

Eye on Campus

Blogging: The day that journalism died

*"I drove my Chevy to the levy
But the levy was dry."*

— Don MacLean

Wednesday, March 9, 2005, Dan Rather resigned his position as anchor for the CBS Evening News, after an unprecedented 24-year run. That night the veteran journalist held a composed and stoic face — actually it was more grave and full of dread.

He knew that we, the American college students, would no longer face tyrants, natural disasters, and wars through the medium in which he reported them. He knew that his fall and the scandal over a seemingly small discrepancy called *the truth*, would push us closer to the threshold of a much bigger threat: alternative media.

That was the day journalism died.

For it was ultimately bloggers who did Rather in. His carelessness, political bias, or in a more colloquial term, his overall screw-up, shocked the public into seeing how much the

mainstream media has become insensitive in its cutthroat businesslike push for ratings, so that the mainstream media itself has failed to realize whose throats are actually being cut.

CNN.com reported that former NBC president Rubeen Frank said, "It's hard to feel sorry for a guy who gets a seven-figure salary." And after his mistake was made public by the bloggers, Rather was "encouraged" by the CBS network executives to step down. CBS was, after all, behind NBC and ABC in the ratings. In addition to the obsession with ratings (translation: money), the other important aspect of mainstream media is that they hold, or perhaps held, the seemingly imperialistic role of news czar. But with their public hold slipping, the mainstream media came up with a masterfully diabolical plan to infect

their influence onto the unsuspecting college student.

Their plan was to create a news resource that was available 24-hours a day and seven days a week, which would incite an irrational but ravenous appetite for news. They called it CNN.

But it is generally accepted that the typical college student doesn't watch CNN. In fact, it seems that today's youth want tidbits of information, which would create a rapidly gyrating kaleidoscope view of the world around them. Jon Stewart himself was surprised, maybe even a little saddened, to find most college students get their news from the "Daily Show."

Perhaps then, the alternative media will be the future of mainstream media. The idea is feasible in context with the way the news itself has been reported through the ages: first through an oral tradition,

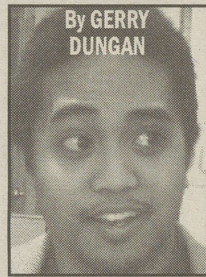
then print, then broadcasting, then the almighty TV.

And now, with the advent of the Internet, bloggers have brought us to yet another level of communication... faster, easier and, this time, interactive. Here we have ordinary citizens simply smacking a post on the Net and calling it news. In an earlier time, this would be called gossip.

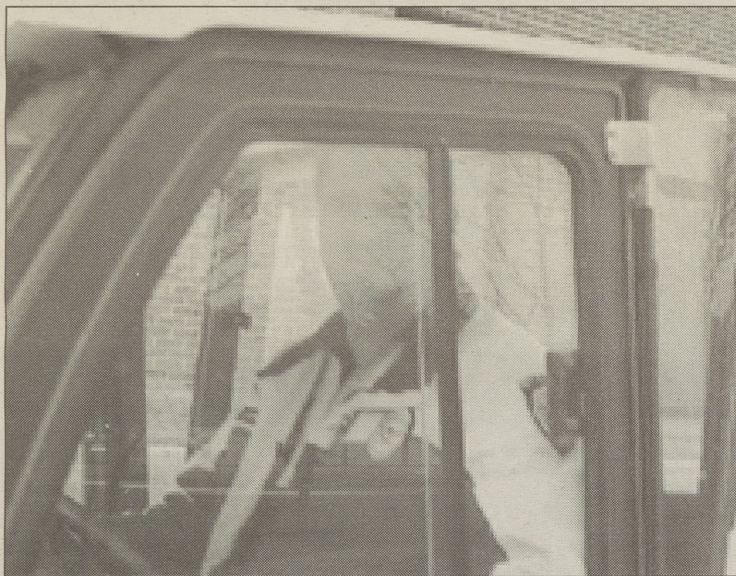
However, one might consider this alternative media as a sort of protesting reformation, maybe even a revolution.

Joseph Biscontinini, professor of journalistic ethics at Delco, coined the terms "cowboy reporters" and "gunslinging journalism." This is because the alternative media is the wild, wild west of news resources.

They gung-ho into high adventure but carry with them no code of ethics, like the lawlessness and chaos of the real American frontier. And yet, many of us have already forfeited our sacred trust for the truth to them.



