editing” stations, hard drives as big as washing machines, even “drum storage,” then the state-of-the-art — and shades of the first “drum storage, the recording cylinders on the earliest RCA pho-

nographs.

I also wrote the user manual for our staff. To have had, as a first computer experience, the opportunity to design both the human system and the computer system to support it concurrently, and to “optimize” each for the other, was seductive in the extreme. This was 1974, if you can conjure it up again. George Lyman Nesbitt, Thomas McNaughten Johnston, Austin Briggs, Jascha Kessler, Dwight Lindley, John Morey, Ed Barrett never taught us anything directly about computer system design.

But isn’t interesting that a rigorous yet eclectic grounding in science, literature, language, studio art, a little bit of tennis, a very little bit of Gene Long can prepare you to take on a brand new “discipline”?

BTW, that little bit of Gene Long thing: Bruce Koloseike, a year ahead of me, also from Irondequoit High School (Rochester burb), ran cross country; he told me to put away my bicycle in June and just run, jog, until September. I did that, and Bruce told me that at least I’d managed to keep up from the first workout (have you ever tried “fartlek”? As the final part of the workout, when everyone’s strung out, the man in the back has to sprint to the front of the line. Torture). In a month, I went from 165# to 139#, and to study, had to sit on my pillow to pad my bony butt).

After NBC (never was any good at “internal politics”), I worked with the consumer complaint unit run by NYU Law school’s consumer law professor, Bruce Ratner, and WNET-TV, Channel 13, NY’s PBS station. NBC (via the good offices of Ted) licensed a copy of the software to NYU, and I got to figure out how to install it on NYU’s computer system in Greenwich Village, with terminals at Columbus Circle. When I was at CJS, Bruce was counsel to Bess Meyer-

son, the highly visible NYC Commissioner for Consumer Affairs. I'd worked with him on a documentary of burglar alarm scams in Harlem.

Bruce later alerted me to the job of PR honcho at the NYState Consumer Protection Board, with Rosemary Pooler, formerly of Syracuse, as director. Pooler is now a federal appellate judge, first district, NY. Among other things, I tried to get Ted's consumer complaint filing system set up state-wide. Unsuccessfully. In addition to all of the regular PR things — newsletter, writing speeches, setting up interviews, ghost-writing a weekly newspaper column for NYState news "outlets," we managed to put out a consumer complaint solving handbook of a couple hundred pages for every local consumer agency in the state.

After 14 months, though, Rosemary explained to me that "You don't have to let the press know *everything*, OK?!" Or words to that effect. I put in a call to Newsday's Stan Asimov, then the VP of technology. We'd met at a CJS alumni get-together, and he'd invited me to interview whenever I was moved to do so (the newspaper business was a very different beast back then 1976). Tony Insolia had taken over from Asimov as one of the triumvir of managing editors, set up after Bill Moyers had been forced out. Insolia, Don Forst and Dave Laventhol were the new team. Tony was the only one to stick with Newsday, as Forst (d'you remember Gael Greene?) and Laventhol rose/moved about in the publishing ranks. He was the only editor I've met in the profession who I think could put out a metro newspaper all by himself. The interview was over a nice, multi-course Italian feast at one of Tony's favorite places. I had linguine and pesto — made with basil the restaurant grew on its roof. Over *sambuca*, Tony said I'd done all right (in holding all the alcohol he'd plied me

with — one of his tests, he said). Then he explained his theory of hiring. Stan, said he, had had five positions to fill for the past year and had been agonizing over the choices before he was promoted out of the newsroom. "What I figure," said Tony (paraphrasing, from a few years out) "is that if I've got five positions to fill, I should fill them ASAP. Out of the five, there may be one dud, a couple of decent journeymen editors and reporters, and, if I'm lucky, maybe one or two really sterling choices. And I won't know which is which until they've worked here for a while. By delaying, not only can I not winnow out the duds, but I'm not getting the help of some very useful, and perhaps even some **very** useful hires. You're hired."

[Hmm. We're still blacked out at the Waltham mill, some five hours after a pole transformer blew up. Battery's at 48%, ornamental beeswax candle burning nicely.]

