

MEDIA



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OVERVIEW

Transition. The decade of the 1990s was a period of rapid change in media fueled by advances in technology, the continued merging of companies, and the explosion of "trash" media. Developments in technology led to debates about censorship and protecting children from violent or pornographic images. It also provided quick and easy access to information through the increased availability of the World Wide Web in most homes and offices in the country. Yet, while technological options expanded, authentic diversity in media voices contracted as more and more media sources were merged into large corporations. From reality-based television programming to television and radio talk shows to network news, high-decibel confrontations, innuendo, and intimate sexual details dominated the media. Even, however, as the public cried out against lowering standards in the media, people tuned in to listen and bought sensational editions in record numbers.

Technology. Advances in computer technology in the 1990s led to unprecedented growth in media access. Either at home, work, school, or the public library, almost every American could get to the information superhighway on the Internet. Such access made electronic publishing a lucrative industry, with advertisers lining up to have a link on an electronic newspaper or magazine page. Many long-time print newspapers and magazines added on-line versions, while new Internet-only publications cropped up at every turn. Of course, unlimited access to web-surfers was not without its problems. Of particular concern was the easy availability to children of pornography on the web. While software was being developed to block children's access to adult sites, the debate about porn on the web was still raging at the end of the decade. Technology also made possible growth in television opportunities. Digital cable provided room for an enormous expansion in the number of channels available to consumers, while digital satellite TV increased offerings even more. WebTV allowed couch potatoes to surf the web from their sofas, and interactive television was becoming a reality as shows provided links on WebTV. Again, such open access raised questions about inappropriate content for children, and by 1999 half of all televisions manufactured were required to carry a v-chip that would allow parents to block children from opening sites with violent, sexually explicit, or graphic television

content. After 1 January 2000 all new televisions had to meet this requirement.

Trash. The 1990s was a decade of trash television, radio, and even news. The television ratings winners were "shockumentaries," a genre of reality-based TV that featured shocking footage of everything from police chases to animal attacks. Especially popular in the important eighteen to forty-nine demographic, these shows proliferated on the FOX network but appeared even from such respected producers as *National Geographic*. While violence on television declined on the whole throughout the decade, the shockumentary was the exception. Shockumentaries, however, were not the only place trash flourished, as TV talk shows reached a new low when they moved from exploring controversial subjects to initiating confrontation. Day by day guests appeared to air their grievances with friends and lovers, while hosts and producers encouraged louder and more-vicious arguments to keep the shows lively. In particular, Ricki Lake and Jerry Springer paraded out people to exploit their private pain on national television. A murder followed the taping of one Jenny Jones Show, in which a young man revealed his crush on his male neighbor. Cultural critics began to refer to these shows as "exploitalk." Americans' romance with real TV also grew to include courtroom television. From Courtroom Television Network (Court TV), which aired such infamous cases as the Lyle and Erik Menendez murder trial (1995–1996), to the live broadcast of the O. J. Simpson murder trial (1995) on CNN and other networks, to television courtroom shows such as *Judge Judy* and *The People's Court*, Americans tuned in to watch the justice system at work, particularly if the cases were sensational. Talk radio also added its share of trash to the air, often generating extreme emotion and misinformation. Rush Limbaugh's variety of political conservatism found an audience in antifeminist, anti-environmentalist, white, Republican listeners, while Laura C. Schelssinger pandered to troubled people needing definitive answers and a quick fix. Probably the greatest trash-monger of them all, however, was Howard Stern, a radio shock jock and self-proclaimed "King of All Media." Specializing in the offensive and scatological, Stern netted more than \$2 million in Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fines for his on-air vulgarity. Neither was

print immune from this tendency toward the salacious. Supermarket tabloids began to scoop mainstream press, and the mainstream press began to run stories one would have expected to have found only in the pages of the *National Enquirer* or *Star*. In particular, the death of Diana, Princess of Wales (31 August 1997), and the sex scandal surrounding President Bill Clinton brought tabloid journalism and mainstream media closer together.

Covering Terror. While for most of its history the United States had been immune from terrorism carried out on its shores, the 1990s brought about an escalation of wide-scale violence. The Unabomber's deadly attacks continued until Theodore John "Ted" Kaczynski was captured (3 April 1996) and found guilty of a seventeen-year (1978-1995) bombing spree that killed three and wounded twenty-three. The World Trade Center in New York was bombed on 26 February 1993, and the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City was blown up on 19 April 1995. A homemade pipe bomb exploded in the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta (27 July 1996). School shootings began to occur at an unthinkable rate. The most widely covered incidents were at Pearl, Mississippi (1 October 1997); West Paducah, Kentucky (1 December 1997); Jonesboro, Arkansas (24 March 1998); Springfield, Oregon (21 May 1998); Littleton, Colorado (20 April 1999); and Conyers, Georgia (20 May 1999). Responses to these events posed many dilemmas for the media, who immediately immersed readers and viewers in the crisis, especially with the availability of twenty-four-hour news channels that carried almost non-stop coverage of each tragedy. Journalists found it particularly difficult to walk the line between reporting the news and sensationalizing or oversentimentalizing it.

Mergers. Like the 1980s, the 1990s witnessed continued centralization of the media in the hands of fewer and fewer corporations. Hometown newspapers were gobbled up as business investments by groups such as Community Newspaper Holdings (CNH) and Liberty Group Publishing. Buying newspapers in geographic clusters was a trend that led major publishers such as Knight Ridder, Cox, Gannett, and others to swap holdings like cards in a game. The idea was that newspapers in close geographic proximity could share resources and thereby lead to greater profits. For many communities, however, this change meant the end of any sort of competition between papers and the decreasing of journalistic voices available to readers. Likewise, television companies merged, with AT&T becoming the largest cable operator in the country after buying TCI. The Walt Disney Company bought Capital Cities/ABC. Time Warner bought Turner Broadcasting System (TBS). Viacom bought Paramount

and then Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS). Even in publishing the number of publishing houses grew smaller, and Pearson Education became the largest educational publisher in the world when Addison Wesley Longman and Simon & Schuster education, business, professional, and reference businesses merged.

Dealing with Diversity. Some headway was made in the 1990s in terms of diversity in media, although disparities and stereotypes certainly remained at the end of the decade. Women moved into greater visibility as news anchors and sportscasters, although television jobs were still dominated by men and whites. Television, newspapers, and magazines provided more coverage of women's sports, and magazines focusing specifically on this area, such as *Sports Illustrated for Women* and *Women's Sports and Fitness*, started up. African Americans also began to have greater representation in sitcoms, especially on the United Paramount Network (UPN), FOX, and Warner Brothers (WB), but still the number of ethnic minorities on television shows remained abysmally low. Gay characters began to populate television shows with regularity, and in 1997 Ellen DeGeneres's character on *Ellen* became the first openly gay lead on a sitcom.

Media Responsibility. In the wake of the news media coverage of major events, especially the presidential sex scandal, many Americans seemed fed up with the press. The broadcast and publication of sordid details left consumers disgusted and questioning the credibility of the news media. Decisions such as the \$5.5 million Food Lion lawsuit against ABC News for manipulative reporting indicated the degree to which the public was outraged with sensational and untrustworthy journalistic tactics. The burgeoning news sources on the Internet also provided forums for gossip and innuendo at a rapid pace that defied checking facts and sources. Yet, despite their concerns, at the end of the decade most Americans still relied on the mainstream media for most of their news and information. Broadcast news was trusted more than print news. Prime-time TV news magazines, CNN, public television news, and local TV newscasts were more trusted than network nightly news. TV news magazines were also more trusted and more utilized than print magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News & World Report*. Yet, few Americans relied on the Internet for news. Apparently, they did not so much believe that the press was inaccurate in presenting titillating information about scandals and tragedies, but rather, it seems, they thought the media should not be presenting such information at all.

Source:

Frank Newport and Lydia Saad, "A Matter of Trust," *American Journalism Review*, 20 (July/August 1998): 30-33.

TOPICS IN THE NEWS

THE BUSINESS OF BOOKS

Selling Books. Novelists, poets, and writers of nonfiction plied their craft in the 1990s pretty much as they had since the invention of movable type, but the business of publishing and marketing books evolved at a pace that left industry analysts wondering if these were the best of times, worst of times or, more likely, both at once. While there was no shortage of writers clamoring to see their work in print, and readers continued to buy books, the industry found itself in a crisis. Commending a book to the printing press had always been an act of faith for the publisher. Unless the writer could be persuaded to pay the costs of printing out of pocket, publishers risked a substantial sum of money producing books that might never sell. Of course, publishers advertised and tried to persuade bookstore owners to stock and prominently display new titles, but if copies remained unsold, booksellers could return them to the publisher, who either pulped them or sold them at a loss. Since end-of-the-year inventories were taxed, neither publishers, distributors, nor retailers wanted a large backlog of unsold books.

Profit-driven Publishers. According to Jason Epstein, former editorial director of Random House, "book publishing has deviated from its true nature by assuming, under duress from unfavorable market conditions and the misconceptions of remote managers, the posture of a conventional business. Book publishing is not a conventional business. It more closely resembles a vocation or an amateur sport in which the primary goal is the activity itself, not its financial outcome. For owners and editors willing to work for the joy of the task, book publishing . . . has been immensely rewarding. For investors looking for conventional returns, it has been disappointing." Although there were thousands of publishers in the United States, some organized on a not-for-profit basis while others were simply unprofitable, most books were produced and distributed by a small number of major firms. Many of the venerable publishing houses had merged with large conglomerates. For example, Simon & Schuster, which had been established in 1924, became in the 1990s a subsidiary of Viacom, whose media holdings included Blockbuster (a chain of video rental stores), a cable-television business, and a movie studio. Prentice-Hall, a publisher of text-

books, became a subsidiary of Pearson Education, a British-based corporation (that included Simon & Schuster's education division), whose goal was to become "an educational company, not a book company." Although such mergers brought with them economies of scale, they also put increased pressure on publishers to maintain their share of the corporate bottom line. Promising, but unknown, authors whose works might—given adequate attention and marketing—find an audience, were often rejected by the big publishing houses. Economies of scale, however, could also work in reverse. Books published by small, niche publishers and university presses continued to find readers, though their press runs tended to be in the hundreds or thousands rather than hundreds of thousands. Occasionally such books were discovered by a wider audience, as was the case with Norman MacLain's *A River Runs Through It, and Other Stories* (1976), which was reissued in 1983 and made into a movie in 1992. Oprah Winfrey's book-club selections could propel little-known titles onto the best-seller lists virtually overnight, as could a movie based on a new work. Books that were connected with a specific event, such as the trial of O. J. Simpson (1994) or the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal (1998) could sell well, but they required massive and costly press runs and often had to make their mark within a matter of days before the buying public lost interest. At the back of every publisher's mind was the fear that Americans were not reading as many books as they had in decades past.

Superstores. The traditional bookstore was often a small, quaint place, with a particular odor and ambiance, run by an owner/manager who got into the business out of a love for books. Customers wandered in, looked around, and bought something more-or-less on impulse because it looked interesting or the owner recommended it. Though the percentage of the total market cornered by a single bookstore was minute, as a group independent dealers had enormous influence. They ordered books they thought would sell and promoted ones they liked. *The New York Times* best-seller list—the benchmark of literary success—was based on sales reports from such independent establishments, and inclusion on the list, if nothing else, promoted further sales. In the early 1990s, however, a new kind of bookstore entered the marketplace. Barnes and

Noble, Borders Books and Tapes, and Books-A-Million built warehouse-size stores—usually in or near shopping malls—stocked with inventories far larger than independent booksellers could afford. Because the larger stores bought books in mass quantity, they could demand deep discounts from the publishers and undercut independent retailers. They also sold coffee and cappuccino in the store, so shoppers could browse, buy something to read, and enjoy a drink while reading the first chapter. Though some independent bookstores were unable to survive in competition with the superstores, others held their own by offering customers better service, an intimate atmosphere, and, copying an idea from their competition, a shot of espresso. Whether or not the superstores increased total readership, or simply homogenized the market, remained to be seen at the close of the decade.

Digital Publishing. The digital revolution represented a fundamental change in the way information was stored, edited, and distributed. Since these functions were how publishers had traditionally made money, it seemed inevitable that this new technology would cause major upheavals in the publishing business. Books, for example, no longer had to be typeset. Rather, a writer could deliver a text on a disk, or through the Internet; an editor could convert it to a camera-ready format and send it to the press or, bypassing paper and ink altogether, distribute it directly to consumers on the World Wide Web. While only a few on-line magazines won a foothold on the web, most notably *Salon*, by 1999 virtually every major newspaper and news magazine offered readers an on-line version, usually for free. The Gutenberg Project posted thousands of copyright-free books on the web, and in 2000 suspense novelist Stephen King published *Riding the Bullet* entirely online. As early as 1993, well before the World Wide Web became popular, Charles Ellis of Houghton Mifflin observed that electronic publishing would become, "a very significant part of our future. There seems to be a greater sense that it's now more a question of how and when the explosion will happen, not if." By the end of the decade, however, the impact of electronic publishing was just beginning to be felt. It was hindered largely by a reluctance on the part of consumers to pay for anything on the web. Readers complained that looking at pages of text on a computer screen was not nearly as appealing as sitting down with an old-fashioned book. Nonetheless, if electronic publishing was still in its early stages of evolution, the Internet proved to be a powerful sales tool. Amazon.com, billing itself as the "world's largest bookstore," started selling books directly to consumers from its website. Without having to rent store space, Amazon.com could maintain an enormous inventory through which customers could browse from home. By placing an order electronically, a consumer could have his book delivered in a few days. By the end of the decade Amazon.com branched out, offering toys, music, and gourmet food as well as reading material. Books, in the new world of the digital era, became commodities to be bought and sold like pork bellies and soybeans. To readers and

writers, however, the magic of the written word transcended even the unbending realities of the marketplace.

Sources:

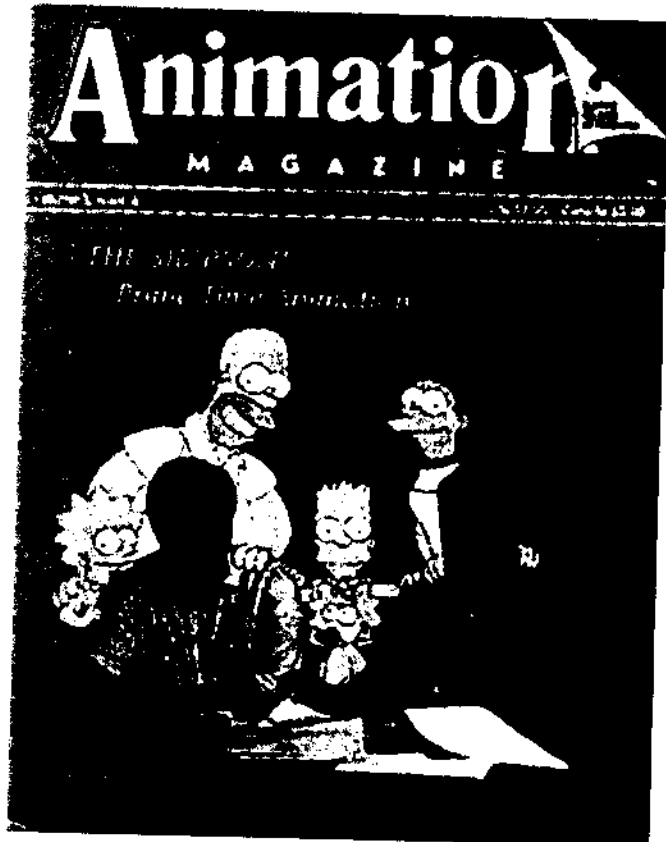
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CARTOONS IN PRIME TIME

Not Just for Kids. At the end of the decade, what was the longest-running situation comedy in prime time? *The Simpsons*. With the success of this show, television executives learned that cartoons were not just for kids on Saturday morning. By the end of the 1990s, FOX, MTV, and WB were all running prime-time cartoons. While *The Simpsons* was by far the most consistently excellent animated series, several other shows provided prime-time laughs and acquired devoted followings.

The Simpsons. Cartoonist Matt Groening introduced *The Simpsons* in 1987 on *The Tracey Ullman Show* (1987–1990). Before creating *The Simpsons*, Groening was best known for his *Life in Hell* comic strip that first appeared in 1977 and became syndicated in more than 250 newspapers worldwide. Following their stint on *The Tracey Ullman Show*, *The Simpsons* got their own Christmas special in 1989, and a prime-time series was launched 14 January 1990 with "Bart the Genius." In this episode Bart learned his lesson when he cheated on an aptitude test and then ended up in a school for exceptional children. The Simpson family—Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Maggie—fast became cultural icons and the instruments of hilarious and surprising social satire. Perhaps one testimony to the success of *The Simpsons* is the long list of stars who have lent their voices, and sometimes their images, to the show, including Elizabeth Taylor, Winona Ryder, Michael Jackson, Gillian Anderson, and David Duchovny. In 1994, *The Simpsons* became the first regular prime-time series to be simulcast in Spanish, and in February 1997 it became the longest-running cartoon on prime time, surpassing the record set by *The Flintstones* (1960–1966).

