

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet.

consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonum

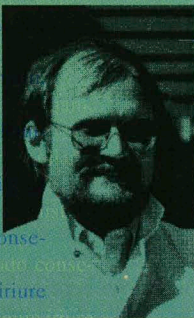
consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonum

EATING WELL

2



magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure



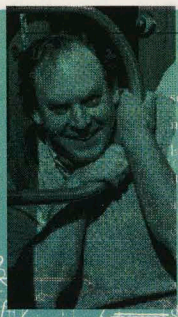
consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui

Highlights for Children

Harrowsmith



consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.



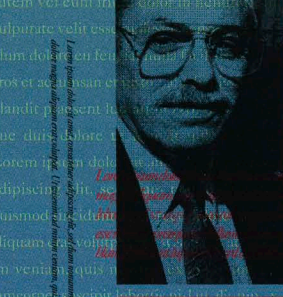
consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.



JET

consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

National Journal



consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.



consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.

Mademoiselle



consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat.

omni

consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.



consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat. Ut wisi enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exerci tation ullamcorper suscipit lobortis nisl ut aliquip ex ea commodo consequat. Duis autem vel eum iriure dolor in hendrerit in vulpate velit esse molestie consequat, vel illum dolore eu feugiat nulla facilisis at vero eros et accumsan et justo odio dignissim qui blandit praesent luptatum zzril delenit augue duiis dolore feugait nulla facilisi. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipisicing elit, sed diam nonumy nibh euismod tincidunt ut laoreet dolore magna aliquam erat volutpat.



WELL READ

The personality of a magazine you love is largely the personality of that individual who decides, issue by issue, what's in and what's out.



BY MARY ELLEN MENGUCCI AND GEORGE LOWERY

This is not an article for graduates of programs in public communications. This is not an article for those who care about the creation of a magazine. This is an article for anyone who cares about the end-product—anyone who loves to receive a magazine—and that's just about everyone.

Each month, or sometimes bi-monthly or perhaps weekly, you open your mailbox to find the latest installment, in magazine form, of information that you have decided is important enough to pay for. It may be news of world affairs, an appraisal of new record albums or automobiles, or bits of professional advice. Especially it might be trends in fashion, style, and what they sometimes call grooming.

In all likelihood, none of it is of earth-shattering importance, or you wouldn't have waited a month to get it. But it's compelling enough that later tonight you'll sneak away from other obligations—family or work or busted doorknobs—slip away into a private spot, and read it cover to cover. This is a magazine.

You don't have to be in the magazine business to notice that, like other entertainment industries, it is saturated by institutionalized approaches to marketing and customer satisfaction. It is, after all, a money-making business, and magazines

that fail to attract readers fizzle at the newsstand like spent matches.

We're happy to say, however, that there is still a person whose office door reads "Editor-in-Chief," and she or he still counts. It is an axiom of magazine editing that an editor edits for herself—meaning that, beyond all the mountains of readership data, if you don't have a gut sense of why someone would read it, you have no business editing it. Thankfully, magazine editing, like most good communication, is magic and art more than it is science.

We present the editors of five magazines of widely divergent types. Despite the variety of their subject matters, the magazines share this attribute: their characters reflect the characters of their editors. What you find in your mailbox is what they found intriguing enough to pass along.

Following, then, is a reminder that beyond the fun of magazine reading are very serious principles of communication ethics: the story of Patrice Adcroft and *Omni* magazine, and the sometimes uncomfortable partnership of advertising and articles.

We hope you enjoy these articles. As the editors of this magazine, we found them intriguing enough to pass along.

MARY ELLEN MENGUCCI, a staff editor, wrote the profile of portrait photographer William Coupon that appeared in the September 1990 issue of *Syracuse University Magazine*. GEORGE LOWERY, also a staff editor, contributed recent articles on actress Edie McClurg and scholarly exchange between the United States and the Eastern bloc.



PAUL O. HONSVERT

James Lawrence & Harrowsmith Country Life

LIFE IN EXURBIA

In the mid-seventies, James Lawrence took stock of his personal demographic: He was a university-educated professional who lived in the country, grew his own produce, burned firewood, cared about the environment. Many of his friends also led back-to-the-land, self-sufficient lives. Without benefit of market research, Lawrence had isolated a lucrative market niche.

Lawrence experienced this exurban epiphany in the hamlet of Harrowsmith, 30 miles outside Kingston, Ontario, where he worked as a reporter after earning a master's degree in magazine journalism from the Newhouse School in 1974.

"I was frustrated by the lack of relevant information, and also by the low level of editorial quality in the existing titles coming from the United States," Lawrence says. "They affected a sort of pseudo-hill-billy editorial voice I found extremely objectionable."

To serve the needs of what he suspected was a large, untapped market of like-minded people—and cater to the fantasies of those who wish they led such lives—Lawrence procured a \$3,500 loan and launched *Harrowsmith* magazine in 1976.