I stayed at Newsday for almost four years. After a few days there, I got tired of moving the computer terminal out of the typewriter-return on my copy desk position (the "rim," when the copy desk was a big horseshoe, and the editor sat in "the slot") so I asked "the computer guy," Howard Halperin, how I could get on the terminals and print out my captions and headlines. Newsday had put a little start-up called Atex on the map with an order for a 200-terminal editorial system. The company had sold a 12-terminal system to USN&WR, and a 2-terminal system to Jeppesen (then a Times-Mirror company) to set the labels for their pilots' maps. In 1976, two reporters were sharing an Atex terminal, writing their stories, then printing them out and handing them off to the copy desk. Still paper. Cut and paste. Painful. The first Atex monitors were carefully sculpted whiskey cases. But soon replaced

with molded plastic covers, after Newsday made its first partial payment.

Halperin told me I'd need a logon and password, and that took overnight. (Last name and "last four" of the non-national ID SSAN.) Howard looked over my shoulder as I logged on, ever ready to correct. So, I asked, where's the user manual?

There isn't one, Howard said.

Then I'll write one, I said.

A bit later that evening, Tony walked by and challenged, "What do you know about computers?" Well...(I told him about the NBC and WNET databases. Tony didn't much believe in reading résumés, either). "I'll bring the manual I wrote for WNBC tomorrow."

He read it, said it seemed I wasn't bullshitting him after all, so, yes, go ahead and write one for the copy editors. We need one. Use Howard and Harry Beery for help. Over the course of three or four months, working overtime after the copy deadline, asking our IT folks questions about the system, sometimes calling programmers at Atex (Bedford, Mass.) for answers our local staff couldn't give me (Atex was ramping up from essentially zero, a true "start-up" but with a batch of old-time Digital Equipment Corp techies and another typesetting outfit. Atex actually designed and built chips and boards when needed, its own 134-key, eight-level keyboard and monitor, as well as writing the software.

Speaking of keyboards: Until the arrival of the Macintosh "aluminum" keyboard, the Atex keyboard, despite its weight and complexity, was the most comfortable keyboard I'd ever used — and I've been using typewriters since the 4<sup>th</sup> grade (I thought I could do a neater job writing if I used the typewriter), though they did kick me up to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade figuring I was doing such "in-

novative" things 'cuz I wuz bored. Dad had a Remington Portable chemistry typewriter from Drew U (which started life in 1928 as Brothers College, and he was in the first class of 9 men, class of 1932. Dad actually taught organic chemistry to Joan Baez' dad. No kidding.

On the Remington, the numbers all had subscripts in the shift position for chemical formulæ, and there were reaction symbols for "yields" → and "equilibrium," ⇌ I think

they're called. I thought it was cool. The Atex keyboards used a "Hall effect" plunger system to register a keystroke — a coil of wire and magnet to generate an electrical pulse, rather than a contact switch. Expensive, but smooth. Now they're thin-film switches, and the springiness is provided by a miniature plunger-looking bit of neoprene (or similar), about 1/4<sup>th</sup> of an inch in diameter that you see above resting on a "pica pole": (72.24 points per inch, rounded to 72, six picas to an inch, 12 points to a pica.

**Meanwhile, back at Newsday:** I got increasingly involved with the computer system, became one of the sysadmins and coordinators, trainers, liaison between edit and composing room, was assigned to set up the transitional bits and pieces when the system was going to be upgraded from Ver. 2 to Ver. 3, a twitchy deal, because the system could be taken down only after the last Saturday edition and booted back up again five hours later, to capture the Sunday wires for Monday's papers. (So we had from about 2:00 to 7:00 am. to make the conversion "stick".)

The first attempt failed. Newsday was the guinea pig — the first customer to test the new editorial system. I got to work with Atex co-founder and vp of the software group, Richard Ying, which was a delight. I also had a couple of ideas for improve-

ments we needed for the system, and Richard would take the source disk pack off to a



*Jon Stewart has made major contributions to the quality of journalism. Back when I first saw him, he and his staff would pull all kinds of clips, quotes, etc., on a particular subject, person, etc. The late Tim Russert used to do that for his Meet The Press, but he was about the only one. After Stewart showed that it could be done effectively, the trade piled into the pool.*