By GERRY DUNGAN



Dave Horevay rides around in his sweet wheels, the security guard version of a soccer mom van.

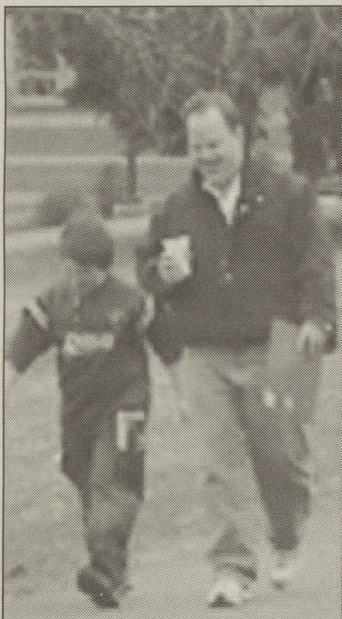
Through the Lens Eye

A photo essay
by Matt Kelly

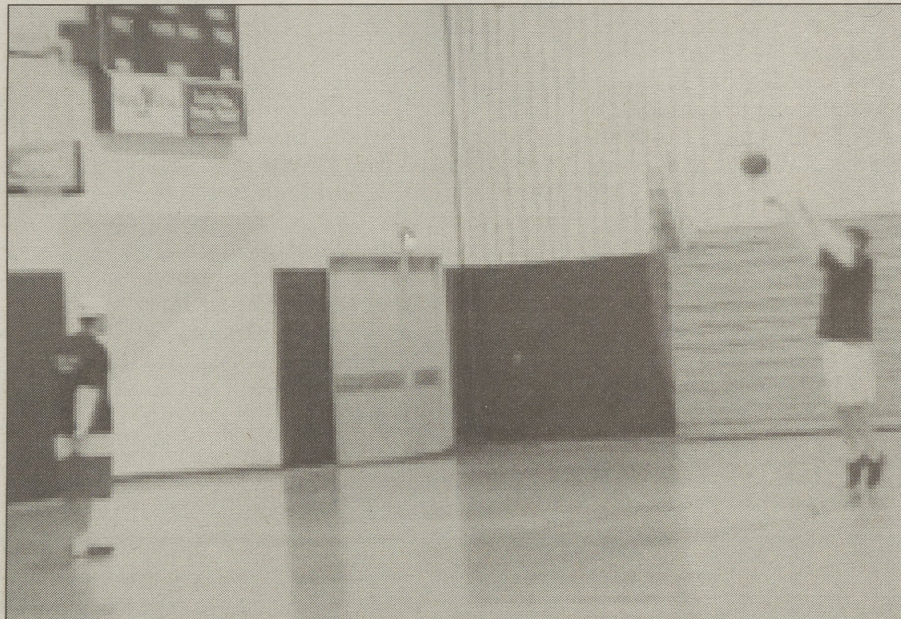
Last week we officially put the spring back in spring semester. The calendars told us that the long-awaited season had finally begun. What have you been doing to keep yourself busy?



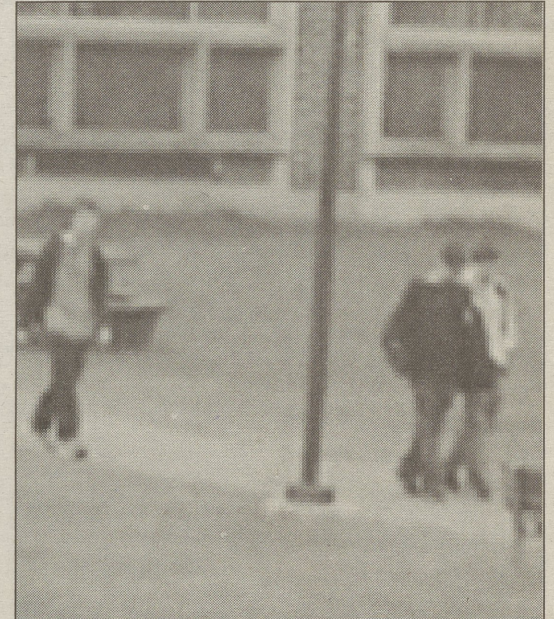
The Nittany lions does nothing because... well, it's a statue, isn't it?



A father and his son walk the campus.



Two students take advantage of the spring weather by playing basketball, in the gym. Yes, that's correct, inside.



Students walk to their next class thinking, 'I could be playing Frisbee.'