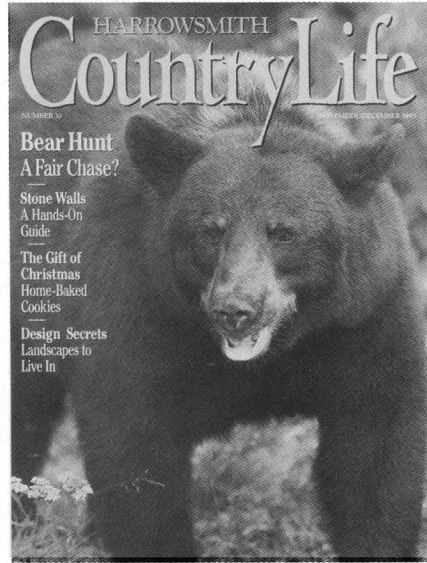
Lawrence enjoyed spectacular success as editor and publisher of *Harrowsmith* and then *Equinox*, a Canadian version of *National Geographic*. The titles are Canada's eighth- and ninth-largest consumer magazines.

"I intuitively knew there was an audience for *Harrowsmith*, because I had a lot of friends who were living in the country," Lawrence says. "They needed and wanted the information. What I think we did was bring good, solid, responsible journalism to the country field, which had tended to be rather aw-shucks."

The magazine offers how-to instruction about gardening, country living, recipes, and building energy-efficient houses. Each issue also features an investigative story. Over the years, subjects have ranged from the long-term damage of the Three Mile Island accident to deforestation of South American rain forests.

After one year, with paid circulation at 40,000, *Harrowsmith* was named "Magazine of the Year" by Canada's National Magazine Awards Foundation. In 1985 Lawrence, a Binghamton, New York, native, sold his properties to a large Canadian media concern. He moved back to the United States and started over.

Today Lawrence publishes *Harrowsmith's* American cousin, *Harrowsmith Country Life*, whose current circulation is about 225,000. "The editorial mix is exactly the same," he says. "It's very much like the first issue of *Harrowsmith* in Canada in 1976, more smoothly done. The essence of the



James Lawrence (left) knows country living.

magazine is unchanged."

Lawrence, who also recently launched *Eating Well* magazine, presides over a staff of 60 writers, designers, and production and business people, housed in a defunct creamery in Charlotte, Vermont.

The typical *Harrowsmith Country Life* reader is 40ish and married. Both partners are college-educated and work in professional or managerial jobs. They own land,

most have gardens, and more than half use wood-burning stoves.

"They have a country ethic," Lawrence says. "I think over the years people have found ways to use their educations and still have links to urban society, or nonrural society, and live at least part of their lives in the country."

One of the issues on the minds of *Harrowsmith Country Life* readers is healthy, nutritious food. But Lawrence relied on more than mere intuition to launch his newest magazine, *Eating Well*.

"We conducted two years and \$1 million worth of testing, development, focus groups, direct mail subscription tests, and a full prototype issue," he says. "We spent a long time and a lot of money to confirm our gut reaction that it was a good idea."

The notion was to create a magazine that treats food seriously, as a subject worthy of thought and in-depth stories in the context of health as opposed to fitness, as the original *Harrowsmith* had treated rural life seriously. But *Eating Well* aimed at a more urban, affluent audience.

"We try to seduce our reader into reading every word," Lawrence says. "We intend it to be for men and women both. Our research showed that people were confused by many of the health stories they were seeing and hearing. We hope to give people enough information to make decisions about their eating habits."

Lawrence created the editorial skeleton and prospectus for *Eating Well*, and hired his former *Equinox* editor to run it. Due to *Eating Well's* launch, Lawrence has less time for *Harrowsmith Country Life*, but he continues to write headlines and blurbs.

"I think the greatest satisfaction for me comes from the editorial side," he says. "We still write for people who believe in being at least partially self-sufficient, who are less likely to be found on a golf course than out in a zucchini patch." —G.L.

Amy Levin-Cooper & Mademoiselle

WOMAN OF STYLE

For many women, a glance through *Mademoiselle* magazine is like a sip from the fountain of youth. Each issue, overflowing with vibrant and beautiful models, and enough inspiration for even the casual reader to contemplate a change in her look or her lifestyle, acts as a catalyst for change—a jump-start for the body and the mind.

Mademoiselle's staff creates everything—the art, the features, the departments, the fashion spreads—with the young and the spirited in mind.

To sustain the interest of her readers, editor Amy Levin-Cooper often thinks about the concerns and curiosities of her younger sister, a casting agent for ABC's *thirtysomething*. "If I can capture her mind

and her imagination—it's young and dynamic—then I can reach many women," says Levin-Cooper. When an issue happens to appeal to the middle-aged or married woman too, all the better.