Beavis & Butt-head. Mike Judge made his first cartoon in 1991 and, not knowing what to do with it, mailed it to addresses he found in the phone book. Comedy Central called, and then the Sick and Twisted Festival of Animation, and within a year Judge had produced four animated shorts. In 1992 his "Frog Baseball," which featured two dumb, ugly teens playing the game of the title, aired on MTV, and the channel commissioned the *Beavis & Butt-head* series, which debuted in 1993. The first season featured the two unbelievably stupid male adolescents who sat on their couch reviewing music videos (which were either "cool" or "sucked") while making crass and idiotic remarks, which on occasion hit home with their piercing insight into 1990s American culture. The show was an immediate success, although some media commentators took it too seri-



Cover commemorating the debut of the first prime-time TV cartoon series

ously as an example of the "dumbing down" of America. "Just because you do a show about dumb guys doesn't make it a dumb show," Judge responded. "I think that's a dumb way to look at it. Like if you did a show about straight-A students, that would be a smart show." Judge animated the series and did most of the male voices for seven seasons, ending his work on the series to devote more time to his new animated show, *King of the Hill*.

King of the Hill. Following his success with *Beavis & Butt-head*, Judge teamed up with Greg Daniels, who had written for *The Simpsons*, to create *King of the Hill* for FOX. The series debuted 12 January 1997, following the televised broadcast of Super Bowl XXXI. *King of the Hill* centered on the Hill family of Arlen, Texas—Hank, who sold propane and propane accessories; Peggy, a substitute school-teacher and champion Boggle player; Bobby, their middle-school-aged son; Luanne, the ditzy niece who lived with them; and their neighbors—Dale, Boomhauer, and Bill. Unlike *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill* presented a family based in the reality of working-class suburbs, the world of Wal-Mart and pickup trucks with gun racks. While the show often explored some of the mustits of Texas storytelling tradition, on the whole it relied on Hank's sense of values and populist notions to create its understated humor.

South Park. It was called "Peanuts on acid," and it won a place on the *New York Times* and *Newsday* ten-best lists for 1997 television. Created by Randolph Trey Parker III and

Matt Stone, *South Park* focused on the adventures and mis-adventures of four third-graders living in the fictional Rocky Mountain town of South Park. Parker caught the attention of FoxLab executive Brian Graden who commissioned Parker and Stone to create a video Christmas card to send his friends. The duo came up with a five-minute short, *Spirit of Christmas*, which featured Jesus and Santa Claus battling over who would own the holiday, while the *South Park* gang looked on. The short was a success, and the series was born. *South Park* debuted on Comedy Central on 13 August 1997 and became the highest rated original series in Comedy Central history. It won a Cable ACE award for Best Animated Series.

Futurama. Groening followed his success with *The Simpsons* by launching another prime-time cartoon on FOX—*Futurama*, which debuted 3 March 1999. This show was set in New York City a thousand years in the future. Fry, the show's protagonist, was a twenty-five-year-old pizza-delivery boy who made a delivery to a cryogenics lab and accidentally froze himself on 31 December 1999. When he woke up, it was the year 3000 and he had a chance to make a new start. So he went to work for the Planet Express Corporation, a delivery service that transported packages to all five quadrants of the universe. His spaceship companions included the captain, Leela, a beautiful one-eyed alien, and Bender, a robot with very human flaws and emotions.

Family Guy. Twenty-five-year-old Seth MacFarlane created a short animation entitled "The Life of Larry" while he was a student at the Rhode Island School of Design. That effort brought his talent to the attention of FOX executives, who gave him the opportunity to create an animated prime-time series. MacFarlane came up with *Family Guy*, which presented the everyday trials and tribulations of family life with its own special spin. The show premiered 6 April 1999, with Peter Griffin, the protagonist, accidentally destroying the satellite dish that provided television service to his town and then pinning the catastrophe on his teenage daughter. The show then focused on his attempts to live without his beloved tube. A subplot featured Stewie, Peter's evil genius toddler son, who had been forced to eat broccoli, creating a weather machine to destroy broccoli while it was still on the farm.

Daria. A spinoff of *Beavis & Butt-head*, *Daria* was MTV's clever and consistently sarcastic portrayal of teenage life. Daria Morgendorffer was an above-average-intelligence adolescent who struggled to hold on to her individuality in the world of high school. Judge, who created *Beavis & Butt-head*, did not create *Daria*, however. Rather, she was developed by Glenn Eichler and Susie Lewis, who worked on *Beavis & Butt-head*. After that show ended, Eichler and Lewis pitched the idea for *Daria* to MTV Animation, and *Daria* got her own show, which premiered 3 March 1997.

The PJs. Diversity in prime-time cartoons was represented by *The PJs*, a show about a grumpy African American building supervisor, Thurgood Stubbs, his family, and

neighbors in the Hilton-Jacobs Projects. The brainchild of comedian Eddie Murphy, who envisioned a show loosely based on puppetry set in an urban environment, the concept was pitched to FOX executives in 1998. *The PJs*, produced by Will Vinton Studios using a "foamation" technique and with Murphy providing the voice of Stubbs, debuted in January 1999.

Sources:
Comedy Central, Internet website.
FOX Network, Internet website.
MTV, Internet website.

COURT TELEVISION

Real-life Drama. In the 1990s the American appetite for "real" TV grew. In addition to the many "shockumentaries" that showed footage of everything from police chases to animal attacks, Americans began to tune in to courtroom television. Two subgenres experienced increasing popularity throughout the decade—televised coverage of criminal trials and shows starring theatrical judges who generally heard civil cases brought by friends, relatives, neighbors, and business associates against each other.

Cameras in the Courtroom. On the whole, the decision whether or not to allow cameras in the courtroom has tended to be left to state supreme courts. In 1965, however, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Elliott v. Texas* that television coverage of a trial could not be conducted in a circus-like atmosphere, but it did not say that this coverage was inherently unconstitutional. In its *Chandler v. Florida* (1981) decision, the Court ruled that TV coverage of criminal trials could be allowed providing they did not violate the defendants' rights. Following that ruling, courtrooms across the nation began to welcome television cameras, and by the 1990s almost every state allowed them into some judicial proceedings and about two-thirds freely allowed them into trial courts at the judge's discretion. The 1995 O. J. Simpson case, however, led to a rethinking of the impact of courtroom cameras. Simpson, the former football star, was charged with murdering his former wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ronald Lyle Goldman. The murder trial was broadcast live by several news networks, including CNN. Judge Lance Ito did not handle the trial well, and the cameras allowed the world to view the spectacle. Following the not-guilty verdict, many people blamed television coverage for influencing the trial, and many judges began to reconsider allowing cameras in their courtrooms. Particularly, in several high-profile cases, cameras were banned following the Simpson debacle—Susan Smith's child-drowning trial in South Carolina (July 1995); the Texas murder trial of Yolanda Saldívar (October 1995), accused of killing singing star Selena Quintanilla-Perez on 31 March 1995; the New Jersey child-murder trial of Jesse K. Timmendequas (May 1997), whose crime, the murder of seven-year-old Megan Kanka, inspired "Megan's law," requiring the notification of neighbors that a convicted sex offender would be living in their community; and the trial of Richard Allen Davis in California (February–June 1996), whose rape and murder of Polly

LEGAL BATTLE OVER LEGAL SELF-HELP

A California publisher of books and software giving detailed instructions on how to complete legal tasks had to go to court in Texas to fight an accusation that the company was engaging in the unauthorized practice of law (UPL). As early as 1992, Texas banned a manual that contained forms and instructions for creating a will. Next the UPL was applied to Parsons Technology's *Quicken Family Lawyer*, a computer program that helps consumers prepare several different legal forms, which a federal judge banned in January 1999 from being sold in Texas. Nolo Press, the most prominent publisher of self-help legal aids in the United States, was accused in 1998 of violating the Texas law and was under investigation by the Unauthorized Practice of Law Committee when the publisher filed a lawsuit in district court in March 1999 against the Committee. The lawsuit asked that the court declare that Nolo's books and software did not practice law and that, consistent with the free-speech provision of the Texas Constitution, they could not be banned from Texas.

Before the lawsuit was heard, the Texas legislature got into the act and amended the government code to address the issue. HB 1507, which was passed by the House on 21 April 1999 and the Senate on 21 May 1999, clarified "practice of law" to exclude legal self-help publications and software as long as the products conspicuously stated that they were not substitutes for the advice of an attorney. Based on that legislative change, the UPL Committee ended their investigation of Nolo Press, and in July 1999 the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that Parsons could sell *Quicken Family Lawyer* in Texas.

Sources: Associated Press, "Federal Judge Bars Distribution of Self-Help Legal Software in Texas."

John Greenwald, "A Legal Press in Texas," *Time*, 3 August 1998.

"Nolo v. Texas—Nolo Declares Victory," *Nolo.com*, Internet website.

James E. Powell, "Quicken Family Lawyer Once Again Legal in Texas," *Winnmag.com*, Internet website.

Hannah Klaas led to the "three strikes and you're out" laws against repeat offenders. Critics argued that courtroom television did not present trials in an appropriate way, relying too heavily on sound bites and omitting in-depth explanation and analysis. Particularly in high-profile cases such as the Simpson trial, television, they contended, focused on the sensational and influenced the proceedings. Journalists, on the other hand, argued that the problem was not that cameras were in the Simpson courtroom but that Ito's inability to control the courtroom and lawyers' attempts to manipulate public opinion with statements outside the courtroom created most of the problems in the

INTRODUCTION

1. The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race. They have greatly increased the life-expectancy of those of us who live in "advanced" countries, but they have destabilized society, have made life unfulfilling, have subjected human beings to indignities, have led to widespread psychological suffering in the Third World to physical suffering as well) and have inflicted severe damage on the natural world. The continued development of technology will worsen the situation. It will certainly subject human beings to greater indignities and inflict greater damage on the natural world, it will probably lead to greater social disruption and psychological suffering, and it may lead to increased physical suffering even in "advanced" countries.
2. The industrial-technological system may survive or it may break down. If it survives, it MAY eventually achieve a low level of physical and psychological suffering, but only after passing through a long and very painful period of adjustment and only at the cost of permanently reducing human beings and many other living organisms to engineered products and mere cogs in the social machine. Furthermore, if the system survives, the consequences will be inevitable: There is no way of reforming or modifying the system so as to prevent it from depriving people of dignity and autonomy.
3. If the system breaks down the consequences will still be very painful. But the bigger the system grows the

more disastrous the results of its breakdown will be, so if it is to break down it had best break down sooner rather than later.

4. We therefore advocate a revolution against the industrial system. This revolution may or may not make use of violence: it may be sudden or it may be a relatively gradual process spanning a few decades. We can't predict any of that. But we do outline in a very general way the measures that those who hate the industrial system should take in order to prepare the way for a revolution against that form of society. This is not to be a POLITICAL revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not governments but the economic and technological basis of the present society.

5. In this article we give attention to only some of the negative developments that have grown out of the industrial-technological system. Other such developments we mention only briefly or ignore altogether. This does not mean that we regard these other developments as unimportant. For practical reasons we have to confine our discussion to areas that have received insufficient public attention or in which we have something new to say. For example, since there are well-developed environmental and wilderness movements, we have written very little about environmental degradation or the destruction of wild nature, even though we consider these to be highly important.

Source: "The Unabomber Case," CNN*Interactive Time*, Internet website.

trial. The issue for journalists was instead the public's right to know and to witness the execution of justice. Even Associate Justice of the Massachusetts Superior Court Robert Barton said, "The courts belong to the public. They don't belong to the judge, the lawyers, or the litigants." In 1990 the Federal Judicial Conference approved a three-year experiment allowing cameras in some federal courts. The report on the experiment recommended that coverage continue, but the conference voted against coverage. At the end of 1999 the "Sunshine in the Courtroom Act," which would allow cameras in federal courtrooms, was pending congressional approval. Interestingly enough, the U.S. Supreme Court itself still refused to permit coverage of its proceedings at the end of the decade.

Court TV. Because of access to many courtrooms and public interest in the American judicial system, the Courtroom Television Network (Court TV) was launched in July 1991 by Steven Brill. While it was initially a small cable network, it had surprisingly good ratings, even reaching number four during the day

among cable viewers who received it, according to the first Nielsen survey of its viewers done in 1993. The network aired several high-profile cases, including the William Kennedy Smith rape trial (1991), the insanity defense of serial killer Jeffrey L. Dahmer (1992), the parole hearing of Charles Manson, the Oklahoma City bombing trial of Timothy McVeigh (April-June 1997), and the "nanny murder trial" of Louise Woodward (October 1997). The case that really engaged the American public, however, was the trial of Lyle and Erik Menendez (1994), two Beverly Hills brothers accused of murdering their parents. The jurors could not reach a verdict, and cameras were banned from the courtroom during their retrial in 1995-1996. This time the brothers were convicted of first-degree murder. Following its beginnings in live trial coverage, the network added other forms of programming—judicial news updates, segments on consumer law, small claims courts, and parole and death penalty issues, for example. Critics of Court TV, however, argued that the net-



Media surrounding Stephen Jones, lawyer for Timothy James McVeigh, accused bomber of the Fred P. Murrah Building in Oklahoma City (AP/Wide World Photos)

work aired mostly sensational cases in order to garner ratings. Court TV responded by noting that most of its airtime was devoted to inspecular cases such as medical malpractice and business lawsuits.

Here Comes the Judge. Real-life TV courtroom trials began with *Divorce Court*, which ran from 1957 to 1969 and again from 1986 to 1991, but its popularity was eclipsed by Judge Joseph A. Wapner's *The People's Court*, which aired from 1981 to 1993. After Wapner's tenure, the genre waned and was only revived when Judge Judith "Judy" Sheindlin took to the air in 1996, spawning several other court shows featuring tough judges doling out justice for the TV-viewing public. Sheindlin's career began in family court in 1972 when she was a juvenile prosecutor for the state of New York. In 1982 then-Mayor Ed Koch appointed Sheindlin to the bench as a judge in family court, and in 1986 she was appointed supervising judge in Manhattan. Sheindlin quickly earned a reputation as a no-nonsense judge who delivered tough, direct admonitions to defendants. An article about Sheindlin in the *Los Angeles Times* in 1993 caught the attention of *60 Minutes*, which did a segment on her. After that exposure she was approached by Big Ticket Television about presiding over a television courtroom. Sheindlin was attracted to the notion of a national audience for her message of justice, and *Judge Judy* premiered in national syndication on 16 September 1996. Sheindlin was to-the-point but also injected her show with wit and humor. By 1999 her show had seven million viewers in an average week and she had garnered an Emmy Award nomination. Following *Judge Judy's* success, other court shows took to the air. Wapner moved to *Animal Court*, and Koch brought *The People's Court* back to daytime television. Judge Joe Brown, Judge Greg Mathis,

and Judge Mills Lane all handed out justice on their own programs, though none was as successful as Sheindlin's show. Even *Divorce Court* made a comeback, returning to television in late 1999. According to Bill Carroll, executive vice president at Katz Television Group, "If it is done correctly, the court format is a little bit game show, a little bit talk show." It presents real-life drama with a resolution to the problems presented, and "that is a pretty strong draw for audiences," Carroll said.

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CYBERPORN

A Pitfall on the Information Superhighway. The Internet brought quick, easy access to information into homes and offices worldwide in the 1990s. Bright entrepreneurs developed various e-commerce sites, and the web became a viable place of business for many, including those who offer sexually explicit images. Unlike seedy adult bookstores, many pornographic sites in cyberspace are easily accessible to anyone at a computer keyboard, including children. That recognition set off a raging debate about the legality of pornography on the web. At the core of this debate was the question raised by the new technology—was the web more like print media and therefore protected by the First Amendment from much regulation at all, or

U.S. SUPREME COURT CASES RELATED TO MEDIA

Osborne v. Ohio, 13 April 1990

The Supreme Court held that a state could constitutionally proscribe the possession of child pornography because protection of the victims of child pornography outweighed other concerns. The case arose when Ohio police found explicit pictures of adolescent males during the execution of a search warrant. The resident was found guilty of violating an Ohio law that prohibits possession of child pornography.

Leathers v. Medlock, 16 April 1991

By a seven-to-two vote, the Supreme Court found that a differential tax structure for various media did not interfere with First Amendment rights and did not present the potential for censorship of ideas. The case brought by Arkansas's cable industry argued that the state's policy of taxing cable but not print media was unconstitutional because the law might suppress the expression of a particular point of view.

Masson v. New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 June 1991

By a nine-to-zero vote, the Supreme Court found that a public figure can recover libel damages from the publisher of an article that attributes altered quotations to the public figure if the alteration results in a material change in the meaning of the statement.

Cohen v. Cowles Media Co., 24 June 1991

By a five-to-four vote, the Supreme Court held that a newspaper could be sued under a state's promissory estoppel law (right to sue as a result of a broken promise) because the law does not discriminate against the press. The case arose when a Minnesota gubernatorial campaign worker offered documents about another candidate to newspapers on the basis of a promise of confidentiality. The newspapers then published the worker's name.

Simon & Schuster v. NY Crime Victims Board, 10 December 1991

The Court ruled that New York's 1977 "Son of Sam" law, which ordered that proceeds from criminals' selling of their stories be turned over to the New York State Crime Victims Board, violated the free speech clause of the First Amendment.

Turner Broadcasting v. FCC, 27 June 1994

The Supreme Court held that the must-carry provision of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992 was not a violation of the First Amendment. Part of the Act required cable companies to allocate a percentage of their channels to local public broadcast stations. The Court found that this Act promoted fair competition and did not determine programming content.