*The Daily Show would also do "What's it really like?" bits. I remember the one on Darth Cheney's hunting outing (reminiscent of Tom Lehrer's "I shot the maximum/the games laws would allow: Seven hunters, two game wardens, and a purebred Guernsey cow." Stewart's team found a pay-and-shoot place that demonstrated the, um, consummate sportsmanship involved in hunting that way. I think they should have added the hip flasks that the parties denied they were using, but at least the Cheney party had the decency to wait a day before reporting the shooting incident, so they wouldn't bother folks with the smell of ethanol. That would have been rude, don'tcha think?*

*And do you find that you're more easily distracted as you age? Just wonderin'. If you haven't seen one of these, here's the "famous people's" internet slip:  
<http://www.adirondack-guide-boat.com/product/adirondack-cedar-guideboat>*

stand-alone system and implement the suggestion. Talk about responding to customer requests. The next weekend, success. Richard took me to a "noodle shop" in Chinatown to celebrate. On the way in, we saw an almost complete car exhaust system, from the header, muffler, resonator and tailpipe. Crushed flat.

Inside, I asked Richard "What's interesting?" He chatted in Mandarin with the waiter, and ordered me marinated connective tissue (impossible to manage with plastic chopsticks). Richard was amused. He also chatted with a mother and daughter in the next booth. In Mandarin (I think I asked). Richard and younger brother Charles were born in China, father a salesman — of steel mills; prep school in Switzerland, college at MIT. Many languages. Also drove a Cambridge, Mass. cab to pay his bills. I had no difficulty believing the story.

Some months later, I was at Atex for a meeting and passed by the "software lounge" (a grungy sofa liberated from a Cambridge curbside). Hanging on the back wall was that 18-foot or so crushed exhaust system, promoted to art. Seems Richard convinced the shuttle flight crew that, as there weren't many passengers that Sunday afternoon, he could just slide the thing under the seats, right? Good karma from his standard costume, which was a black or grey turtleneck, jeans, wooden clogs and red socks.

After the upgrade installation, Stan Asimov came up with a new project for me. He wanted Newsday completely "computerized." I figured that, while his brother Isaac was be the family member to write about the future, Stanley would be the one who made it happen, at least in the newspaper world.

Newsday had helped persuade Atex to build a classified ad system (Charlie Ying liked to recount his response: "Sure, why not. It's just a lot of *little* stories," but, "it turned out, with really big headers." The headers being the entire database structure of selling, typesetting, billing, revising, expiring, and printing, classified ads (the business that *Craig's List* pretty much

killed, single-sidedly. Asimov was now looking for a computer system for doing the fancy display ads, an incredibly labor-intensive activity, and new graphics terminals were being developed (Camex, on Kneeland St., in Boston's Chinatown, was one of the the companies in the forefront of this effort). Stanley had me in for a chat one evening. I think I came in early, and he stayed later than usual for a dayside person. (Newsday is "the afternoon newspaper published in the morning" and the copy desk worked from 8:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.) I don't know if any of you have ever used Letraset, sheets of alphabets in different fonts and sizes, which designers had to lay down character by character, using a little "burnishing tool". In newspaper composing rooms, ad makeup men would set headline type, use a carbide-toothed table saw to cut the letters off the slug, and then stick them down on blocks of lead with double-sided tape. Or a customer might submit "camera-ready copy", which would go to engraving, to expose a metal plate and then "develop it" in a vat of acid and wax. Nasty stuff, done in rooms with very large exhaust fans and little chimneys sitting over the acid "developing" tanks. This was called acid etching, back in the days of "hot metal".

Stanley figured that the graphic display ad terminals should be able to support drawing newspaper page dummies, or page layouts, on the graphics screens, so he thought editorial should be in on the search for a display ad system, along with the ad department. Moreover, he wanted to design a computer system that would let the display ad people set the size of the paper and place all the display ads, electronically, pass the electronic dummies on to classified, display and editorial to ad their content to the mix, build the pages in the computer system, and then output entire pages, via computer typesetter, which would then be converted to letterpress plates, and

later, when Newsday moved from Garden City to Lower Melville, to aluminum offset plates, completely replacing the "hot metal" production systems.

Because the goal of these systems was to go as nearly as possible to "full-page output," they were thought of as "pagination systems." Stanley asked me if I'd like to write the functional specification for the system. I'm sitting here now shaking my head side to side at the idea of this. At the time, it seemed like a really neat thing to undertake and would be a lot of fun. I said Sure.