Connecting with readers at a personal level is Levin-Cooper's primary goal. "I think the personal element is very, very important," she says. "I think women talk



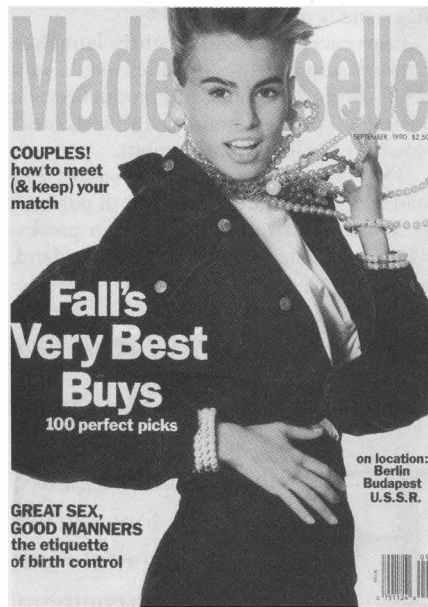
As editor of *Mademoiselle*, Amy Levin-Cooper anticipates the interest of the young, dynamic woman.

personally. They talk conversationally. I think they are at their best when they are honest and open. And that's the way I think they should be reached."

Levin-Cooper speaks from experience. Since graduating from SU's College of Arts and Sciences in 1963, she has spent her entire career working for women's magazines. She began as a secretary at *Redbook*, but her talent for creating snappy headlines—a difficult and dreaded task at most magazines—caught the attention of her editors. When an entry-level editorial position opened up, Levin-Cooper got the job. She moved quickly through the editorial ranks at both *Redbook* and *Ladies Home Journal* before joining *Mademoiselle* as editor-in-chief 10 years ago.

Editing a magazine in the eighties proved an exciting experience, says Levin-Cooper. She refers to the decade as a golden age for magazine publishing. The economy and the mindset of the country were right for the industry. But she says fashion magazines faced a stumbling block in the later half of the decade when, in her opinion, fashion designs stagnated.

"If the fashion industry changes," she says, "it makes my life much easier. You don't have to make it up. When clothes don't change, you have to find a new way to



shoot it every single month and make it appear as if it changed. When fashion changes, all you have to do is chronicle it."

Setting trends and staying current is the name of the game in Levin-Cooper's business, and that often means taking risks. For that reason, she intentionally edits *Mademoiselle* "less safely" than competing beauty and fashion magazines. "*Mademoiselle* was always a magazine with a very, very fine literary history, and I have maintained that."

But, she explains, "I believe it's less formulaic and I'm committed to a variety of writers, writing in their own voices. . . . As a result, we get wonderful writers."

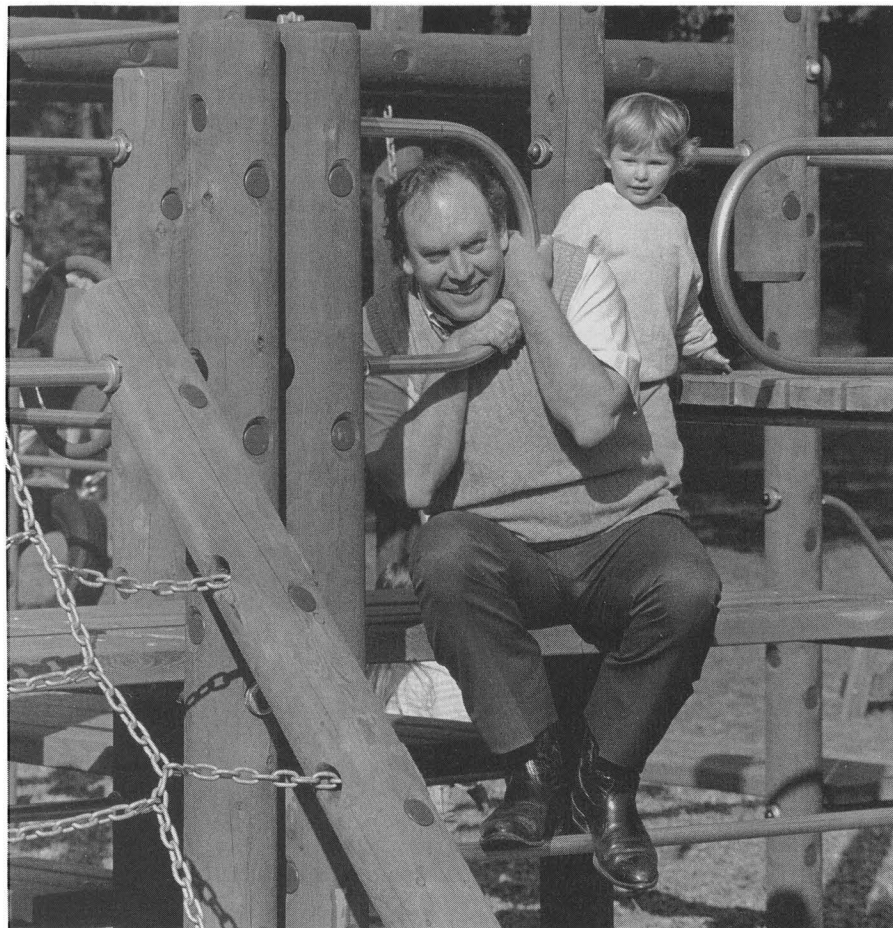
Throughout her tenure at *Mademoiselle*, Levin-Cooper has implemented numerous editorial revisions, including the addition of several new departments—most notably an ethics column called "Scruples"; a department about social issues titled "Private Eye"; and a job column, "Your Brilliant Career," written pseudonymously by a well-known *New York Times* writer.