Denver Area Consortium v. FCC, 28 June 1996

In a six-to-three decision, the Supreme Court held that the 1992 Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act allowed leased channel cable operators to restrict the transmission of patently offensive or indecent programming, but it did not allow them to ban offensive or indecent programming on public-access channels.

Arkansas Educational Television Commission v. Forbes, 18 May 1998

In a six-to-three decision, the Supreme Court found that the exclusion of a ballot-qualified candidate from a debate sponsored by a state-owned public television broadcaster did not violate the candidate's First Amendment right to freedom of speech. During a congressional race the Arkansas Educational Television Commission had excluded an independent candidate with little popular support from its debate between major party candidates. The Court held that as long as the debates were not designed as public forums, public broadcasters could selectively exclude candidates.

Hanton v. Berger and Wilson v. Layne, 24 May 1999

By nine-to-zero and eight-to-one votes, the Supreme Court ruled that law enforcement officials violate the Fourth Amendment by allowing the media to enter private homes on execution of a search warrant and that officers were entitled to qualified immunity because it was not yet a clearly established violation of the Fourth Amendment. A reporter and photographer from *The Washington Post* accompanied law enforcement officials during the execution of a search warrant, and the residents sued, alleging the officers had violated their rights to privacy.

Source: The Oyez Project, Northwestern University, First Amendment Center, Supreme Court Files.

was it more like broadcast media, which are much more open to federal regulation.

Porn on the Web. New technologies made pornography on the web accessible and profitable. "Adult" sites on the web were a billion-dollar business by 1998, and more than half the requests on search engines were adult-oriented. While many pornographic sites required identification and a credit card, many others could be accessed by anyone with web service. One survey found that 25 percent of teens said they had visited X-rated websites. Almost all on-line consumers of porn were men, and a great deal of the adult material available consisted of images not readily available in the average porn-magazine market—including bondage, sadomasochism, bestiality, and pedophilia.

Case of the Thomases. Robert Alan and Carleen Thomas operated the Amateur Action BBS (bulletin board service) out of Milpitas, California. The two entrepreneurs were indicted in 1994 for transmitting pornographic material to a government agent in Tennessee. A Memphis jury decided the images were obscene, and the Thomases were found guilty of violating federal obscenity laws by allowing residents in Tennessee to download explicit images and by sending explicit videotapes into Tennessee by United Parcel Service (UPS). Their conviction was affirmed by the U.S. Court of Appeals in February 1996, and the Supreme Court declined to review the case in October 1996. Federal obscenity law requires the court to consider the standards of the local community into which pornography is sent in determining whether or not the material is obscene. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and other free-speech advocates argued that the images on the web were not sent specifically to Tennessee and that to find the Thomases guilty in that state would mean that anyone posting explicit material on the web could be liable for prosecution in any community that had access to the information. The Supreme Court did not address the larger issue because the Court found that Thomas required the name, age, address, and phone number of each subscriber before he gave them a password to download images from his BBS. Thus, the Thomases knew their customer was in Tennessee and knew they were providing access to someone in a community with strict obscenity standards. Had they not wished to subject themselves to liability, they could have refused to provide a password to consumers in those communities. In other words, the Court ruled that because the Thomases knew the addresses of customers, their business was essentially no different than *Playboy* or *Hustler* or any "adult" business that ships videotapes or printed material.

Communications Decency Act. As cyberporn began to come to wider public attention in the mid 1990s, lawmakers began to wonder how to regulate it on the web. Despite protests from various constituencies concerned with civil liberties and free speech, the U.S. House voted 416 to 9 and the U.S. Senate 91 to 5 in favor of the 1996 Telecommunications Reform Act, which included the Communications Decency Act. The CDA called for up to two years in prison and fines up to \$250,000 for Internet content pro-



As part of the effort to control child pornography, Vice President Al Gore displays the "Parents Guide to the Internet" at a 2 December 1997 conference in Washington, D.C. (AP/Wide World Photos).

viders who displayed "patently offensive material" that could be viewed by a minor or for Internet users who knowingly transmitted indecent material to a minor. Clinton signed the bill into law. In response, ACLU associate director Barry Steinhardt said, "It's a sad day for free speech in America," and the ACLU immediately filed a lawsuit to prevent implementation of the CDA while it was reviewed in the courts. Even among those who voted for the bill, doubts arose about the constitutionality of the measure. A year and a half later the Supreme Court rejected the CDA, declaring it unconstitutional in its abridgement of free-speech rights. The Court voted unanimously against the provision aimed at "patently offensive display," which could have included speech both on websites and in chat rooms, and split seven to two on the transmission provision.

Free Speech on the Internet. In its decision against the Communications Decency Act, the Supreme Court ruled that the provisions of the law unconstitutionally undermined free speech. While affirming the importance of protecting children from inappropriate material, the Court concurred with a lower court ruling that the Act abridged First Amendment rights. In making its ruling, the Court concluded the broadcast standards used to censor obscenity do not necessarily apply to the Internet and that the need

to protect children from explicit sexual materials on line does not supersede the rights of adults to have access to such content. Chris Hansen, lead counsel for the ACLU, which brought suit over the Act, commented that the decision "is recognition that speech over the Internet is entitled to the same First Amendment protection that books and magazines have always enjoyed." Representative Anna Georges Eshoo (D-California) added, "The Supreme Court has demonstrated a far better understanding of free-speech issues on the Internet than Congress did in its rush to address questionable online materials. Today's ruling erects a high legal barrier around online free speech that Congress would be wise not to attempt to breach." Ultimately, then, in the eyes of the Supreme Court justices, preventing children from accessing graphic materials on the Internet is the parents' responsibility.

Blocking Porn. At the end of the decade two technologies existed to help block porn on the Internet, although neither was foolproof. The first is a filtering software that blocks access to sites that contain certain words or phrases associated with sexually explicit material. One of the problems, however, is that such software often also blocks legitimate sites such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) or sites that deal with social issues such as violence, sexuality, rape, or homosexuality. Additionally, the software does not always block pornographic pages. The second technology for blocking pornography is a ratings system. Web developers can label sites with invisible tags that indicate the type of content on the site. Users then utilize a ratings system developed by an organization they trust, such as the Parent Teacher Association (PTA), and program their browsers to access only sites whose content meets the standards of the organization. While both technologies have their problems, opponents to the CDA argue that filtering software and ratings systems are still better options than censorship. Following the Supreme Court decision, Clinton stated, "We will study the opinion closely. We can and must develop a solution for the Internet that is as powerful for the computer as the V-chip will be for television and that protects children in ways that are consistent with America's free-speech values."

MERGERS

Bigger? Yes. Better? Remains to Be Seen. The trend toward consolidation began in the 1980s continued with renewed vigor in the 1990s. Publishing houses, newspapers, radio and television stations all were swallowed up in the ongoing series of mergers that created larger and larger companies while reducing genuine diversity in ownership and perspective, as well as occasionally creating strange bedfellows.

Newspapers for Sale. The hometown newspaper, a staple of American life, was undergoing a major change in the 1990s that may completely alter the nature of local news. Half of the 1,489 daily U.S. newspapers had circulations under thirteen thousand, but these small papers were being bought up as business investments at an amazing rate—

more than 380 were sold in a five-year period. The hometown daily constituted 70 percent of daily newspaper sales, making the small paper a profitable business for their owners, usually large businesses that bought up and trimmed down these local papers. Community Newspaper Holdings (CNHI), for example, owned ninety-five papers; Liberty Group Publishing owned sixty-three. Hometown dailies were especially appealing because, unlike large metro papers, they usually faced little or no competition, had fewer pages and therefore required less newsprint per copy, rarely had unionized workers, employed cheap labor, and tended to have stable bases.

Fast-Growing Empires. Two of the fastest-growing newspaper empires were CNHI and Liberty, which only came into existence in 1997 and 1998, respectively. Based in Birmingham, Alabama, CNHI owned ninety-five dailies by 1999 with a total circulation of eight hundred thousand and another 102 nondaily publications. Ralph Martin, founder and president of CNHI, worked for Park Communications as vice president of newspaper operations. When Park was sold to Media General, Martin discovered the new owner did not intend to keep all of Park's 106 newspapers. Preferring to avoid a public offering of the small papers he wanted to buy, Martin went to the Alabama pension fund, which put up the money for the venture, enabling CNHI to buy such small dailies as the *Lumberton* (N.C.) *Robesonian*, the *Jacksonville* (Texas) *Daily Progress*, and the *Jeffersonville* (Ind.) *Evening News*. Likewise, in 1998, Leonard Green made a \$310 million deal with Hollinger International and created Liberty Group Publishing in Northbrook, Illinois. Liberty's sixty-five papers had a circulation of 275,000, and the company owned another 237 nondaily publications.

Geographic Clusters. A further trend that emerged in all the transfers of local newspapers was clustering, the buying up of newspapers in towns located in geographic proximity. All of the major newspaper publishers—Thomson, Knight-Ridder, Cox, Media General, Hollinger, Gannett, Donrey, and MediaNews—engaged in swapping properties to fit their geographic strategies and tightening the concentration of ownership. The reason for clustering was economic. Newspapers in close geographic proximity could share resources—accounting, for example, or state and regional coverage. Best of all, some papers could share the same printing plant. Geographic concentration also appealed to large retail advertisers who could create a single ad sheet for several newspapers and could make a single purchase on a cost-per-thousand basis rather than buying ad space in bits and pieces.

Reduced Diversity. While building clustered newspaper empires made economic sense for investors, the strategy had its drawbacks. Often newly purchased newspapers found themselves facing staff and budget cuts. When MediaNews bought the *Long Beach* (Cal.) *Press-Telegram*, it slashed newsroom salaries, and more than half the staff left. Twenty-five employees were cut



Costumed ABC employees on strike outside the main gates of the Walt Disney Company on 6 November 1998 (AP/Wide World Photos).

at the *Times Herald* in Norristown, Pennsylvania, by the Journal Register Company; fifty-five editorial positions were cut when Gannett bought the *Asbury Park Press* in New Jersey. Perhaps the greater worry for readers, however, was the reduction in authentic diversity of journalistic voices as newspaper ownership was concentrated into fewer and fewer hands. In twenty-two states a single company owned at least 20 percent of the daily newspapers. For example, CNHI owned more than half of the dailies in Oklahoma, and Media General owned one-third of the papers in Virginia. With newspapers being owned by widely diversified financial corporations, the possibility of conflicts of interest rose greatly. The trend toward corporate ownership also raised the issue of community involvement. With ownership of the paper removed from the local community, many newspapers became less involved in local issues because owners did not see such participation as contributing to the bottom line.

AT&T and TCI. In 1999 a phone company became the largest cable operator in the nation when AT&T bought TCI for \$48 billion. For most of its history, the cable industry was a sort of family affair, with small cable companies being owned by local businessmen. As a

result of deregulation, competition, and consolidation, however, cable companies quickly became part of larger corporations. At the end of the decade analysts were predicting that eventually four or five cable companies would dominate, with AT&T, Time Warner, and Comcast among the leaders. In June 1999 a federal judge ruled in favor of a lawsuit brought by Portland, Oregon, and surrounding Multnomah County, to require AT&T to open its cable networks to competition. Cable networks in the late 1990s began to deliver more than television, as technological advances allowed them to carry advanced digital services such as the Internet and telephone service. The Portland lawsuit was an attempt to force AT&T to sell access to its network to Internet providers such as America Online (AOL) and MindSpring. AT&T appealed the decision in the U.S. Court of Appeals, but in December it agreed to allow broadband customers a choice of Internet Service Provider (ISP). In a letter to Federal Communications chair William E. Kennard, AT&T's vice president and general counsel James W. Cicconi wrote that the company would allow high-speed Internet access over its cable, giving customers a choice of ISPs beginning in 2002 when its contract with Excite@Home expired.

Disney and ABC. In 1995 Walt Disney Company chair Michael D. Eisner led the Magic Kingdom to spend \$19 billion to buy Capital Cities ABC in a deal that united theme parks, movie and television studios, a major network, and a variety of cable channels, including ESPN and Lifetime TV. Disney's romance with American Broadcasting Company (ABC) began more than forty years earlier when ABC helped Walt Disney finance his dream of a theme park, and talks of merger had been surfacing from time to time throughout the previous decade. Wall Street reacted positively to the merger, and, by the end of the week after the merger announcement, the combined value of the two companies topped \$48 billion.

Time Warner and Turner. In 1996 a \$7.5 billion merger occurred between Time Warner and Turner Broadcasting System (TBS), creating the world's largest media and entertainment company at the time. Robert Edward "Ted" Turner

III, founder and chair of TBS, became vice chair and the largest single shareholder of the newly merged company. The deal left the company owning film and TV studios, a cable system, cable networks, music groups, magazines, publishing houses, the Atlanta Braves, the Atlanta Hawks, and other interests.

Viacom and Paramount. In 1994, Viacom, best known for its ownership of MTV, acquired Paramount Communications for \$9.8 billion in a battle with Barry Diller, chairman of QVC Network, who also was trying to buy the company. By building an alliance with Blockbuster Entertainment Corporation, the largest retail video store operator in the world, Viacom was able to close the deal, creating a media empire that included movie and TV studios, a cable system, cable networks, broadcasting stations, publishing houses, motion picture theaters, 3,500 Blockbuster Video stores in ten countries, the New York Knicks and the New York Rangers, and many other interests.

A SAMPLE OF WHAT THEY OWNED: THREE MAJOR MEDIA CORPORATIONS

Time Warner/Turner

Castle Rock
Hanna-Barbera Cartoons
New Line Cinema
Cartoon Network
CNN International
Comedy Central
Court TV
Home Box Office
Headline News
Elektra Entertainment
Atlantic Records
Warner Brothers Records
Time
Fortune
Sports Illustrated
People
Book of the Month Club
Little, Brown & Co.
Atlanta Braves
Atlanta Hawks
DC Comics
World Championship Wrestling

Disney/ABC

Buena Vista Pictures
Miramax Films
Touchstone Pictures
Touchstone Television
The Disney Channel
ESPN and ESPN2
Lifetime TV
Hollywood Records
Discover Magazine
Anaheim Mighty Ducks
Disneyland
California Angels (25 percent)

Viacom/Paramount

Republic Pictures (37 percent)
Spelling Entertainment (70.5 percent)
MTV
Nickelodeon
Showtime USA Network
Three NBC and two CBS affiliates
Four independent and three FOX affiliates
14 radio stations
Pocket Books
Prentice-Hall Imprints
Simon & Schuster Publishers
New York Knicks
New York Rangers
Regional theme parks
Motion picture theaters
Music Plus retail chain

Source: John Pungente, S.J., "Trans-National Media Corporations: What They Own and How Much They Earn," *Mediacy* (1996): 18.

Viacom and CBS. In September 1999, Viacom agreed to purchase Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) for \$34.8 billion. Viacom chair Sumner M. Redstone was slated to be chair and chief executive (CEO) of the new company that was planning to keep the Viacom name. To put Viacom in a strong financial position for the deal, Redstone sold a minority stake in Blockbuster in a public stock offering and planned to sell the remaining stakes within a few months. The merger put the future of Viacom's stake in United Paramount Network (UPN) in jeopardy because government rules prevent a company from owning more than one TV network.

Pearson Education. On 30 November 1998 Pearson Education was launched from the merger of Addison Wesley Longman with Simon & Schuster education, business, professional, and reference divisions to form the largest educational publisher in the world. The newly formed publishing house offered publications in elementary, secondary, professional, and higher education, as well as English Language Teaching and educational technology. Its imprints included Prentice-Hall, Scott Foresman, Allyn & Bacon, Macmillan Computer Publishing, and Modern Curriculum Press.

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SHOCKUMENTARY

Ratings Winners. In the 1990s the most successful documentaries and ratings winners on television were "shockumentaries," a form of reality-based television that uses a "greatest hits" format to showcase shocking, violent, and gory footage of everything from police shootouts to unbelievably large tumors to natural disasters. They are inexpensive to make and highly successful in garnering high ratings, especially in the all-important eighteen- to forty-nine-year-old demographic. The shockumentary trend began in 1995 when Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) aired *World's Most Dangerous Animals*, but FOX

perfected the genre with *When Animals Attack*. In fact, the second installation of the show was so successful that FOX ran it twice during the November 1996 rating sweeps period.

Shock Predecessor. One of the most successful reality-based programs began in 1989 and had aired more than four hundred episodes by the end of 1999. *COPS* broadcast everyday experiences of law enforcement officers, such as chasing fleeing suspects, intervening in domestic disputes, and apprehending murder suspects. The show was nominated for four Emmys and won its timeslot in the eighteen- to forty-nine-year-old adult demographic during the 1998 May sweeps. At the end of the decade, *COPS* was one of the longest-running programs on television, joining the ranks of *60 Minutes*, *20/20*, and *48 Hours*. While *COPS* was an innovator in the reality genre, its images of police experiences were mild compared with the shock specials that came to the fore in the middle of the decade.

Behind the Shock. The brains behind shockumentary programs on FOX was Mike Darnell, executive vice president of specials. Darnell began his TV career as a tape librarian at the local FOX station in Los Angeles. He worked his way up the ranks and was eventually invited to work on *Alien Autopsy: Fact or Fiction* (1995), which became FOX's highest-rated special ever. Based on the success of *Alien Autopsy*, Darnell was placed in charge of specials for the network. Drawing on the success of animal specials produced by *National Geographic*, Darnell decided to put together a show from footage of animals attacking people, and *When Animals Attack* was born.