I was pulled from the copy desk, shifted to daytime, Monday-Friday, instead of nights, Tuesday through Saturday. I became a pagination system designer — an in-house reporter, interviewing all of the people involved in getting Newsday printed, from the arrival of ad copy or film, through advertising, editorial, page production, and printing. I stopped at the loading dock — meaning I wasn't studying the circulation system(s).

I met with Atex software engineers, with Newsday staff, with potential vendors of graphics terminals, went to the University of Toronto with a video film crew to experiment with a programmer's masters thesis, a newspaper page layout terminal realized on an architectural computer system terminal, bringing back "video notes" for the Newsday and Atex team. There brief moments when I did feel like I was a kid in a tech candy store, but mostly, it was just what Newsday was up to, and I was supporting that, 'doing my thing.'

Newsday had guaranteed lifetime employment for the production department, because the editorial terminals were eliminating Linotype machines and, later, stereotyping, converting the flat chases of type-metal into cast half-cylinders that were clamped to the printing presses, putting the ink on the paper. All of this change was relatively incremental, though day-by-day. But it didn't seem like such a revolution.

One evening, though, I was doing the last page checks, being a "makeup editor," but working on three computer terminals instead of walking the composing room, as in BC (before comput-

ers), looking over the shoulder of the compositors, reading lines-of-type upside down and backwards, to trim stories or lead them out, trim photos if necessary — all the last minute adjustments to make it all fit on the page.

Bill Davis, the head of our dayside “electronic makeup group” — or EMG— had learned from his counterpart at *Time Magazine* (*USN&WR*, *Time*, *Fortune*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Newsweek*, *Business Week* all had Atex systems by then—the *Daily News*, *NYTimes* and *NYPost* were hold-outs) told him about a composition command Atex had written for the magazine system so they could set columns of editorial type in page format and display it on a low tech version of the “bit-mapped screen” for a “soft proof” on a green-screened monitor. And Bill told me. I called them “Etch-a-Sketch®” commands: you’d dial the right knob to change the phototypesetter’s X axis by so many picas and points, and dial the bottom knob change the Y axis.

Because Stanley’s goal was full-page output, and because Newsday was a tabloid format paper, the phototypesetter with the widest output available would fit a Newsday page. It could handle the widest pages, 63-pica Viewpoints pages, as well as the 59-pica standard pages, with headlines set full width (so they wouldn’t have to be cut and waxed down in two pieces, which would from time to time slip, slanting the news, so to speak).

Dayside, they loaded 6-inch film (really resin coated photo paper, called RC paper) in the typesetter, and Bill would use the X,Y commands to break up long galleys of movie listings, events, etc. (much as in the New Yorker mag front section), and conserve the RC paper. At night, for the news pages, the full width paper was loaded.

So, I wondered, could I put out a full page of type. The layouts were pretty straight-forward blocks, with perhaps three stories, a photograph, photo credit, caption on any given page. Each story had a headline, byline, credit line, and then three or four legs of type. No need for weird measures to dodge a display ad here and there as in broadsheets. Because some of these elements were not evenly divisible by “lines” (10 points), I had to carefully square off each story “block,” spacing the lines in the first paragraph—which used to be called “leading the lead” (lead, as in the metal; lead, as the antonym of follow). There was also a “box” command in the magazine software (Atex didn’t add or subtract features from one system to another — they just didn’t tell people about them unless they were interested in using them; and it simplifies distribution.) I found that the CY command could also be expressed in lines, and that count, in minus line depths, was calculated by the H&J (hyphenation & justification) program.

Bear with me. For example, at the top of the page, the headline, byline, credit and text would start at coordinate 0,0. The headline would be full width, and then you’d be into the columns of text, say four “legs” of type, line-width 14 picas, depth divisible by full lines (One would edit these to fit). In making up the page, with four legs of 14-picas width, 18 lines deep, you would insert the CX/CY commands at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 36<sup>th</sup>, 54<sup>th</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> lines. This isn’t something you’d do on deadline. And of course, since the Macintosh and its bit-addressable screen, and WYSIWIG text (what you see is what you get — I called it WUSIWUG, for what U see is what U get, but Jonathan Seybold’s less stylized rendition won the day), you don’t have to go through the steps you did in a character-based display (where a 6-point blurb or a