Sometimes innovations stick, but when they become outdated, Levin-Cooper scraps them. "If I don't like it, I don't want it in the magazine," she says.

Mademoiselle sells 75 percent of its one-million-plus circulation on newsstands, making the magazine's appearance crucial to sales. "It comes out every month like a little racehorse," says Levin-Cooper, "and has to perform at a very high level."

Of course, the average reader knows little about the newsstand competition involved in beauty magazines. Instead, she happens to see a snappy headline ("Great Fall Clothes: 96 Perfectly Balanced Looks") or a certain cover model catches her attention. And before you know it, she's leafing through the magazine and taking a proverbial sip from the fountain of youth.

—M.E.M.



Kent Brown & Highlights

FIND THE HIDDEN HORSESHOE

If you somehow made it through childhood without a subscription to *Highlights* magazine, you probably leafed through it in the waiting room at your dentist's or pediatrician's office. Most likely, you loved the "Hidden Pictures" page (possibly even fought with your brother or sister each month for the first crack at locating the concealed fish, pencil, toothbrush, and turtle).

You looked forward to reading about Goofus and Gallant, the Timbertoes, Poozy and Woozy, and the other regular features. Every once in a while you sent in a poem or drawing, crossing your fingers that the editors would publish your work on "Our Own Pages." And you kept your back issues handy because they contained directions for making neat crafts or gifts out of pipe cleaners, tin foil, cotton balls, or other things around the house.

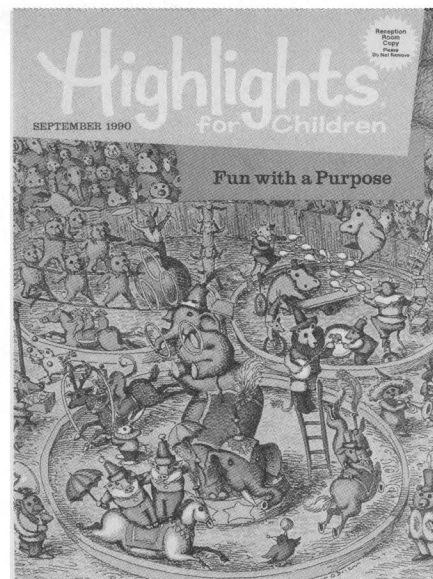
It's likely you're subscribing to the *Highlights* again—this time for your children. But if you're not, you'd be pleasantly surprised to learn that the *Highlights* of today remains much as it was when you were a child. Your favorite features still appear. And the "Hidden Pictures" page, though less of a challenge to an adult, is still fun to complete when no one is watching.

One of the main reasons the magazine

perseveres as a time-honored publication is that Kent Brown Jr., a grandchild of the founding editors, serves as editor-in-chief today. Because direction of the magazine remains in the family, *Highlights'* founding philosophy is virtually intact.

Brown has a long history with the publication, which began in 1946. Before he learned to walk or write, he served as an early model for the character of Goofus, the boy who sometimes loses his temper, has trouble sharing, or forgets his manners. Brown's cousin, who is now chief executive officer, was a model for Gallant, the well-behaved boy. "I'm not sure what that tells you," says Brown with a chuckle.

Brown began his career with *Highlights* as a youngster, changing cartridges on an old photocopy machine. In 1961 he branched out and began selling copies of the magazine door-to-door. A decade later, after



You might call it the playground point of view—Kent Brown edits Highlights magazine for kids.

receiving two degrees (including a master's in English education from SU in 1971) and working first as a farmer, then as a teacher, he came back to *Highlights* as an entry-level editor. He moved through the editorial echelons, joined the magazine's board of directors, and in 1981 became editor.