Animal Snuff Films. NBC executive Don Ohlmeyer likened *When Animals Attack* to a "snuff film," a form of pornography in which women are brutally killed. FOX responded by pointing out that *Dateline* on NBC had aired footage of a man being gored by a bull. Later FOX volunteered not to air the attack-genre specials anymore. During the 1997 sweeps, however, FOX broadcast *World's Deadliest Swarms*, *When Stunts Go Bad*, *Cheating Death: Catastrophes Caught on Tape*, and *World's Scariest Police Shootouts*. An advertisement for *When Good Pets Go Bad* encouraged viewers to send in their footage of "performing animals that strike back against trainers or rebel in performance, companion animals trained to fight, animals making mad dashes to freedom, frightening scenes of animals displaying their wild natures, humans under attack—bitten by snakes, pecked by birds, scratched by cats, ravaged by dogs." While *When Animals Attack* was canceled in 1998, its effects continued throughout the industry. The American Broadcasting Company (ABC) aired *World's Deadliest Volcanoes*, FOX developed *When Disaster Strikes*, CBS presented *Forces of Nature*, and even the venerable *National Geographic* created a documentary called *Deadly Encounters* that featured black widow spiders, rattlesnakes, and bears. FOX also developed *Guinness World Records: Primetime*, which debuted 27 July 1998, featuring a three-hundred-pound tumor. Other

Guinness episodes included the man with the longest fingernails, the boy who had his head reconstructed, the "living skeleton," and "werewolf" boys. Another FOX series was the *Busted* specials that showed surveillance video of people doing things they should not have been doing—urinating in a coffee pot, stealing donuts, or copying their breasts on the office copier.

Real TV. Paramount also offered its share of shock with a series called *Real TV*. Premiering 9 September 1996, *Real TV* showed viewers clips from Margot Byra "Margaux" Hemingway's private therapy sessions four years prior to her 28 June 1996 suicide. *Real TV* presented footage of celebrities before they were stars, high-drama rescues, amazing stunts, natural disasters, and bizarre people. Episodes included a man falling onto the concrete bottom of his empty swimming pool, people who survived a shootout at a North Hollywood bank, a Russian kidnapping, a high-rise fire in Chile, and the removal of an arrow from a horse that had been shot at point-blank range. By February 1997 viewership was up 62 percent from its premiere episode.

Shock Promos. Of course, the success of shockumentaries was based on the ability of networks to get people to watch their shows, hence, the shock promotion. While viewers certainly had the choice not to watch the actual shows, the promos were a different matter. These brief glimpses of car crashes, attacking bears, havoc-wreaking tornadoes, and human deformities appeared as commercials during other programs. In the middle of watching *The Simpsons* or *Ally McBeal*, unsuspecting viewers often found themselves confronted with station-break promotions of carnage shows, whether they wanted to see it or not. One commentator wrote, "I'm sure many people who see the promos will tune in so they can survey the rest of the disaster scene . . . I don't want shocking things flashed in front of my eyes without warning. They put warnings before shows like that in their entirety. Why do they feel it's OK to shove it in my face when I'm unsuspecting?"

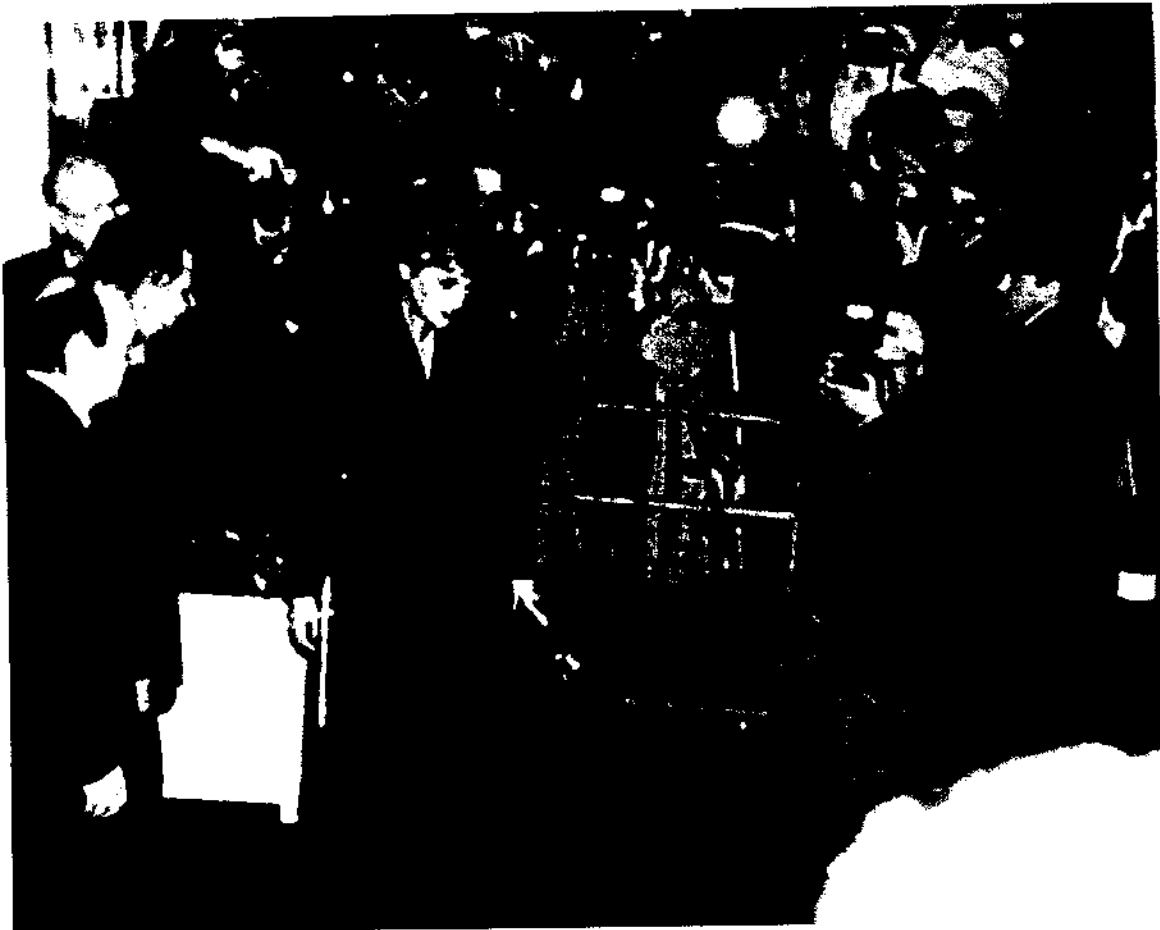
Real Violence—Real Problem. A 1998 report based on a three-year study by researchers at UCLA found that overall depictions of violence on television had decreased through the decade, with the exception of the shockumentary. While the genre was virtually nonexistent in the first year of the study, specials that elicited concern over violent content grew from five in the second year to sixteen in the third. Jeffrey Cole, director of the UCLA Center for Communications Policy explained, "Overall, the trend is toward less violence on network television. While the majority of programming deals responsibly with violence issues, reality-based specials do not." In particular, the study cited FOX's *World's Scariest Police Shootouts* and CBS's *The World's Most Dangerous Animals* for their violent and gory content. Cole said that such shows depicted "violence without any context." Darnell disagreed, explaining that the specials depicted the same violence shown on local news everyday. Despite the debate, shockumentaries were

highly successful in the late 1990s. *World's Wildest Police Videos* and *Shocking Moments Caught on Tape* helped FOX capture its best ratings in the eighteen- to forty-nine-year-old demographic in nearly six years.

TABLOID JOURNALISM

News Lite. In the 1990s the line between serious journalism and tabloid reporting blurred substantially. Supermarket tabloids such as the *National Enquirer*, *Star*, and *Weekly World News* broke and reported top news stories, and more and more the stories that appeared in print and television news began to look like reports from the *National Enquirer*. In fact, *Inside Edition* won a Polk Award for a piece on abuses in the insurance industry in Arkansas, and major networks provided almost nonstop coverage of the woes of Michael Jackson, O. J. Simpson, Patsy and John Ramsey, and Bill Clinton. News anchor Dan Rather called this trend toward the sensational "news lite." On the one hand, Americans assailed the journalistic world for reporting the sordid details, of Clinton's sex scandal, for example, and yet they could not seem to get enough of them. The decade ended with debates still raging about journalistic ethics and the intrusion of the press into the private lives of public figures.

Diana and the Paparazzi. Diana, Princess of Wales, had often complained of the paparazzi who seemed to follow her everywhere after she came to public attention when she was courted by Prince Charles and later married him. When she died in a car accident in Paris on 31 August 1997 while being chased by photographers, her plight raised public interest and anger over the ways news was gathered. While blood alcohol tests revealed that Diana's driver was drunk that night, many people, including Diana's brother, blamed paparazzi for their role in the accident. Not only did they chase Diana, but they immediately snapped pictures of the accident scene. In his statement the day of his sister's death, Earl Spencer said, "I always believed the press would kill her in the end. But not even I could imagine that they would take such a direct hand in her death as seems to be the case. It would appear that every proprietor and editor of every publication that has paid for intrusive and exploitative photographs of her, encouraging greedy and ruthless individuals to risk everything in pursuit of Diana's image, has blood on his hands today." Diana had long pled with the paparazzi for privacy and had even filed a restraining order against one photographer the year before her death. Other celebrities joined in recounting their frustrating experiences with paparazzi, and some U.S. legislators called for measures to limit access to public figures, but journalists argued that laws on the books already addressed the issue and further limitations would prove unconstitutional and unnecessary. Some supermarkets even refused to carry any tabloid newspapers that published accident-scene photographs. Still, coverage of Diana's death in the mainstream media was itself a feeding frenzy. *Time* and *Newsweek* redid their covers and devoted many pages to stories about Diana. In fact, *Time's* first



Diana, Princess of Wales, passing paparazzi on 3 December 1993 (Michel Stephens/"PA Photos")

issue about Diana's death sold 853,000 newsstand copies—650,000 more than normal—and the commemorative issue sold 1.2 million copies, making these editions the two largest sellers in *Time's* history. *USA Today's* circulation for the week following the accident was well above normal, and *The Washington Post* sold more than 20,000 copies above the normal rate of its Sunday editions the day Diana died and the day after her funeral. CNN experienced a dramatic increase in its viewership, and more than fifteen million people watched the *60 Minutes* edition devoted to the princess. More than twenty-six million households tuned in to watch Diana's funeral. Some journalists decried the "tabloid-laundry" of many of the mainstream media—writing about the tabloids and running pictures of the photographs to show how terrible they were. Other journalists defended the practice, saying the photos illustrated serious issues and were not meant to titillate or entertain. In either case, the coverage of Diana's death certainly illustrated the blurring line between tabloid and mainstream journalism, in addition to the increasing pressure on the press to provide entertainment as well as news.

Monicagate. The story that led to the impeachment of President Clinton by the House of Representatives was broken not in the mainstream media but by Internet gossip Matt Drudge on 18 January 1998. Three days later the *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and American Broadcasting Company (ABC) reported the allegations that the

president had had an affair with a White House intern, which Clinton denied, and the media frenzy began, with innuendo often replacing fact. Interestingly enough, *Newsweek* lost the scoop because the magazine wanted to act responsibly. Michael Isikoff had been pursuing the story as a follow-up to Paula Corbin Jones's allegations of sexual misconduct against Clinton. In March 1997, Isikoff met with Linda Tripp, a Pentagon public-affairs officer and confidant of Monica Lewinsky, who had taped phone conversations in which Lewinsky discussed her affair with the president. *Newsweek* had held up the story, but when other media published the allegations, *Newsweek* decided to put the details online. The ensuing coverage eclipsed even the media attention that had been given to the O. J. Simpson trial or the death of Princess Diana. Suddenly Americans learned on the nightly news details that would have required a parental-warning label had they appeared in a prime-time show. Night after night television audiences heard about oral sex, adultery, and a semen-stained dress. Newspapers and television consistently used phrases such as "sources said" or "reportedly" to bring every lurid detail, allegation, and innuendo to the public's attention. Eventually, however, people tired of the coverage of the scandal, seeing the media's preoccupation as sordid and excessive. In fact, as the scrutiny intensified, Clinton's popularity increased. An outpouring of anger at the media occurred, and yet people continued to

BEST-SELLERS OF THE 1990S (1990-1998)

Rank	Title	Author	Number Sold	Years as bestseller
1.	<i>The Prisoner</i>	by John Grisham	11,200,000+	(1993-1994)
2.	<i>The Client</i>	by John Grisham	8,100,000	(1994)
3.	<i>Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus</i>	by John Gray	6,600,000+	(1993-1997)
4.	<i>Jurassic Park</i>	by Michael Crichton	6,400,000+	(1993)
5.	<i>The Firm</i>	by John Grisham	6,175,000+	(1993)
6.	<i>In the Kitchen with Rosie</i>	by Rosie Daley	5,900,000+	(1994-1995)
7.	<i>The Bridges of Madison County</i>	by Robert James Waller	5,800,000+	(1993-1995)
8.	<i>Rising Sun</i>	by Michael Crichton	5,600,000	(1993)
9.	<i>The Chamber</i>	by John Grisham	5,000,000	(1995)
10.	<i>The Runaway Jury</i>	by John Grisham	4,995,000+	(1997)

Source: Publishers Weekly.

read and tune in. For many critics of the media, coverage of the White House scandal indicated the extent to which tabloid and mainstream journalism had become closely aligned. TV critic Tom Shales wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Once more, it seems to be happening with greater frequency, the lead story on 'Inside Edition' and 'Hard Copy' is the same as the lead story on 'The CBS Evening News.'" Media critic Jon Katz likewise worried that the ramifications of the salacious coverage of the scandal would transmit a dangerous message to the public: "that there is no difference between us and the tabloids."

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TALK RADIO

Conservative Media. Through the last few decades of the twentieth century, conservative politicians, religious leaders, and other public figures often decried the "liberal media," but in the 1990s, conservatives themselves found

their media niche—talk radio. By far, talk-radio shows across the nation were dominated by conservative ideologues who attacked everything from feminism and welfare to gun control and the president, although a few liberals remained on the air. By the middle of the decade talk radio was the second most pervasive radio format in the nation, following only country music, and the number of talk stations had increased to one thousand, up from two hundred only ten years before. One talk station manager suggested the reason that conservatives dominated was that they were simply more entertaining. Liberals, he said, "are genetically engineered not to offend anybody. People who go on the air afraid of offending are not inherently entertaining." Certainly most conservative radio talk-show hosts in the 1990s did not shy away from offending people. For example, Rush Limbaugh, probably the top conservative radio talk-show host of the decade frequently targeted women, the poor, and people of color with his on-air comments. Ken Hamblin, a black conservative whose show was syndicated to more than sixty stations nationwide, at one time railed against gun control and against James Brady, whom he called "the cripple guy," for promoting it. Apparently these shows had a lot of influence too. A 1993 Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press survey found that 44 percent of Americans named talk radio as their primary source for political information. One congressman even suggested that Limbaugh was partly responsible for the GOP's 1994 election victories.

Dittoheads and Feminazis. The number one radio talk-show host of the nineties was Rush Limbaugh, whose three-hour show was heard daily by twenty million listeners. Limbaugh was born in Cape Girardeau, Missouri, in 1954 and began working in radio for a Top-40 station when he was only sixteen. After attending Southeast Missouri State University, he started his radio career at American Broadcasting Company's ABC affiliate in Pittsburgh. From there he moved to Kansas City, where he eventually left broadcasting for a few years to work with the Kansas City Royals baseball franchise. In 1983 he returned to broadcasting as a political commentator for KMBZ in Kansas City, and in 1984 he began to host a daytime talk show on KFBB in Sacramento. In 1988 he began his nationally syndicated network talk show. He received the Marconi Award for Syndicated Radio Personality of the Year in 1992 and in 1993 was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame. Limbaugh's willingness to lambaste the Left, sometimes with complete disregard of the facts, earned him a devoted following, usually white, male, and working class, who agreed with his views and quickly became known as "dittoheads." His comments were often inflammatory and raised the ire of organizations such as the National Organization for Women (NOW) and Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). NOW began a "Flush Rush" campaign to encourage advertisers to pull their spots from his show, and FAIR released a report documenting the misinformation (called "disinformation" by some) in many of Limbaugh's comments. For example, Limbaugh contended that volcanoes did more to harm the ozone layer than human-produced chemicals. He claimed that the only people who worried about the ozone layer were "environmental whackos" and "dunderheaded alarmists and prophets of doom." He outraged feminists by referring to them as "feminazis," and in his "Thirty-Five Undeniable Truths" (February 1994) he argued that "Feminism was established to allow unattractive women easier access to the mainstream of society."