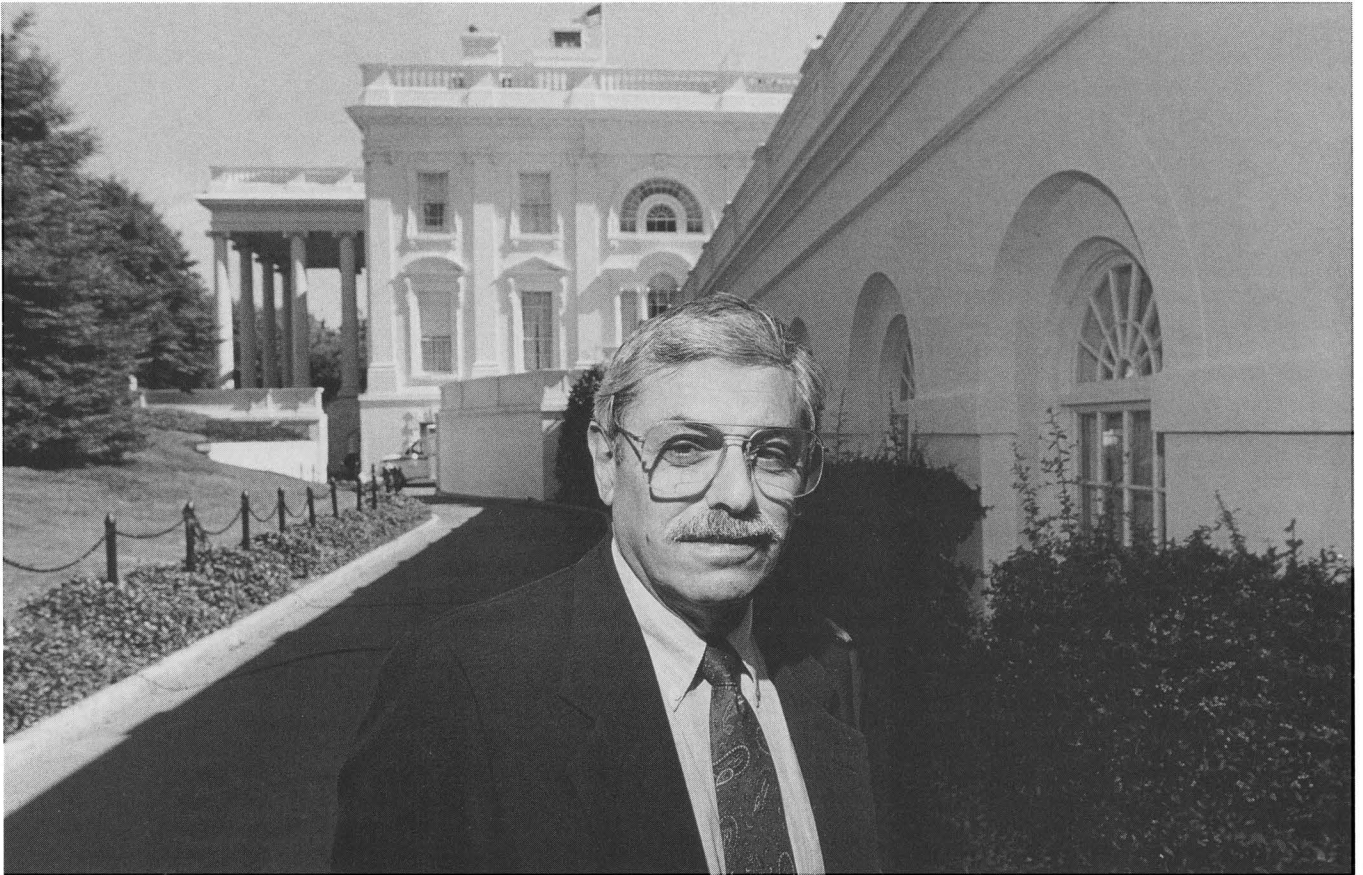
Brown has no qualms about crediting the success of *Highlights* to its consistency, though he asserts that some substantial changes occurred in the last 44 years. Most noticeably, the circulation has reached nearly 3 million. The staff grew from a handful to more than 75. Like most magazines these days, color pages appear throughout. And *Highlights*, once published in both hardcover and soft-cover versions, produces only the latter now.

Change is not discouraged, he says, but practiced with caution. "My feeling is you should always be experimenting, but you don't want a magazine to be different every month. We tend to do a lot of experiments that nobody ever sees," says Brown.

Brown and his editorial staff, many of whom have backgrounds in education and psychology, work in a 19th-century Victorian home, far away from the hustle of city life, in Honesdale, Pennsylvania (only two stoplights in town). To stay abreast of children's issues, many editors belong to professional organizations and attend conferences. But some of the best information comes to the staff in the form of letters to the editor—hundreds of thousands of pieces of mail each year.

Kids often write about their problems, says Brown. "And the bulk of their problems center around getting along with a brother or sister, being liked by their classmates, excelling in school, developing self-confidence." In that respect, says Brown, today's children remain much the same as the kids of any generation. The 44-year success of *Highlights* eloquently proves Brown's point.

—M.E.M.



Richard Frank & The National Journal

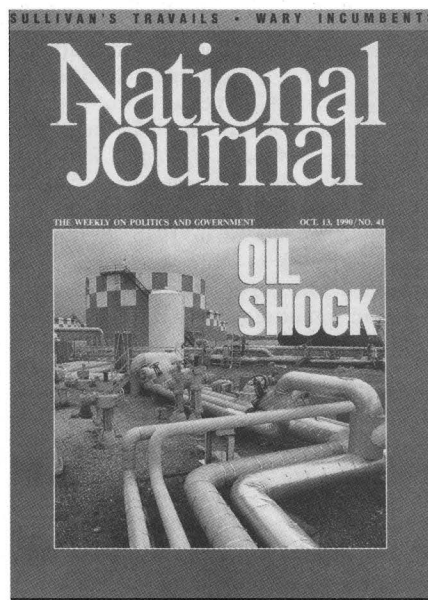
TALKING POLITICS

There are only a couple of magazines devoted exclusively to covering government," says Richard Frank, editor and vice president of the *National Journal*. "We cover all aspects of federal policy and national politics. We're an analytical magazine. Our articles are analytical as well as factual. We try to explain to our readers not only what's happening, but why it's happening and how the issues might develop."

The *National Journal*, a nonpartisan weekly proud of its objectivity and fairness, prints no editorials and has no ideological bent. Still, it has been accused of being conservative, liberal, pro- and anti-business. Competitors include the *Congressional Quarterly* and, in a broader sense, the news weeklies.

"In one sense, we have no competitors," Frank says. "Our emphasis is on the entire federal government. We go after the same stories as the daily press, even though we handle them in a different way. I've always had a strong professional interest in giving readers more than just a welter of facts. I much prefer to give them an analysis of what it means, and how the facts fit together, and who the people are in determining policy."

The *National Journal's* modest circulation of 5,500 belies its influence: Another 40,000 influential policy makers are pass-along or library readers who extend the magazine's



influence. As its \$624-a-year subscription price suggests, it is a magazine known not by the quantity, but the quality, of its readers.

"Our readers include those who have a professional interest in government," Frank says. "They're people who are influential, people who make policy and affect policy."

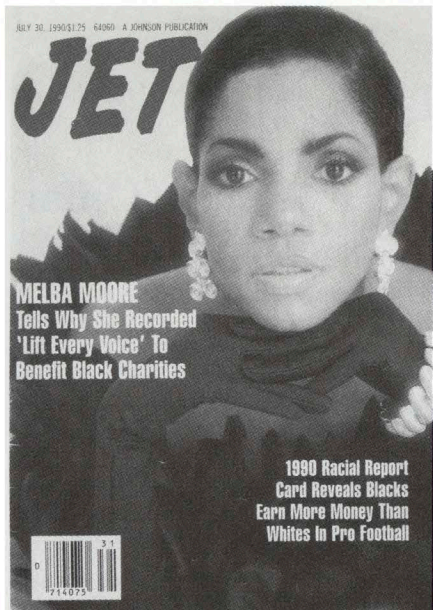
Roughly half of the *National Journal's* readers are in the Washington, D.C., area. They include members of Congress and their staffs, lobbyists, academics, members of trade associations, and state and federal government employees.

The *National Journal* is entirely staff written by a dozen-plus reporters. "We made a decision at the beginning that we would be much better off with our own staff than using outside contributors," Frank says, "and that costs money. The bulk of our expenses is salaries."

Frank prefers to make incremental, rather than dramatic, changes to the magazine. In his 19 years there, it has become bigger, featuring more stories and information. Coverage of lobbying activities in Washington will increase during the next year.

"We can improve the magazine without really changing it," Frank says. "If you look back five or six years, the magazine looks different. And if you looked back 10 or 20 years, then you could say there have been radical changes. But we strongly believe that readers should not notice change."

As the editor of the National Journal, Richard Frank (above) has a simple task: know the federal government, stem to stern, inside and out.



Robert Johnson (at right with actor Bill Cosby) moves among the community of influential black Americans. The result is *Jet*.



Robert Johnson & Jet

SPECIAL INTEREST

Recent issues carried stories on Europe's move toward a common foreign policy and its consequences for the United States, immigration reform, the U.S. Navy's plans for a new generation of submarines, the Gulf crisis, the budget, and an interview with the Speaker of the House.

All *National Journal* readers know government well; a small percentage are expert in government arcana. Because of them, Frank says, "it's very hazardous to make mistakes in this magazine. A letter or phone call comes in almost immediately.

"We keep the level of writing high, but we try to avoid jargon so readers who aren't experts in the field will not get lost. We're not writing for the general audience, but for every story we have to balance the two audiences: the real experts and the people with general knowledge."