Radio Therapy. Close on the heels of Limbaugh's popularity was Dr. Laura C. Schlessinger, whose three-hour daily radio talk show drew twenty million listeners, with fifty thousand of them vying each day to consult her on the air. She was heard on 450 stations in the United States and 35 in Canada. The format of her show was simple. People called in with their problems, and Schlessinger offered them quick—often simplistic and untenable—solutions. Her answer to women who complained about the men in their lives? "Pick better!" A man confessed to a sex addiction problem, and she told him, "No, you have a character problem." Schlessinger's credo was "Grow up." For many Americans searching for a definitive answer in the instability of postmodernism, Schlessinger provided an avenue of certainty. Judgmental and moralistic, she berated callers' behaviors and ordered them around like a media mother. Schlessinger herself was raised without religion by a Jewish father and Catholic mother, and recalled her childhood as an unhappy one. She earned a Ph.D. in physiology from

Columbia University Medical School and became a professor at the University of Southern California and Pepperdine University. Eventually she received a license in marriage and family therapy and went into private practice. One day in 1975 she called in to Bill Ballance's radio talk show, and her banter with him went so well that he began to feature her as a regular guest. Within a few years she had her own show. While Schlessinger immersed herself in Judaism, she was supportive of all religions but became a darling of the evangelical Right. Her antifeminist message played especially well amidst the backlash against activist women during the decade. Schlessinger claimed she had once been a feminist, but "all that feminist stuff fell off me like bad dandruff and I knew there was something more important than me and my success." "There is no oppression of women in this country," she said. Feminists "nauseate and sicken me. They've destroyed the sanctity of motherhood." Of course, Schlessinger herself managed a highly successful career and certainly seemed to benefit from advances brought about by the women's movement. Along the way, she managed to offend most people who knew her. Even Ballance, her mentor, referred to her as an "ogre." Still, at the end of the decade her show had already surpassed Howard Stern's and was rivaling Limbaugh's.

Shock Jock. The self-proclaimed "King of All Media," Howard Stern, was the third leading radio host in the decade, delivering a foul-mouthed, offensive, and highly successful show. The best known of the "shock jocks," Stern's show netted him more than \$2 million in Federal Communications Commission (FCC) fines throughout the decade for graphic and indecent speech on air. A 1997 Gallup Poll found that 90 percent of Americans were familiar with Stern, but 75 percent of those in the sample held an unfavorable opinion of him, especially women, older people, and better-educated people. Still, when Stern spoke, people listened, and, in fact, his endorsement of George E. Pataki for governor of New York in 1994 was considered a significant factor in the Republican's defeat of incumbent Democrat Mario M. Cuomo. In 1993 Stern endorsed Republican Christine Todd Whitman for governor of New Jersey, and in return she named a rest stop along I-295 in Springfield after him, complete with a plaque featuring Stern peeking from an outhouse. Stern was born in New York in 1954 and graduated from Boston University in 1976. He began work with Infinity Broadcasting in 1985 after being fired from WNBC in New York. The next year his show moved to the morning drive slot in Los Angeles. In August 1986 the show was simulcast in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. In 1990 Stern finally got the right to syndicate the show, and its expansion began. In 1998 he began a nightly television show on E! Entertainment Television, which earned an MA (mature audiences) rating for its raunchy content. Critics called the show "a low point in television history" and "the dregs of the dregs." Perhaps Stern's lowest point came in 1999 when he found a way to worsen the horror and tragedy of the Columbine High School shootings in Littleton,



Shock-rock Howard Stern (AP-Wide World Photos)

Colorado. While considering the motives for the murders, Stern said, "There were some really good looking girls running out with their hands over their heads. Did those kids try to have sex with any of the good-looking girls? They didn't even do that. At least if you're going to kill yourself and kill all the kids, why wouldn't you have some sex? If I was going to kill some people, I'd take them out with sex."

Not Necessarily the Facts. The radio talk shows of the 1990s relied more on emotion than reality. While wildly popular, these conservative hosts seemed more concerned with rhetoric, especially that which drew in an audience, than substance or reality. Often, the tone of their shows was mean, if not downright mean-spirited. Mike Hoyt, in a 1992 edition of the *Columbia Journalism Review*, explained that the flavor of these talk shows was dictated by the hosts. "There are demagogues, semi-demagogues, and no shortage of hosts who dance around the edge, at least, of hostility toward women, gays, Jews, or blacks." Nonetheless, talk radio seemed to provide a forum for many Americans to have their say or at least to have someone say it for them.

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TV TALK SHOWS

Trash TV. The most popular television talk show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, took the high ground in the explosion of talk shows in the 1990s. While Winfrey focused on personal empowerment, social activism, and books, other talk shows relied on raucous confrontations and tell-all revelations, culminating with the murder of a *Jenny Jones Show* guest who had revealed on a program his crush on another male participant. Guests came on talk shows voluntarily to air their grievances; reveal deep, dark secrets; or be reunited with mysterious people from their pasts. According to

WHEN TALK TURNS DEADLY

In March 1995, Jonathan Schmitz, 26, appeared on the *Jenny Jones Show* to meet a secret admirer. Although *Jones* producers insist that Schmitz knew his admirer could be a woman or a man, Schmitz was shocked and embarrassed when the admirer turned out to be his gay neighbor, Scott Amedure, 32. Three days after the taping, Schmitz took a twelve-gauge shotgun to Amedure's home and fired twice at close range into Amedure's chest. Minutes later, Schmitz called 911 and said, "I just walked in the room and killed him." Schmitz's lawyer claimed that Schmitz was deceived by *Jenny Jones* representatives and then snapped three days later when he found a sexually suggestive note on his doorstep and assumed it was from Amedure. Schmitz was found guilty of second-degree murder and illegal possession of a firearm in commission of a felony, but his conviction was overturned because of the mishandling of jury selection. A second guilty verdict was handed down in August 1999. The episode in which he and Amedure appeared never aired.

Meanwhile, Amedure's family filed a civil suit against the *Jenny Jones Show*, alleging that the show was negligent and responsible for the events that led to Amedure's death. The defendants in the case were Telepictures, which produces the show, and Warner Bros. Television, which syndicates it. Both entities are owned by Time Warner. In May 1999 a Michigan jury found in favor of the Amedure family and awarded them \$25 million. If the decision is upheld, the case could have far-reaching effects in the talk-show industry.

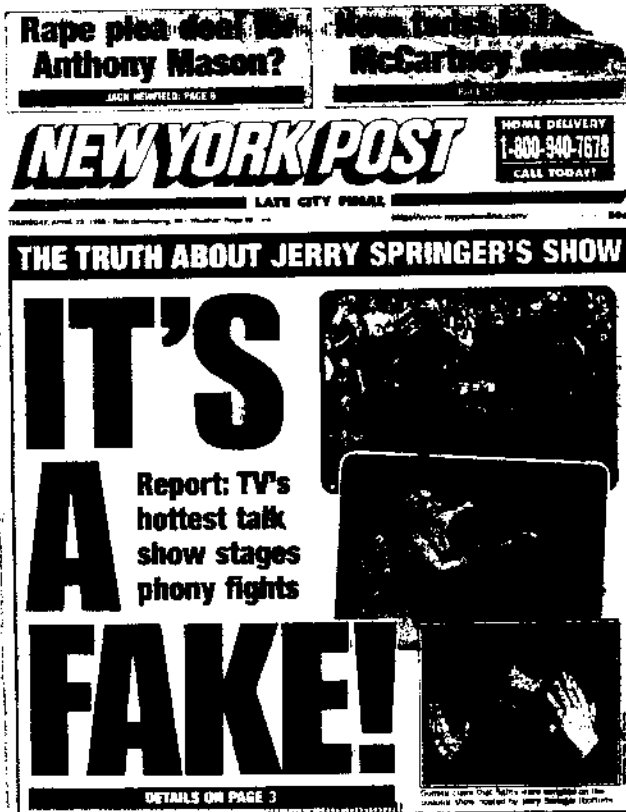
Attorneys for Warner Bros. argued that the verdict could have a chilling effect on free speech on talk shows, but Geoffrey Fieger, attorney for the Amedure family (and for Dr. Jack Kevorkian), argued that the issue was not free speech but exploitation by TV talk shows. He claimed that the show was reckless in its use of an unstable man for entertainment and did not think about the consequences of the situation in which they placed Schmitz and Amedure. In fact, he went on to condemn not only the *Jenny Jones Show* but all of talk TV, contending that such shows are undermining U.S. culture.

Jenny Jones said she was shocked and outraged by the jury's judgment. She suggested that the reaction to the murder would not have been the same had the murder followed a "heterosexual show." Rather, she argued, the response was about homophobia. Nonetheless, the decision sent shockwaves through the industry, suggesting that the public was ready for talk TV to take some responsibility.

many guests, producers often tried to whip them into a frenzy before they went on the air. The resultant televised emotional outbursts proved entertaining for audiences and took hosts such as Ricki Lake and Jerry Springer to the top of daytime television.

Talk TV in the 1990s. Coming into the 1990s, longtime talk-show host Phil Donahue led the pack, closely followed by Geraldo Rivera, Sally Jesse Raphael, and Winfrey. Donahue and Winfrey, in particular, had fostered a genre of talk show that focused on exploring information and relationships, while encouraging listeners to be better people. All of that changed quickly in the early 1990s when talk shows proliferated with what one cultural critic called "exploitalk." The bar for talk shows had been set low when in 1988 a melee by white supremacists erupted on *Geraldo*, and one of the guests broke the host's nose with a chair. When Maury Povich, Montel Williams, and Jenny Jones took to the air in 1991, Jerry Springer in 1992, and Leeza Gibbons and Ricki Lake in 1993, trash TV emerged to dominate daytime television. While the earlier talk shows had not shied away from controversy, these newcomers added the element of confrontation, and suddenly screaming matches and fistfights became part of daytime talk show fare. With topics such as "Woman in love with a serial killer" and "Girlfriend, I slept with your man and I'll do it again," these shows played to whooping audiences who, along with the hosts and producers, encouraged the escalation of mud-slinging and temper-flaring. In fact, the confrontation format was so successful that in February 1998 the *Jerry Springer Show* nudged Winfrey out of the number one slot she had held since 1987. The debut of the *Rosie O'Donnell Show* in June 1996 signaled an attempt by several performers to clean up daytime TV. Barbara Walters launched *The View*, a daytime show hosted by a group of women, in 1997; Donny and Marie Osmond and Roseanne established shows in 1998; and hip-hop star Queen Latifah debuted her show in 1999. Their impact was widely felt in the industry. Geraldo cleaned up his act and became a serious journalist, leaving his talk show in 1998 to move on to *NBC News*. Even Springer agreed to eliminate the foul language and fistfights, and his ratings slipped 17 percent, allowing *The Oprah Winfrey Show* to regain the number one spot.

A New Television Low? While daytime talk shows brought to television issues that were often silenced in societal discourse, the exploitative aspects highly outweighed the educational benefits they claimed to provide. Quite often the recruiting practices of these shows bordered on the deceptive, and many guests left feeling they had been set up for humiliation. One talk show producer told *TV Guide*, "When you're booking guests, you're thinking, 'How much confrontation can this person provide me?' The more confrontation, the better. You want people just this side of a fistfight." Ambushing guests was a typical tactic. One guest invited to the *Jerry Springer Show* found out, in front of the studio and TV audience, that her husband was still involved with his former girlfriend and that he also



Headline for the 23 April 1998 cover story attacking the most popular television talk show of the year

had a male lover. She had to encounter them both on camera, and the former girlfriend even assaulted her. The guest, however, saw the experience as a mixed bag. For her, finding out the whole truth was in some ways a relief, and the show offered to pay for counseling for her and her husband. Of course, the appeal of these shows was therapy as entertainment, and in the name of therapeutic disclosure hosts encouraged their guests to reveal intimate and titillating details of their personal lives. While disclosure may have proven helpful to some guests, the fact was that they were simply objects of entertainment for the audience—who were fulfilling their voyeuristic desires. The point of these shows was not really to help guests but to garner ratings by dragging out true confessions. Although the tenor of these shows was generally nonjudgmental, audience members often viewed guests with contempt or watched their misfortunes with a sadistic sort of glee. As one cultural critic explained, "This is one of the more shameless aspects of the talk show spectacle. As passive witnesses, we consume others' misfortunes without feeling any responsibility to do anything to intervene."

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TV TECHNOLOGY

More Options. Television options expanded rapidly in the 1990s with new cable networks, digital satellite signals, and WebTV. By the end of the decade, more than two hundred broadcast networks and cable channels were available, and viewers were able to interact with many of their favorite television programs from the comfort of their couch.

Cable Expansion. Throughout the decade the number of cable channels grew sharply, although most new channels were not available to basic cable subscribers. In the early 1990s new channels tended to reflect the programming of existing networks, which targeted broad-based audiences. Instead of offering programs devoted to specific interests, viewers were given more of the same fare by these channels. For example, FX was launched in 1994, featuring a morning show, familiar reruns, a pet show, a collectibles program, and a *Nightline*-style interview show. Nonetheless, the channel, created by FOX, opened up with eighteen million subscribers, the largest start-up figure for any cable service in history. One problem in developing greater diversity was the limitation of the cable system itself, which only allowed about forty slots for programming. Additionally, the cable industry complained that the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act (1992) took away incentives to add new programming to basic service because the cost the industry was allowed to pass on to the consumer did not make carrying these channels lucrative. Instead, the cable companies focused on adding channels that were not hindered by federal rate caps—premium service, home-shopping networks, and pay-per-view movies. In fact, one of the largest growth areas was adult movie channels, which provided a substantial profit for cable operators. At the end of the decade, however, digital cable technology made possible the expansion of channels into highly specialized areas, and viewers were able to watch channels that were devoted to animals, health, cars, golf, gardening, comedy, science fiction, history, and the outdoors. News, movie, music, and sports channels were especially prolific; channels targeting specific ethnic minorities even went on the air. Many premium movie channels developed multiplexed versions so that, for example, subscribers to Encore also received Encore Love Stories, Encore Westerns, Encore Mystery, Encore Action, and Encore True Stories and Drama. By 1999 just about anyone could find a channel, from the Adam and Eve channel to Z Music, to suit his or her interest.

Crisp Images and Quality Sound. Digital satellite services were first offered in 1994, providing a system for delivering crisp images and quality sound by a digital signal

Students used to do their research at the library, searching through card catalogs and journal indices, checking out books, and copying articles. At the end of the 1990s, electronic publishing had changed all that. Everything from newspapers to magazines to books could be found with a point and a click on the web. And at the end of the decade, most of these sites could be surfed free of charge. While some print newspapers essentially reproduced their stories on the web with few changes other than a few hypertext words offering links to other stories, many web publications, such as HotWired, were creating a new genre of media. Editor David Weir explained, "I think what you're looking at is honestly the birth of a new mass media. It's happening right before our eyes." Not everyone was exuberant about the move toward electronic publishing. Many journalists and newspaper publishers found themselves wondering if they were fast becoming dinosaurs. As one journalist put it, "Round One is over and America Online has won." The *New York Times* discovered, for example, that half of its 3 million registered on-line users had never bought a copy of the paper, and a Pew Research Center survey found that the percentage of Americans getting news on-line at least once a week had tripled to over 36 million from 1996 to 1998. Forty-seven percent of under-30 college graduates were reading their news on-line. Unfortunately, often accuracy was sacrificed for speed in the world of the web where immediate posting of information was possible. *Newsweek* columnist and media critic Jonathan Alter summed it up: "The time when newspapers were the gatekeepers of information is over. What newspapers are now becoming is the authenticators of information, the quality control instruments on a huge river of rumor—and for that you have to have reporters. Newspapers will continue to be the primary instruments of newsgathering, but when you have so many sources of information, any one pundit has less influence. Even if there were a Walter Lippmann today, he'd just be another guy with a link to the Drudge Report."

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broadcast. An orbiting satellite beamed down signals that provided better-quality pictures than air or cable broadcasts. Another advantage of digital satellite was its availability. While still offered only in limited markets at the end of the decade, digital satellite television was available anywhere a viewer could put a dish with an unobstructed

view of the sky. The drawback was that digital satellite services did not provide access to local programming. Network stations were available, but they could be found anywhere in the United States—the American Broadcasting Company (ABC) affiliate in New York or the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) affiliate in Los Angeles. The problem was that for most people that meant no access to local news or weather. Digital satellite service was begun by DIRECTV, who actually owned the rights to the acronym DSS (digital satellite systems). Within the first six months of operation, more than half a million people had signed up for service, and by the end of the decade DIRECTV claimed more than half of the satellite-dish market share and offered more sports programming than any other network. The initial setup was expensive, however, and ordering services was complicated. The second of the three biggest satellite companies, Primestar, provided equipment and made its pricing highly competitive, but it required larger dishes, offered fewer channels and sports events, and charged more for pay-per-view movies. The third major player, the DISH Network, offered an aggressive pricing scheme if viewers were willing to commit to one year of premium service. DISH offered many channels not available with the other services, including BBC America, NASA TV, and an extensive collection of international and religious channels, and also was making an attempt to provide local network programming, offering local packages in thirteen major cities. To get all of the channels, however, consumers had to put two or even three dishes on the roof or in the backyard because the network broadcast various stations from different satellites. As an interesting side note, satellite dishes gave rise to another product, the Rock-On, a hollow faux-granite boulder used to camouflage the eighteen-inch dishes.

The Web for Couch Potatoes. Former Apple prodigy Steve Perlman designed the Web TV box in 1995 to adapt computer data so it could be browsed on a television set remote control. The WebTV-based Internet Terminal appeared in stores in October 1996. A year later, WebTV Networks introduced the WebTV-based Internet Receiver that integrated television programming with Internet content and services. Interactive Television Links allowed subscribers to supplement their television viewing with related information from the Internet. WebTV Networks was acquired by Microsoft in August 1997. In 1999 WebTV Networks joined with EchoStar Communications to make Internet TV service available through satellite. The EchoStar satellite receiver came equipped with an ultrafast, multigigabyte hard drive that made possible such features as TV Pause (freezing a show for up to thirty minutes and then resuming when the viewer is ready to watch again), DVR (automatic recording of several hours of high-quality digital video), and downloadable video games. By the end of 1999, television viewers with WebTV could play along with *Jeopardy*, vote in a live poll while watching *Judge Judy*, access sports stats, and get up-to-the-minute news coverage with *NBC Nightly News*.