A 1953 graduate of the College of Arts and Sciences, Frank earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago before joining the *Bergen County* (New Jersey) *Record* as a reporter. He moved on to the *Baltimore Evening Sun*, and in the mid-1960s took a year off to serve as chief administrative assistant to the mayor of Baltimore. He was a Washington correspondent for the *Philadelphia Bulletin* before joining the *National Journal* in 1971.

Like his readers, Frank lives and breathes politics. But he resists inflicting his own judgments or biases on the editorial content of the magazine, and adheres to its strictly nonpartisan stance. But it isn't always easy.

"There may be some particular subject, some aspect of public policy, that I think is particularly important," Frank says. "In that way, the magazine reflects my interests. But I go out of my way to keep my own particular views, or solutions to the problem, out of the magazine. This isn't a one-man show." —G.L.

Peruse *Jet* magazine and you'll find one of the most concentrated sources anywhere of information about the people and events that affect and interest black Americans. Most of it can be found elsewhere, of course, scattered throughout the media, but *Jet* covers it from a black perspective. *Time* may publish a story about the country's increasing unemployment rate. *Jet* reports what that rate means to blacks in America. And in some cases, *Jet* is the only national publication covering stories of this sort.

"I always like to say, 'Go to the newsstand and read all of the newspapers. Read all of the magazines. Then go listen to all of the radio newscasts. Then go watch all of the TV news. And you still won't get as much news from a black perspective, having read all of that, as you get in one issue of *Jet* magazine each week,'" says Robert E. Johnson, the magazine's executive editor and publisher.

A single issue of *Jet* updates readers on the likes of NAACP President Hazel Dukes, Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, talk show host Oprah Winfrey, entertainers M.C. Hammer and Ray Charles, Democratic National Committee Chairman Ron Brown, and dozens more. *Jet* regularly publishes stories about education, religion, sports, politics, African affairs, black fashion, and black entertainment. "These are

the most important things that are happening to black people today in the United States," says Johnson.

To stay abreast of local, national, and international events, Johnson consumes news like some people drink coffee. Most mornings, he reads six newspapers before 9 a.m. The office's 200 metropolitan daily newspapers and magazines are at his fingertips. For fast-breaking news, Johnson turns to the Associated Press wire. His office is equipped with a radio and television (which sometimes operate simultaneously) and a video cassette recorder for taping programs relevant to *Jet*.

It's fitting that Johnson edits *Jet*, the most widely read black-oriented news weekly magazine. He epitomizes his reader—the 20th-century African American. He grew up in a segregated America, attended Morehouse University in the late forties with classmate Martin Luther King Jr., and covered the tumultuous civil rights movement of the fifties and sixties as a young journalist. Johnson, privileged enough to experience the low and high points of the black experience in America, bursts at the seams with stories and anecdotes about black America. He has met hundreds of black news-makers and celebrities throughout his career. His life experiences act as a constant, sometimes subconscious, source of inspiration. This wealth of experience serves as raw material upon which Johnson draws to edit *Jet*—not that he needs a lot of direction.

Johnson, who began his editorial career as city editor of the *Atlanta Daily World*, received a master's degree in journalism from SU's Newhouse School in 1952. He started at *Jet* in 1953 as associate editor, a little more than a year after the magazine's launching. "I've been here most of *Jet*'s life," he says with pride.

A mere 10 years after joining *Jet*, Johnson was tapped as executive editor, and he has been guiding the magazine ever since. He continues to play a hands-on role in the daily activities of *Jet*—everything from pitching story ideas and copy editing to reporting and writing an occasional piece. Better than most, he knows how to package that information to sustain the interest of the magazine's 850,000 subscribers.

As *Jet*'s shepherd, Johnson (who assumed the additional responsibilities of associate publisher in 1975) routinely has the opportunity to meet and befriend black leaders and news-makers. And he points out, "I will have talked with them long before they are discovered by the *New York Times*." —M.E.M.

Why Patty Quit

Patrice Adcroft's resignation as editor of Omni is a reminder that serious principles underlie the business of magazines.

BY MARY ELLEN MENGUCCI

The November issue of *Omni* magazine contains the stories that you would expect: scoops on science, psychology, technology, and other innovations. At the same time, the issue is markedly different in two respects. Most noticeably, the front cover features an advertisement. Inside, the list of staffers no longer includes Patrice Adcroft.

To the average observer, these two changes may seem inconsequential. To Adcroft, editor of *Omni* since 1986, they are monumental. The decision by *Omni*'s publisher to display an ad on the front cover prompted her to quit one of the top editing posts in New York City.

Adcroft, who graduated from SU in 1976 with dual degrees in creative writing and magazine journalism, started editing *Omni* at age 30, one of the youngest editors ever to head a national magazine. She landed the job after working in several editorial positions at *Family Weekly*, *Alive & Well*, and *Good Housekeeping*, among others. During the four-plus years that she served as editor-in-chief, Adcroft boosted *Omni*'s circulation by implementing creative techniques of interactive journalism that encouraged readers to take part in national scientific surveys or prompted them to participate in local and world affairs.