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THE V-CHIP

Responsible Viewing With the explosion of new networks and greater availability of ever-increasing violence on television, parents and politicians became concerned in the 1990s about children's access to violent programming. As early as 1992 the technical standards for a "violence chip," to provide parents with a way to block particular television programs, were discussed at meetings of the Electronic Industries Association. The v-chip reads information encoded in a rated program and blocks programs based on the parent's selections. In 1992 the v-chip was shot down by broadcasters who were afraid it might limit audiences and advertising revenue, but by 1994 the industry group agreed to begin including the device in more-expensive televisions.

Telecommunications Reform. In the midst of the ever-growing telecommunications industry, Congress,

along with President Bill Clinton, recognized the need for reform in order to promote competition, stimulate private investment, improve access to information, and provide parents with technology to help them control programming in their homes. In 1996 Congress passed, and on 8 February Clinton signed, the Telecommunications Reform Act. This law provides the industry with guidance in several areas: (1) universal service, ensuring that schools, libraries, hospitals, and clinics have access to advanced telecommunications services; (2) media ownership, preventing undue concentration of television, newspaper, and radio ownership; (3) phone service, removing regulations that kept local Bell Telephone companies and long-distance companies from competing with one another; and (4) the v-chip. The Act calls for a v-chip to be installed in every new television set. In response to this legislation the TV industry in 1997 submitted a voluntary system of parental guidelines for rating television programming to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for review, and in March 1998 the FCC found the rating system was acceptable and adopted technical requirements for the v-chip.



President Bill Clinton shows off a v-chip at the Library of Congress on 8 February 1996, where he signed the Telecommunications Reform Act (AP/Wide World Photos).

TV PARENTAL GUIDELINES

The following are the ratings established to guide parents in their viewing selection for their children as described by the FCC:

TV-Y (All children—this program is designed to be appropriate for all children). Whether animated or live-action, the themes and elements in this program are specifically designed for a very young audience, including children from ages two through six. This program is not expected to frighten younger children.

TV-Y7 (Directed to Older Children—this program is designed for children age seven and above). It may be more appropriate for children who have acquired the developmental skills needed to distinguish between make-believe and reality. Themes and elements in this level may include mild fantasy or comedic violence, or may frighten children under the age of seven. Therefore, parents may wish to consider the suitability of this program for their younger children.

TV-G (General Audience—most parents would find this program suitable for all ages). Although this rating does not signify a program designed specifically for children, most parents may let younger children watch this program unattended. It contains little or no violence, no strong language, and little or no sexual dialogue or situations.

TV-PG (Parental Guidance Suggested—this program contains material that parents may find unsuitable for younger children). Many parents may want to watch with their younger children. The theme itself may call for parental guidance and/or the program contains one or more of the following: moderate violence (V), some sexual situations (S), infrequent coarse language (L), or some suggestive dialogue (D).

TV-14 (Parents Strongly Cautioned—this program contains some material that many parents would find unsuitable for children under fourteen years of age). Parents are strongly urged to exercise greater care in monitoring this program and are cautioned against letting children under the age of fourteen watch unattended. This program contains one or more of the following: intense violence (V), intense sexual situations (S), strong coarse language (L), or intensely suggestive dialogue (D).

TV-MA (Mature Audiences Only—this program is specifically designed to be viewed by adults and therefore may be unsuitable for children under seventeen). This program contains one or more of the following: graphic violence (V), explicit sexual activity (S), or crude, indecent language (L).

FCC V-Chip Rules. According to the FCC, all TV sets with picture screens thirteen inches or larger must be equipped with the v-chip. Half of all televisions manufactured after 1 July 1999 were required to carry the v-chip, and all thirteen-inch or larger sets made after 1 January 2000 had to meet this requirement. Set top boxes were made available to allow parents to use v-chip technology on their existing televisions. The rating system established by the National Association of Broadcasters, the National Cable Television Association, and the Motion Picture Association of America is known as "TV Parental Guidelines." Ratings are shown on the TV screen for the first fifteen seconds of a rated program.

The V-Chip and the First Amendment. V-chip legislation was carefully crafted to avoid infringing on First Amendment free-speech rights. While television manufacturers would be required to install the v-chip, the program ratings system would be devised and implemented by the television industry. The v-chip would allow parents to block programs they found inappropriate for their children, but it would not require programmers to alter their content to conform to decency standards. Additionally, no requirement was made that programs be labeled. That allowed the TV industry to administer and apply the rating system to specific programs.

V-Chip Task Force. In May 1999 FCC chairman William E. Kennard established the FCC V-Chip Task Force to ensure the success of the v-chip. The goals of the Task Force were: (1) ensure that blocking technology was available and that programmers were encoding ratings information in conformance with their voluntary commitment; (2) educate parents about the v-chip; (3) encourage distribution of information about the v-chip at the time consumers purchase televisions; (4) encourage labeling v-chip equipped sets; and (5) gather information about the availability, usage, and effectiveness of the v-chip. According to Task Force chairperson Gloria Tristani, 90 percent of television manufacturers should be in compliance with v-chip technical requirements by the July 1999 and January 2000 deadlines, although a FCC survey found that many programmers were lagging behind in actually encoding ratings.

WOMEN IN THE NEWS

Girl Power. While the second wave of the women's movement began in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the 1990s witnessed several significant developments in women's progress. Research on girls' loss of self-esteem at puberty led to efforts to boost their self-esteem and to encourage girls to consider the entire range of possibilities available to them. Girls went to work with their parents, were encouraged to go into math and science, and scored goals, baskets, and runs in sports. While equality was not fully achieved, important steps were taken, although a backlash had begun by the last few years of the decade as detractors claimed that girls' progress had come at boys' expense. Women, as well, made important steps in the decade, particularly in the areas of politics and sports.

Prior to the mid 1990s few television shows, made-for-TV movies, or specials featured gay and lesbian characters. While *That Certain Summer* (1972) on ABC had featured Hal Holbrook and Martin Sheen as a gay couple, and Billy Crystal had played a bisexual man on *Soup* in the late 1970s, only the occasional gay character appeared on the small screen. As gay rights came to the front of American politics, however, gay characters came to television. A list of examples follows:

In 1992 Guy Savant played a gay character, Matt Fielding, on *Metrose Place*.

A 1994 Ikea ad featured two men shopping for a table together.

Roseanne was kissed by Mariel Hemingway in a gay bar on a *Roseanne* episode entitled "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," which aired on 1 March 1994.

In 1995 Chris Bruno played a gay schoolteacher on *All My Children*.

The 11 January 1997 episode of *Relativity* showed two women engaged in passionate kissing.

In May 1997 Maggie Doyle's character on *ER* came out as a lesbian.

In July 1997 *TV Guide* included two gay-focused shows on its list of *The 100 Greatest Episodes of All Time*—Ellen DeGeneres's coming-out episode and an episode of *My So-Called Life* in which Wilson Cruz's

character Rickie, who is gay, had a crush on Corey, played by Adam Biesk.

Will and Grace, a sitcom centering on two gay men and their heterosexual women friends, debuted in the fall of 1998.

In 1999 Warner Bros.'s *Dawson Creek* featured a gay character whose experiences reflected those of series creator Kevin Williamson.

In early 1999 a gay clerical assistant in the detectives' squad room, who had appeared intermittently on *NYPD Blue*, became a permanent character on the show.

On 8 April 1999, the *Cathedral of Hope* aired a program by and for lesbians and gays.

The Simpsons character Waylan Smithers had an obvious crush on his boss, Montgomery Burns.

Oh, Grow Up debuted with newly divorced and newly outed lead.

Animated *Mission Hill* featured Wally and Gus, who had been a couple for forty years and are the only gay couple who enjoyed an on-screen kiss.

Other shows featuring gay characters included *Friends*, *Mad about You*, *Spin City*, *Wasteland*, *Popular*, and *Action*. *Drew Carey* featured Drew's cross-dressing heterosexual brother.

The Year of the Woman. Energized by the 1991 Clarence Thomas—Anita Hill hearings, women stormed into the political world in 1992. More female candidates than ever ran for House and Senate seats. Five Democratic women were elected to the Senate—Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein from California, Blanche Lambert Lincoln from Arkansas, Carol Moseley-Braun from Illinois, and Patty Murray from Washington—bringing to eight the total number of women in the Senate. Forty-eight women were elected to the House, and women helped elect Democratic presidential candidate Bill Clinton. The press quickly labeled 1992 as "The Year of the Woman." Nonetheless, the media still tended to focus on trivial stories about Barbara Bush and Hillary Rodham Clinton rather than on serious stories about women candidates. Election coverage still tended to be male dominated and focused on male candidates. Still, when so many women swept into Congress and Clinton was elected, many feminists thought that significant women's issues would at last be addressed, but the hopes of liberal women in 1992 were short-lived. In 1994 the Republicans announced

their "Contract with America" and took a majority in both the House and Senate, leading to a new era of cutbacks in abortion rights and welfare.

The 1996 Olympics. The 1996 Olympics in Atlanta marked a turning point in women's sports and in media coverage of female athletes. More women participated than ever before—3,626 women or 36 percent of all Olympic athletes that year—in part a result of the recognition of women's soccer, softball, and triple jump as Olympic events. In many ways the American women athletes were the beneficiaries of Title IX (Education Amendments of 1972), which required gender equity in education, including sports. While its goals had yet to be realized at the end of the decade, its effects were beginning to be seen in women athletes. Donna Lopiano, executive director of the Women's Sports Foundation, explained, "You're seeing the first generation of women who've had a lifetime of opportunity to play. What you see is the female athlete as a rule, not the exception." American women won team gold medals in basketball, soccer, softball, and gymnastics, opening the way for new



First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton (center) with senators (l to r) Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Ill.), Patty Murray (D-Wash.), Barbara Ann Mikulski (D-Md.), Barbara Boxer (D-Cal.), Dianne Feinstein (D-Cal.), and Nancy Landon Kassebaum (R-Kans.) (Official White House Photo)

professional leagues in basketball and softball. NBC covered the Olympics and was criticized for hiring only eleven women for its team of fifty-one reporters and commentators, as well as for not providing ample coverage of women's soccer. Recognizing the growing power of women athletes, General Mills placed a photo of the gymnastics team on a box of Wheaties, and Nike made basketball player Sheryl Swoopes the first female athlete to have a sneaker named after her.

Success and Inequality. The success of female athletes at the 1996 Olympics opened the way for the expansion of women's sports in the United States. The American Basketball League (ABL) tipped off its first season on 18 October 1996 with eight teams, featuring Olympic stars Teresa Edwards and Katy Steding. While the league inspired devoted fans, it was unable to stay afloat financially and folded in December 1998. Several commentators attributed its demise, at least in part, to a lack of television exposure. Meanwhile, the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA) got off the ground 21 January 1997. Rebecca Lobo, Swoopes, and Lisa Leslie all signed to play in the inaugural season. The WNBA received more television coverage, especially from Life-

time TV, a cable channel devoted to women's issues and interests. Perhaps American women's greatest success in sports and sports coverage in the 1990s was women's World Cup soccer. The 1999 championship sold more than 650,000 tickets and grabbed headlines rarely seen for soccer or women's sports in the United States. A crowd of 90,185 at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena watched as the U.S. women defeated China in a sudden-death overtime after 120 scoreless minutes. The game was one of the most-watched sporting events in the decade for women or men. With the growth of televised women's sports, in particular, more women were also given the opportunity to work as sportscasters, with some even moving into the realm of men's sports, including football. Much of the credit for providing career opportunities in sportscasting to women was given to ESPN, which hired Gayle Gardner in 1983. Still, at the end of the 1990s women had a long way to go in achieving gender equality in sports and sports coverage. Few colleges were in full compliance with Title IX. The purse for women's sports was still smaller than men's in the same sport, and salaries for female athletes still ranked far below their male counterparts. Coverage of women's sports also lagged behind.

HEADLINE MAKERS

ELLEN DEGENERES

1958-

COMEDIENNE AND ACTRESS



Coming Out. Depending on whom one asks, it was either a triumph for social justice or a further indicator of the moral decline of Western civilization. In April 1997 actor and comedian Ellen DeGeneres revealed that she was a lesbian, and her character, Ellen Morgan, also came out, making *Ellen* the first sitcom ever with a gay lead character. News of this impending declaration leaked in September 1996, setting off a sensational debate about gays both on TV and in American life. In March of 1997, ABC finally announced that Ellen Morgan would indeed come out on a special one-hour episode the last day of April. For DeGeneres, her declaration was something she had put off for a long time, attempting to keep her personal life separate from her professional one. When DeGeneres approached ABC about having her character discover that she is a lesbian, however, she knew that the time had come for her to be more open and honest about her own life. Furthermore, when she made her decision to go public, she did so in a big way, making the cover of *Time* magazine and appearing with her partner, actor Anne Heche, on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*.

Taking the Heat. While Ellen at last breathed a sigh of relief at having made her decision, ABC and Touchstone Television, which coproduced *Ellen* and were part of The Walt Disney Company, began to feel the heat from anti-gay commentators. Reverend Jerry Falwell referred to the star as "Ellen DeGenerate," and Reverend Donald E. Wildmon and his American Family Association issued threats to boycott advertisers of the show. Two occasional advertisers, J. C. Penney and Chrysler, announced that they would no longer sponsor the show. Nonetheless, *Ellen* was aired on schedule.

Background. DeGeneres was born in Metairie, Louisiana. After graduating from high school in 1976, she worked a series of dead-end jobs around New Orleans. Her friends began to tell her how funny she was, and in 1981 she took the stage at an amateur hour at a local coffee house. In 1982 she entered and won Showtime's *Funniest Person in America* competition, which became the springboard for her career as a standup comic. In 1986 she appeared on the *Tonight* show, and, following her routine, Johnny Carson invited her to take a seat, making her the first woman comic to receive the invitation on a debut appearance on the show. She was offered her own sitcom, which appeared in 1994 as *These Friends of Mine* and then, following some rethinking and recasting, became *Ellen* (1994-1998).

"The Puppy Episode." The first three years of *Ellen* were fairly lackluster, to the point that producers suggested the lead character get a puppy to liven up the show. Instead, as an inside joke, writers named the coming-out show "The Puppy Episode." In this show Ellen Morgan realizes that she is gay when she meets Susan, played by Laura Dern. The episode deals with Ellen's struggles and feelings about her realization. Oprah Winfrey appears as Ellen's therapist, and a dream sequence includes cameos by Demi Moore and Billy Bob Thornton. Ellen's lesbian friends Melissa Etheridge and k. d. lang also made guest appearances. *Ellen* scored its highest rating ever with "The Puppy Episode" and garnered five Emmy nominations. The show won an Emmy for best comedy writing and a Peabody Award. The fourth season concluded with episodes in which Ellen Morgan came out to her family and to her employer, with mixed results. In accepting the Emmy, DeGeneres said, "On behalf of the people—and the teenagers especially—out there who think there is something wrong with them because they're gay: There's nothing wrong with you, and don't let anyone make you ashamed of who you are."

Parental Warnings and Cancellation. In its fifth season the show began to explore Ellen Morgan's newly identified sexuality and was frequently rewarded with a parental advisory label that appeared before the show for

such potentially "offensive" acts as kissing her girlfriend or discussing her lesbianism. Ratings for the series began to slip, and in April 1998 ABC announced that it would not continue the show.

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IRA GLASS

1959- JOURNALIST



Revolutionary Journalism. At the end of the 1990s Ira Glass was changing the face of American journalism with his weekly radio program, *This American Life*. Ran out of Chicago public radio station WBEZ, *This American Life* was a show of stories held together by a theme. After

only three and a half years on the air the program aired on 350 public radio stations to an audience of more than 830,000. The show began when WBEZ received a MacArthur Foundation grant to create a weekly arts/news show and asked Glass to produce it. Instead, Glass pitched the station his idea for a human interest show he wanted to host featuring stories about everyday Americans. WBEZ bought the idea, and the show began broadcasting in November 1995 with an annual budget of \$224,000. In its first year it won a Peabody Award and in its second year was awarded a \$350,000 grant from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Later the Ford Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts became underwriters, and the show developed a collaboration with Amazon.com that brought in about \$125,000 per year. Even Hollywood had contacted Glass about a possible television version of the show.

Background. Glass grew up in Baltimore and then attended Northwestern University and Brown University. His first radio job was selling one-liners to a shock jock in Baltimore. After his first year in college, he volunteered to produce promotional announcements at National Public Radio (NPR) and eventually worked that position into a paying job. For the next sixteen years he worked as a producer and reporter for NPR before becoming host of *This American Life*.