But it all ended October 2, when General Media International, the New York-based company that publishes *Omni*, informed Adcroft that the front-cover ad would run despite her objections. The advertisement, a luminous hologram of a Motorola cellular telephone, is printed on page one and can be seen through a five-inch oval cut-out in the cover. Other than type, the hologram is the only image that appears on the cover.

Why does an editor care if an ad appears on the front cover of her magazine? Since Adcroft's departure, her case has been seen as a test of the sometimes fuzzy line between editorial and advertising space in national consumer magazines. The following conversation with Adcroft, conducted in mid-October, explores her feelings about advertising precedents and principles, and her reasons for quitting *Omni*.

Why, in your opinion, does the placement of an advertisement on the cover of a magazine violate journalistic principles?

Because the cover has always been the hallmark of editorial integrity, and it really makes it appear as if the entire issue is being brought to you by the [organization] on the cover.

Magazines are already composed of a significant mix of advertising and editorial. What do you think the proper mix is and why do you think this ad tips the balance?

Obviously advertising and editorial need to work hand-in-hand. And in this day and age, ad dollars do support a lot of magazines. However, when a magazine starts redirecting itself in some way to accommodate an advertiser, that's a very dangerous precedent. . . . What's to stop an advertiser the next time from saying, "Gee, they remade their cover for so and so, what about this article? This article is anti-smoking. Why can't they recast that? Why can't they recast this piece on nuclear waste?" I think it's a violation of editorial freedom.

Do you think that the average reader is savvy enough to notice the difference?

Well, our average reader is. We prided ourselves on having readers who were more observant, more involved, questioning. The demos, the psychographics tell us that we have a very special reader. Suddenly our readers are not so smart?

*Do you think *Omni* is still meeting its goals if it continues to sell, even with an advertisement on the cover?*

I would hope the goal of the magazine is to do more than sell. I mean, maybe the goal of a product, of a widget, of a pet rock, is to sell. I would hope that the goal of journalism is not just to sell newspapers or magazines.

Considering the prevalence of advertising in most magazines, is there a chance that the position you've taken upholds ideals that were already corrupted years ago?

I don't think your ideals or your ethics should be relative to a time and place. If you have a certain belief system, then it



We photographed Patrice Adcroft at the AT&T's InfoQuest Center, on October 2. Later that day she resigned as editor-in-chief of Omni magazine.

should be exercised under all conditions, not just ones in which it's easy to exercise them. And, obviously, I was extremely saddened by this whole event. . . . I loved the magazine. I really enjoyed working for General Media. It gave me a whole lot that I never got from anyone else. However, I would have been doing them a disservice if I had just gone along with it. I was paid to be a thinking editor all those years, and I don't feel that a thinking editor can agree with such a position. It would be nice to still be there and have my staff and have my office, but it would have been wrong.

You know the Omni readers best. How do you think they're going to react when they get the November issue in their mailboxes?

I think initially they'll enjoy the hologram. They'll be delighted there's a hologram. They'll appreciate a hologram because they are technologically very savvy. However, I think they'll be surprised by the fact that the hologram is attached to an advertisement. And it may sell more copies—you know, out of the curiosity factor. Maybe that issue will break records. . . . I would love the magazine to continue to do well.

And there's still the chance I'll be proven wrong. . . . But when I told my staff that I had resigned, I told them I wasn't really doing this for anyone but myself and for them. I really felt I had come to New York [with] very little except a good pair of shoes and my name. If I didn't have my name I wouldn't have anything.

What is happening in the magazine business today that would tempt or force your former publisher to consider placing an ad on the cover?

There are tremendous pressures—financial pressures. . . . A lot of deals have been cut at numerous publications. The lines between editorial and advertising have been blurred over and over again.

Do you think this is a sign of problems to come for the magazine industry in the nineties?

This is going to be the greatest challenge for the magazine industry in the nineties. Innovation, creativity, and breakthroughs are good. And I can see this was very much an attempt on General Media's part to be innovative and have a breakthrough. But I

think that the breakthrough has to serve both masters. And I did not see this serving the editorial end of things.

What sort of precedent do you think this sets for the magazine publishing industry?

A sad one.

If this trend continues, what do you think consumer magazines might look like in five or 10 years?

I don't see that kind of trend continuing. I really think that ethics and credibility . . . are going to be much more the issue in the nineties. Whereas the eighties were sort of a decade of greed, I don't see the nineties as having that same kind of atmosphere. I mean, we've all seen the consequences of those types of actions and so I don't see those actions continuing.

What will you do now?

I am not positive what I'm going to be doing next—probably some consulting work. I'd really like to be involved in a publishing empire that affected change, that upheld the principles I believe in, including editorial integrity. ■