Telling Stories. According to Glass, the aim of *This American Life* was to tell stories that go straight to the heart. He introduced the show as "documentaries, monologues, overheard conversations, found tapes, anything we can think of." He also kept in a lot of the voices and moments edited out of other shows, producing a more raw, realistic sound than most TV or radio programs. While realistic television tended to play toward the prurient, *This American Life* presented reality without tabloid hype, presenting stories about ordinary lives in old-fashioned ways. Glass credited the Readings section of *Harper's* magazine for some of the ideas of *This American Life*. Like the magazine section, *This American Life* was a collection of odds and ends—performance pieces, memoirs, reported pieces, some by big-name writers who normally commanded exorbitant fees but who worked for a few hundred dollars just to be on Glass's show. The program has included a piece about a secular Jew who journeyed to Colorado Springs to try to understand a group of evangelicals who spent their days praying for strangers and a story about a middle-class couple who moved to a poor Missouri town to try to improve things—with very bad results. One show, on the kindness of strangers, featured pieces on a locksmith rescuing a stranded motorist, a white teenager who ran away from home to move in with a black father figure in Harlem in the 1950s, a crazy woman who posted notices on the door of her neighbors accusing them of being drug dealers, and a man who entertained his block with Sinatra songs. Journalist Bill McKibben wrote in *The Nation* in November 1997, that *This American Life* is "simultaneously 'light,' in that it doesn't discuss Madeleine Albright/global warming/the Teamsters election/budget deficits/the Gephardt campaign, and 'deep,' in that it gets at what matters to us most of the time. It is, for instance, almost the only journalism I've ever come across that manages to cover religion as the experience it is in contemporary America. And at the same time there's room for a report from rock-and-roll fantasy camp."

Exerting Influence. The impact of Glass's use of stories told in authentic voices was felt across the world of journalism. *NBC Nightly News* created a segment called "In His Own Words," in which the subject told his or her own tale. *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *St. Petersburg Times*, *Baltimore Sun*, and *Philadelphia Inquirer* all began to use more narrative, including even the occasional fictional piece, and more and more they turned to stories of ordinary people. Paul Tough, editor of the Canadian monthly *Saturday Night*, modeled his magazine's front-of-the-book section on the program. Tough described *This American Life* as "applying the tools of journalism to everyday lives, personal lives." At the end of the decade that was still the kind of journalism Glass preferred: "I feel the stories in my heart. There's still a huge, undiscovered country."

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THEODORE JOHN KACZYNSKI

1942- TERRORIST



Antitechnology Serial Killer.

Over a seventeen-year period, a mysterious terrorist mailed or planted sixteen package bombs that killed three people and wounded twenty-three others, and he managed to elude the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the U.S. Postal Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms until 3 April 1996. He was dubbed the "Unabomber" because his first targets were related to universities (un) and airlines (a). His identity became known only when his brother recognized his antitechnology rantings in a manifesto published in the *Washington Post* and contacted federal authorities.

Background. Theodore John Kaczynski was born in Chicago on 22 May 1942. He went to Harvard on scholarship at age sixteen and then earned a Ph.D. in math from the University of Michigan. Upon graduation in 1967, he was appointed assistant professor of mathematics at the University of California, Berkeley. He resigned suddenly from that post in 1969 and then lived and worked in Salt Lake City through the mid 1970s. In 1978 he moved back to Chicago. In 1988 and again in 1991, Kaczynski wrote letters to mental-health professionals requesting counseling by mail rather than face-to-face sessions. In one of the letters he detailed his lack of friends, absence of social contact, and lack of social skills and self-confidence that led to his isolation. Kaczynski eventually began to live in a cramped hand-built cabin on a small plot of land he and his brother owned in Montana. That is where federal agents eventually found and arrested him.

The Bomb is in the Mail. The Unabomber first struck in May 1978. A package was found in a parking lot at the University of Illinois in Chicago with a return address of a Northwestern University professor. The package was addressed to a professor at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York. On 26 May the package was returned to Professor Buckley Crist at Northwestern, who was suspicious and contacted the University's Department of Public Safety. Public Safety officer Terry Marker opened the package, which exploded, leaving Marker with minor injuries. Over

time the FBI came to realize that the Unabomber often addressed packages so that the return addressee was the intended recipient. Over the next nine years the Unabomber struck at Northwestern University, American Airlines, United Airlines, the University of Utah, Vanderbilt University, UC-Berkeley, Boeing, the University of Michigan, Rentech computer store in Sacramento, and CAAMS, Inc., in Salt Lake City. With the attack on American Airlines president Percy A. Wood in June 1980, the Unabomber began to use the initials "FC" to mark his work. During the 20 February 1987 attack at CAAMS, a secretary saw a man with a mustache in a sweatshirt placing a bomb next to a car. The employee's description became the basis for the widely used sketch of the Unabomber. After the CAAMS bombing, the Unabomber's attacks seemed to stop until 1993, when in June they resumed with mail bombs being sent to a geneticist at the University of California, San Francisco, and a computer science professor at Yale University. The same day a bomb exploded at Yale. *The New York Times* received a letter mailed from Sacramento connecting "FC" to the two attacks and providing a nine-digit social security format number that it claimed would be used to authenticate future communications from "FC." In July of that year the UNABOM Task Force formed in San Francisco, made up of agents from the FBI, Treasury Department, and U.S. Postal Service.

The Unabomber Speaks. In December 1994 and April 1995, the Unabomber struck again, killing an advertising executive in New Jersey and a Forestry Association president in California. The same day as the Forestry killing, a number of letters with the "FC" identifying mark were received. A victim of one of the 1993 bombs received a letter stating that "there are a lot of people out there who resent bitterly the way technonerdz like you are changing the world." Two researchers received letters warning them to stop their genetic research. That same day *The New York Times* received a letter from "FC" with the identifying number given in 1993. The author of the letter claimed to be part of an anarchist group and suggested that if *Time*, *Newsweek*, or *The New York Times* would publish a lengthy article telling his story the group would cease its "terrorist activities," although the group retained the right to engage in "sabotage," which was defined as the destruction of property. On 27 June 1995 *The Washington Post* received a letter from "FC" that repeated the offer to cease its terrorist activities if the *Post* would publish an enclosed manuscript. The next day *The New York Times* received another letter from "FC," including the same 35,000-word manuscript that was sent to the *Post*. The following day *Penthouse* received a letter in response to an earlier offer to publish the manuscript in the magazine. The letter expressed a preference for publication in the more "respectable" *Post* or *Times* and stated conditions for publication, although the group reserved the

right to one additional bombing after the *Penthouse* publication. These letters left the publications with an ethical dilemma. On the one hand, if they published the manifesto, they could possibly save potential bombing victims. On the other, they would be acceding to terrorist demands and may well open the door for other murderous social critics to demand publication of their manifestos. Not to publish the document, however, could lead to public perception of the publications as accomplices if the Unabomber struck again. On 19 September 1995 *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* split the cost of publication of the Unabomber's manifesto in the *Post*. Their joint statement also explained that they had chosen to print the document based on recommendations from the FBI and because of "public safety reasons." The rambling document was essentially an indictment of a technocratic society that crushed human freedom.

Caught. In February 1996, David Kaczynski contacted the FBI, voicing his suspicions that his brother may be the Unabomber. Federal agents arrested Ted Kaczynski at his Montana cabin on 3 April 1996. Kaczynski's trial began with jury selection on 12 November 1997. On 22 January 1998, Kaczynski pled guilty to thirteen counts for attacks in California, New Jersey, and Connecticut that killed three and injured two. He was sentenced to four consecutive life sentences without the possibility of parole.

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DAVID E. KELLEY

1956-

TELEVISION PRODUCER



Producer of the Decade. At the end of the 1990s, David E. Kelley had five shows on television and Emmys for Best Drama and Best Comedy. Without a doubt, Kelley was the most influential TV producer of the decade. Kelley started his TV career as a story editor for *L.A. Law* (1986-1994). The next year

he became executive story editor and then supervising producer. When Steven Bochco left the show after its third season, Kelley became executive producer. Following *L.A. Law*, Kelley was creative consultant for *Doogie Howser, M.D.* (1989-1993), another Bochco production, and then executive producer of *Picket Fences* (1992-1996), *Chicago Hope* (1994-), *Ally*

McBeal (1997-), *The Practice* (1997-), and *Snoops* (1999-). His shows have won seven Emmys for Outstanding Drama and Outstanding Comedy.

Background. Kelley was born in Maine in 1956. He attended Princeton University and Boston University Law School. An associate at a law firm in 1983, he used his legal experience as the basis for a movie script that was produced as *From the Hip* (1987), starring Judd Nelson, Elizabeth Perkins, and John Hurt. When Bochco was planning *L.A. Law*, he began to look for writers with some legal expertise. He saw Kelley's script and invited him to discuss the possibility of writing an episode of *L.A. Law*. The meeting was so successful that Bochco hired Kelley as a story editor for the show. Bochco was Kelley's mentor, and when he left the show to produce *NYPD Blue* (1993-), Kelley stepped into his shoes as executive producer and continued to write scripts for the show. In 1993, Kelley married actress Michelle Pfeiffer.

Quirky, Vulnerable Characters. The one thing Kelley's vast array of programs had in common was characters who were vulnerable, needy, quirky, ridiculous, and often embarrassed; they struggled with difficulties, as well as complex moral and ethical questions. Five-time Emmy Award-winning *Chicago Hope* followed the personal and professional dilemmas of medical personnel in a leading urban hospital. Against the backdrop of high-tech medicine and the ever-changing world of modern health care, the staff members attempted to maintain sanity in a place with a reputation for being "the last, best hope," a hospital that provided treatment no other institution could or dared to give. *Ally McBeal* and *The Practice* could be considered two sides of the same coin. One a comedy and the other a drama, both were set in the world of the courtroom. *Ally McBeal* focused on a young, single lawyer who joined a rather unconventional law firm in which her former longtime boyfriend worked. One of the most interesting elements of the show was its blending of fantasy with reality—Ally's interior life often appeared on the screen—dancing babies and unicorns, for example. Neither did the show shy away from controversial issues, often engaging and offending viewers at the same time. It was an immediate hit, pulling in an average of 11.4 million viewers a week in its first season. *The Practice*, a more serious courtroom drama focusing on the complexities and moral ambiguities of the legal system, premiered on 4 March 1997 to immediate high acclaim. In 1999 *The Practice* was nominated for thirteen Emmy Awards and won the Emmy for Outstanding Drama Series, as well as a Golden Globe for Best Dramatic Series and the George Foster Peabody Award for overall excellence. Kelley's last production of the decade was *Snoops*, a detective show in which three female private eyes teamed up with a surveillance expert to solve cases, which premiered 26 September 1999.

1960-1999

LAWYER AND PUBLISHER



Another Kennedy Tragedy.

John F. Kennedy Jr. was only thirty-eight when he died Friday, 16 July 1999, when the small plane he was piloting crashed off the coast of Martha's Vineyard in Massachusetts. Killed along with him were his wife, Carolyn Bessette Kennedy, and her sister, Lauren Bessette.

They were on their way to cousin Rory Elizabeth Katherine Kennedy's wedding. When Kennedy did not arrive, a family member contacted the Coast Guard, which launched an intensive search Saturday morning. That afternoon debris from the plane began to wash up on shore. The nation waited in shock as television provided around-the-clock coverage of the search. By Sunday hope was all but gone, and finally the Coast Guard announced that it had changed its search-and-rescue mission to search-and-recover. The bodies, still in the fuselage, were recovered Wednesday; Kennedy was cremated and buried at sea within twenty-four hours.

America's Crown Prince. America's fascination with "John-John" Kennedy began when his father was elected president in 1960, seventeen days before John Jr.'s birth on 25 November. He is probably best remembered for the famous photograph of him, clad in coat and shorts, on his third birthday, standing and saluting the coffin bearing his father's body. Kennedy grew up in the media spotlight, and most people expected him to follow in his family's political footsteps. He graduated from Brown University and New York University Law School, and, though he initially failed the bar exam, he eventually became an assistant district attorney in Manhattan. In 1988 he gave the keynote speech at the Democratic National Convention. Throughout the 1980s and early 1990s, he was the most eligible bachelor in the country and was named "The Sexiest Man Alive!" by *People* magazine. In 1996 he married former fashion publicist Carolyn Bessette in a secret ceremony on Cumberland Island just off the Georgia coast. Despite his good looks and celebrity status, Kennedy was a kind and compassionate man who maintained his family's sense of obligation to disadvantaged Americans, and his sense of humor about himself and "regular guy" demeanor endeared him to the public.

Not Politics as Usual. In 1995, Kennedy surprised most people when, instead of going into politics, he entered the world of publishing, founding *George* magazine, a blend of pop culture and politics. He got Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, publisher of such magazines as *Car and Driver*, *Elle*, *Mirabella*, *Premiere*,

and *Woman's Day*, to invest \$20 million in the new magazine, and it quickly became the most successful political magazine ever, with a circulation of 419,000, four times that of a serious political magazine such as *New Republic*. The magazine never turned a profit, however, and just before Kennedy's death, Hachette Filipacchi was considering whether or not it would continue its support and Kennedy was reportedly seeking other investors. Kennedy was also editor in chief of the magazine and played a hands-on role in its production. He regularly interviewed hard-to-get celebrities, such as George C. Wallace, Louis Farrakhan, Bill Gates, Colin L. Powell, and the Dalai Lama. Kennedy made *George* a nonpartisan publication, which resulted in its never quite being embraced in Washington. This did not seem to faze Kennedy, who aimed for a more populist approach. Kennedy on occasion exploited his own celebrity status, once posing nude, although strategically shadowed, and he criticized some of his own family members, describing them as "poster boys for bad behavior." Kennedy admitted, "I can't pretend that my last name didn't help sell this magazine or that it didn't help bring it to people's attention."

The Future of *George*. Kennedy's last issue of *George* hit newsstands 31 August 1999 just as he left it. The issue included an interview with Attorney General Janet Reno, an article on Elizabeth Dole, and a listing of the "20 most fascinating women in politics." Much of the October issue was dedicated to commemorating Kennedy. At the end of 1999 the future of *George* was still in question despite a Hachette Filipacchi commitment to keep the publication alive, although with fewer issues, following Kennedy's death. The magazine had experienced a 20-percent drop in advertising in the first half of 1998, and newsstand sales were off by 28 percent. Nonetheless, advertisers were being promised that starting with the February 2000 issue, circulation would reach 450,000. In Kennedy's final issue the staff's letter, which was usually written by Kennedy, explained that the magazine was a reflection of his ideals about politics: "He edited *George* because the magazine manifested certain beliefs he wanted to promote. . . . That for all its imperfections, politics is a noble profession, and given his unique perspective on and place in the political world, he could make a difference by saying so."

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1959-

CORRESPONDENT AND NEWS
ANCHORMAN



A Road Less Traveled. Brian Williams was a fast-rising star as the White House correspondent on *NBC News* when he took an unusual career turn for an aspiring nightly anchor. He accepted an offer to become anchor on an all-news cable channel launched in 1996 by NBC and Microsoft. Most jour-

nalists travel in the other direction, from cable to network news, but Williams had no trouble making the decision to front his own hour-long news program on MSNBC, *The News with Brian Williams*. He continued to anchor the Saturday edition of *NBC Nightly News*, however, and is rumored to be a possible future replacement for Tom Brokaw.

Background. Williams dreamed of being a news anchor as a child in Middletown, New Jersey. He worked his way through a Catholic high school and took classes at Catholic University and George Washington University. He never graduated and instead chose a low-level job in the White House during Jimmy Carter's presidency. From there, Williams spent a short while running the political action committee of the National Association of Broadcasters and then landed his first TV job as a reporter in Pittsburgh, Kansas. He moved to Washington, D.C., then to Philadelphia, and finally to WCBS-TV in New York, where he was a reporter and noon anchor for five years. While at WCBS he won two Emmys for his coverage of the 1987 stock market crash and the 1989 collapse of the Berlin Wall. In 1993 he was recruited to NBC and became Saturday night news anchor after only five months on the job. He won another Emmy for his coverage of the Iowa flood in 1993, and he and Brokaw were nominated for a 1994 Emmy for coverage of the California earthquakes. In 1994 he was assigned by NBC to the White House as its chief correspondent, while continuing to anchor the *Nightly News* on Saturdays. While working as White House correspondent, he accompanied President Bill Clinton on *Air Force One*, and he was the only TV news correspondent to accompany Clinton and former presidents George Bush and Jimmy Carter to the funeral of Yitzhak Rabin in Israel. In 1996 he took the position with MSNBC and got his own program. Although a serious journalist, Williams also exhibited a great deal of charm and wit. He appeared as a guest on *The*

Tonight Show with Jay Leno, *Late Night with Conan O'Brien*, and *The Late Show* with David Letterman, and he was so entertaining on *The Tonight Show* that he was invited back several times.

MSNBC. Williams's willingness to shift to cable news was a significant indicator of how news was changing in the 1990s. MSNBC, a twenty-four-hour news channel, resulted from a \$500 million deal between NBC and Microsoft. NBC president Robert Wright convinced Microsoft CEO Bill Gates to pay NBC for half-interest in America's Talking, a cable network owned by NBC that was shut down to make way for MSNBC, and then to put up another \$250 million for Microsoft's share of building the new network over five years. By 1997 MSNBC reached 25 million homes (compared with 70 million for CNN), but the network anticipated reaching 55 million homes by 2000. The early success of MSNBC could perhaps be gauged by the talent it has attracted. John Hockenberry left ABC to host his own weekend program, *Edgewise*, and MSNBC's nightly talk show, *InterNight*, included Brokaw, Katie Couric, Byrant Gumbel, Bob Costas, and Bill Moyers in its rotation of hosts. Because cable news reached an audience more interested in news than entertainment, MSNBC was able to provide Williams with a place to develop his unique style of journalism without some of the constraints of network news.

The News with Brian Williams. Cable news gave Williams an opportunity to do serious, in-depth news on television. Without the ratings pressure of network TV, he was able to cover the kinds of stories that interested him—politics, government, business, and the like. Assuming an audience actually interested in news, Williams and executive producer Kathy Sciore were able to run longer stories than would generally be seen on network news, as well as more foreign news and lengthier live interviews. While the show developed hard news rather than lighter features, it also allowed Williams to develop a conversational tone and inject his wit on air. Vice president and general manager of MSNBC Cable Mark Harrington explained, "Brian brings a great sense of tone. He's serious when he needs to be, because the news does deal with tragedy and sadness, and at other times wry and filled with amusement. He can have fun with things." Williams's continuous coverage of the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, on MSNBC, which was simulcast on NBC worldwide, brought praise from TV critics, and after his coverage of the crash of TWA Flight 800 and the death of John F. Kennedy Jr., *New York Magazine* called him the "complete package," and *GQ* named him "the most interesting man in television today."

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1954-

ACTRESS AND TALK SHOW HOST



At *The Top*, *Time* named Oprah Winfrey one of the most important people of the twentieth century, and in 1998 *Entertainment Weekly* ranked her first in its annual list of the most influential people in Hollywood. In 1997 *Newsweek* named her the most important person in books and media, and *TV Guide* called her

the television performer of the year. She received the George Foster Peabody Individual Achievement Award and the International Radio and Television Society (IRTS) Gold Medal Award in 1996, as well as the National Academy of Television Arts and Science's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1998. She has won seven Emmy Awards for Outstanding Talk Show Host and nine Emmys for Outstanding Talk Show. The first African American woman to own her own production studio, Winfrey revolutionized television talk shows. Since her show began in syndication in 1986, it remained the number one talk show for twelve consecutive seasons and boasted an audience of thirty-three million viewers every weekday in the United States. The show was also broadcast in 135 countries worldwide. In 1999, Oprah, with an estimated \$725 million fortune, showed up as number 348 on the *Forbes* list of the 400 wealthiest Americans. In 1998 she signed a contract to continue her show until 2002.

Background. Winfrey was born on 29 January 1954 in Kosciusko, Mississippi, where she was reared by her grandmother until she was six, when she moved to Milwaukee with her mother. At thirteen she ran away from the abuse in her home and ended up being sent to live with her strict father in Nashville. She began her broadcasting career in 1973 at WVOL radio in Nashville and two years later joined WTVF-TV in Nashville as a reporter and anchor. In 1976 she moved to WJZ-TV in Baltimore and in 1978 became cohost of the station's *People are Talking* talk show. In January 1984 Winfrey moved to Chicago to host WLS-TV's faltering local talk show, *AM Chicago*, and, in less than a year, she turned the program into one of the most popular shows in town. The format expanded to an hour and in 1985 was renamed *The Oprah Winfrey Show*. The show went national in 1986 and quickly became the number one talk show in the nation. In 1987 it received three Daytime Emmy Awards for outstanding host, outstanding talk/service program, and outstanding direction. Winfrey's talents were not limited to the small screen. In 1985 she was nominated for an Academy Award and a

Golden Globe as Best Supporting Actress for her performance in Steven Spielberg's *The Color Purple*. Additionally, in 1986 she became the first black woman to form her own production company, HARPO Productions, Inc., and, when in 1988, HARPO assumed ownership and production responsibilities for *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, Winfrey became the first woman ever to own and produce her own talk show. HARPO also produced a made-for-TV adaptation of Gloria Naylor's *The Women of Brewster Place* (1989) and a feature film in 1998 based on Toni Morrison's *Beloved: A Novel* (1987), both starring Winfrey. In 1996 she introduced *Oprah's Book Club*, an on-air reading club that featured such titles as Ursula Hegi's *Stones from the River* (1994), Kaye Gibbons's *Ellen Foster: A Novel* (1987), Wally Lamb's *She's Come Undone: A Novel* (1992), and Maya Angelou's *The Heart of a Woman* (1981). Each book selected for the show became an instant best-seller. In 1997, Winfrey launched Oprah's *Angel Network*, a humanitarian effort to encourage people to help others in need. One *Angel* program raised enough money to provide college scholarships for 150 students, and the *Angel* network teamed with Habitat for Humanity to provide funding and volunteers to build almost two hundred houses for disadvantaged families across the country. Winfrey also used her clout as a political activist. In 1991 she testified before the U.S. Senate judiciary committee to establish a national database of convicted child abusers. The "Oprah Bill" was signed into law 20 December 1993 by President Bill Clinton.

Oprah's Appeal. According to communications expert Deborah Tannen, Winfrey's appeal resulted from her ability to blend public and private in such a way that viewers, especially women, felt as if she were a friend. Contrasting Winfrey's "rapport-talk" with the "report-talk" typical of male talk show hosts, Tannen explains, rather than focusing on information, Winfrey focused on self-revealing intimacies that are the basis of female friendship. "She turned the focus from the experts to ordinary people talking about personal issues," and divulged her own secrets, making the show more immediate, confessional, and personal. Her show became a medium, then, not only to inform and entertain but also to empower.

Oprah vs. the Cattlemen. Winfrey probably received the most press in the 1990s when she became embroiled in a lawsuit with Texas cattlemen. In an April 1996 show about dangerous foods, vegetarian activist Howard Lyman explained that feeding ground-up animal parts to cattle could spread mad cow disease in the United States. Winfrey exclaimed that the information stopped her from eating another burger. Cattlemen in Texas, led by Amarillo rancher Paul Engler, alleged that the broadcast caused the cattle industry to lose millions of dollars in the beef futures market. Engler and six other plaintiffs brought suit under Texas's False Disparagement of Perishable Foods Products law. The suit claimed that

Winfrey knew the information presented on the show was false and misleading. The case was to be the most significant test of so-called "veggie libel" laws to date, but U.S. District Judge Mary Lou Robinson ruled that the case would not proceed under the "veggie libel" law, but would be tried as a business disparagement case. In this instance, then, cattlemen had to prove that Winfrey maliciously and intentionally sought to harm the beef industry. Attorneys for the cattlemen argued that Winfrey had knowingly produced a show that was unfairly biased against the beef industry. Winfrey's attorney countered that the case was actually about the First Amendment. On 26 February 1998 the jury decided the case in favor of Winfrey, determining that the state-

ments did not constitute libel. After the verdict, Winfrey exclaimed, "Free speech not only lives, it rocks!"

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PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

On 4 June 1997 United Press International (UPI) names **James Adams**, Washington bureau chief for the *Sunday Times* of London, as its chief executive officer.

On 18 June 1997 **John J. Agolia** resigns as president of NBC Enterprises. He was directly responsible for the network's dealings with the entertainment industry.

On 25 September 1997 TV sportscaster **Marv Albert** pleads guilty to misdemeanor assault and battery in a sex scandal that leads to his firing from NBC. He receives a twelve-month suspended sentence and is ordered to undergo counseling, and returns to sports broadcasting in July 1999.

Disgraced TV evangelist **James Orsen Bakker** is released after serving 4.5 years in a federal prison. He was convicted in October 1989 on charges of selling \$158 million worth of essentially nonexistent timeshares at his Heritage USA Christian theme park.

In August 1998 *Boston Globe* columnist **Mike Barnicle** is suspended for two months after the newspaper discovered he had used jokes from George Carlin's *Brain Droppings* (1997) in his column, as well as fabricated facts and sources. He resigned shortly thereafter and went to work for the *Sunday Daily News*.

In July 1994 **Jeffrey P. Bezos** founds Amazon.com, an Internet retailer of books, music, and videos. By 1998 Amazon.com is the leading on-line shopping site with sales topping \$500 million, and Bezos was named *Time* Person of the Year in 1999.

Charles Boesch, a former executive of the *Los Angeles Times*, is sentenced on 7 January 1998 to four years in prison for billing the newspaper more than \$775,000 for freelance articles that were never written. He is also ordered to pay all of the money back to the company.

Benjamin C. Bradlee, retired executive editor of *The Washington Post*, is honored 9 December 1997 by the National Constitution Center for his decision to publish the *Pentagon Papers* in 1971 despite threats of punishment and for pursuing the Watergate story and improprieties in the Nixon administration.

Tina Brown, former editor in chief of *Vanity Fair* and *The New Yorker* magazine, joins forces with Miramax and Hearst Corporation to found *Talk*, a new general interest magazine. The magazine is launched 3 August 1999 with an initial press run of one million copies, which quickly sold out, necessitating a second press run of an additional three hundred thousand, making *Talk* the fastest selling title in Hearst history.

In 1990 **Connie Chung** becomes anchorwoman and senior correspondent for the Emmy-winning prime-time news series, *Face to Face with Connie Chung*, on CBS. From 1993 to 1995 she coanchors the *CBS Evening News with Dan Rather and Connie Chung*. She joined *ABC News* in November 1997.

On 8 September 1999, CBS announces that **Jane Clayson**, a Los Angeles-based correspondent for ABC, is named co-anchor with **Bryant Gumbel** on *The Early Show*.

Steve Coll is named managing editor of *The Washington Post* on 9 March 1998. Prior to his appointment he was editor and publisher of the *Washington Post Magazine*.

Katie Couric joins the *Today* show in June 1990 as its first national correspondent, serves as substitute anchorwoman from February 1991 to 5 April 1991, when she becomes permanent anchorwoman.

James Fallows is fired as editor of *U.S. News & World Report* in June 1998 after twenty-two months on the job. Reportedly Fallows's departure was the result of disagreements with magazine owner Mortimer Zuckerman.

In May 1998 reporter and associate editor Stephen Glass is fired by *The New Republic* editor Charles Lane, when Glass's penchant for creating his stories comes to light. Glass fabricated quotations, people, corporations, organizations, and even cities. *The New Republic* had published forty of his articles since December 1995.

On 2 April 1997 Amy Gross resigns as editor in chief of *Mirabella* magazine, which she helped found in 1988. Hachette Filipacchi Magazines, which owns *Mirabella*, cites "creative differences" as the reason for the resignation.

Bryant Gumbel, who coanchored the *Today* show with Katie Couric until late 1996, leaves NBC for his own prime-time news magazine, *Public Eye with Bryant Gumbel*, on CBS. The program is canceled in 1998, and Gumbel returns to the morning routine of *The Early Show*, which airs opposite his former cohost.

On 1 January 1997 Ted Harbert resigns as chair of ABC Entertainment.

On 9 January 1998 Dow Jones & Company names executive editor Paul Ingrassia as president of its *Newsweek* operation. He won a Pulitzer Prize in 1993 with colleague Joseph B. White for coverage of management turmoil at General Motors.

On 20 January 1997 Julia Kagan is promoted from deputy editor to editor of *Consumer Reports*.

Robert G. Kaiser resigns as managing editor of *The Washington Post* on 30 June 1998. Kaiser held the post for seven years, having joined the paper staff in 1967 after two summers as an intern.

Richard Kaplan becomes president of CNN/USA in August 1997 after seventeen years at ABC, where he was executive producer of *World News Tonight*, *Prime Time Live*, and *Nightline*.

In July 1990 television reporter Brian Karem from KMOL-TV serves two weeks of a six-month sentence in a San Antonio jail for refusing to give the names of the people who helped arrange a phone interview with accused cop-killer Henry David Hernandez. Karem is released when he informs the judge that the source agreed to be named.

On 9 April 1998 CBS names Mel Karmazin president and CEO. He had been chair and CEO of the CBS Station Group since May 1997.

In 1997 Michael Kelly, editor of *New Republic*, is fired by owner Martin Peretz after only two months on the job and is replaced by Charles Lane. Peretz was unhappy with Kelly's columns that were critical of his friend Vice President Al Gore.

On 11 November 1998 Kevin Klose was named president and CEO of National Public Radio (NPR). Prior to joining NPR, Klose was director of U.S. International Broadcasting and president of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

In June 1998 Kay Koplovitz, founder of USA Networks, resigned as chair and president. She took the cable network from an idea to a \$3.5 billion company in her twenty years in the industry.

On 21 May 1999, after nineteen years of nominations, Susan Lucci finally wins an Emmy for best daytime actress on 21 May 1999, for her role as Erica Kane in the daytime soap *All My Children* (ABC).

On 27 January 1997 Christopher Ma, former *U.S. News & World Report* deputy editor, is named executive producer of the *Washington Post* on-line venture *Digital Ink*, which had been launched October 1993.

In October 1998 Mike McCurry resigns as White House Press Secretary, a job he held since 1995. Prior to that appointment he worked at the State Department and in the presidential campaigns of Jimmy Carter, Walter Mondale, and Michael Dukakis.

Politician-turned-morning-show-host Susan Molinari is released as anchor for *CBS News Saturday Morning* on 23 June 1998. Molinari took the job in September 1997 after a career as a Republican congresswoman from New York City's Staten Island. Audiences did not respond to Molinari, and ratings for her show were quite low.

On 14 April 1998 FOX News Channel hires former presidential adviser Dick Morris, who had resigned August 1996 because of a sex scandal, as a political commentator.

On 30 March 1998 *The New York Post* names James Murdoch, son of media mogul and *Post* owner Rupert Murdoch, as deputy publisher. He was previously president of News America Digital Publishing.

After four years as metropolitan editor for *The New York Times*, Michael Oreskes switches roles to become its Washington bureau chief in September 1997.

In 1998 *Dateline NBC* signs anchorwoman Jane Pauley for another five years with a \$5.5 million contract. Pauley had been making around \$4.5 million annually.

On 10 June 1990, because of his erratic and often irresponsible behavior, Hutchinson Pearson resigns as editor in chief of *Street News*. He had founded the paper to help homeless people help themselves by selling it on the street.

In January 1995 Norman Podhoretz steps down as editor in chief of *Commentary*. During his thirty-five-year tenure, Podhoretz transformed the previously liberal Jewish monthly into a promoter of neoconservatism.

On 13 February 1998 **William L. Pollak** is named president and chief executive officer for American Lawyer Media, Inc., a publisher of legal journals, newspapers, and other resources. Previously, Pollak was executive vice president for circulation for *The New York Times*.

On 14 July 1998 **David Remnick** is named editor of *The New Yorker*. He had been a staff writer at the magazine since 1992 and had won the Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction in 1994 for *Lenin's Tomb: The Last Days of the Soviet Empire* (1993).

In October 1997 **Lucie Salhany**, the top-ranking woman executive in broadcast television, leaves the United Paramount Network (UPN) to become a board member of BHC Communications and to operate JH Media. Before moving to UPN, she had worked for the FOX Network.

On 18 June 1998 **Patricia Smith**, a columnist for *The Boston Globe*, is forced to resign after the newspaper discovered that she had fabricated characters and quotations in some of her columns. Smith had won the American Society of Newspaper Editors Distinguished Writing Award and had been named a Pulitzer Prize finalist in the commentary category.

On 11 February 1997 home decorator par excellence **Martha Stewart** leaves the *Today* show on NBC to join *CBS This Morning*. Stewart had appeared on *Today* since 1992.

On 26 August 1999 **Jamie Tarses** resigns as president of ABC Entertainment. Her brief three-year tenure with the network had been marked by controversy.

On 4 March 1998 **Carolyn Wall** is named publisher of *Newsweek*. Previously, she had been publisher of *New York* magazine, as well as vice president and general manager of the FOX affiliate in New York City.

On 16 December 1997 **John Walston** is named editorial director of United Press International (UPI). Previously he worked for *USA Today*, the *San Jose Mercury News*, and the *Dallas Times Herald*.

On 13 December 1997 **Gary Webb**, the reporter whose series linked the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to crack cocaine sales, resigns from the *San Jose Mercury News*. Webb had been criticized by other newspapers and U.S. officials for the story.

On 21 July 1998 **Betsy West**, an ABC executive who helped launch *PrimeTime Live* and *Turning Point*, joins CBS to oversee its prime-time news broadcasts. West won eighteen Emmy Awards during her tenure at ABC.

Revered *Glamour* editor **Ruth Whitney** is ousted in August 1998 and replaced by her rival, *Cosmopolitan* editor **Bonnie Fuller**. Under Whitney, *Glamour* became one of the most-read women's magazines in the nation with 2.2 million readers (compared with *Cosmopolitan's* 2.7 million) and won several National Magazine Awards. Fuller was succeeded by *Redbook* editor **Kate White**.

AWARDS

EMMY AWARDS

1990

Outstanding Drama Series: *L.A. Law* (NBC)

Outstanding Comedy Series: *Murphy Brown* (CBS)

Outstanding Variety Series: *In Living Color* (FOX)

1991

Outstanding Drama Series: *L.A. Law* (NBC)

Outstanding Comedy Series: *Cheers* (NBC)

1992

Outstanding Drama Series: *Northern Exposure* (CBS)

Outstanding Comedy Series: *Murphy Brown* (CBS)

Outstanding Variety Series: *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* (NBC)

1993

Outstanding Drama Series: *Picket Fences* (CBS)

Outstanding Comedy Series: *Seinfeld* (NBC)

Outstanding Variety Series: *Saturday Night Live* (NBC)

1994

Outstanding Drama Series: *Picket Fences* (CBS)

Outstanding Comedy Series: *Frasier* (NBC)