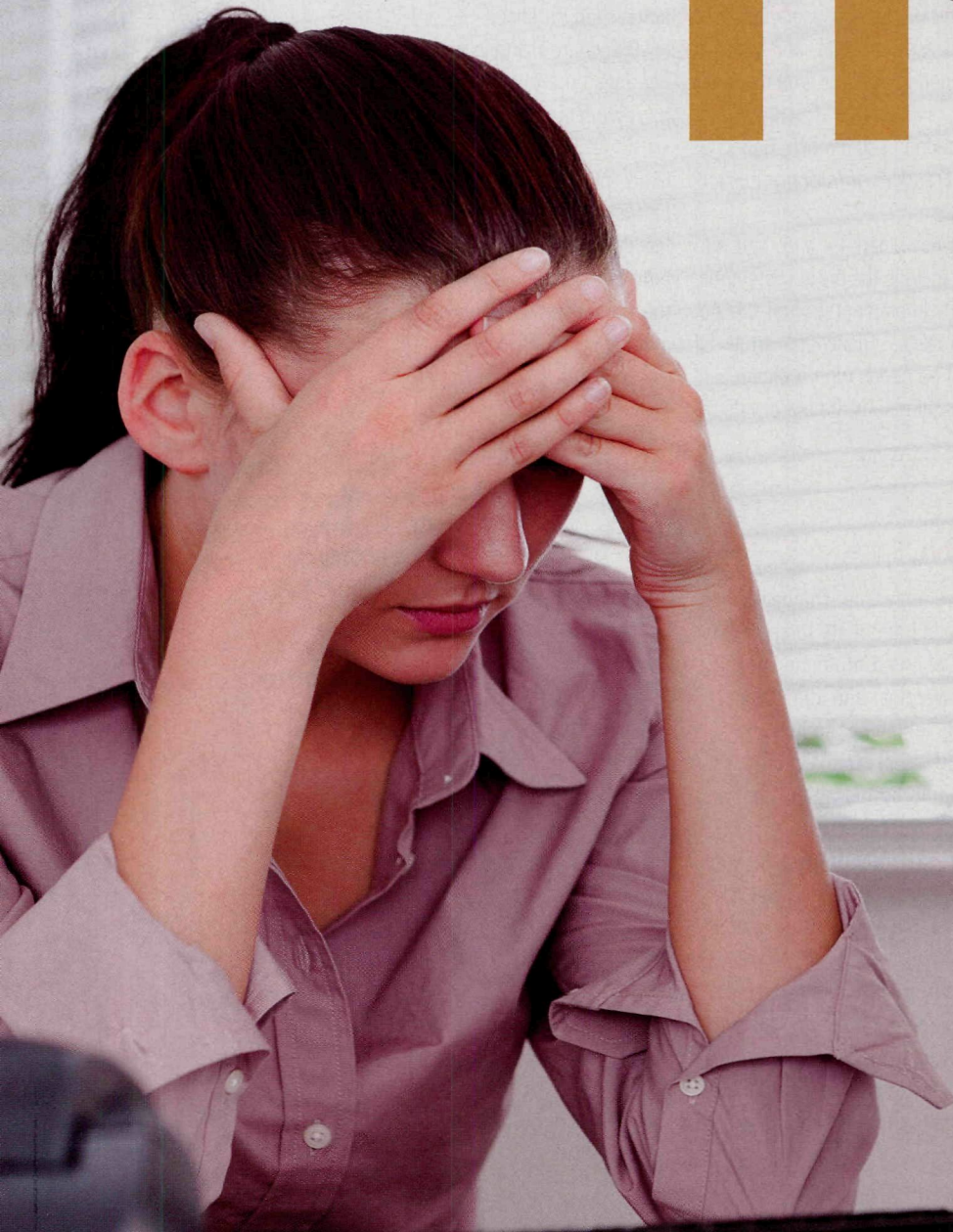
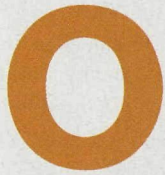


**YOUR JOURNALISM
CAREER AND DEGREE:**

WORTH IT?





K, OK, we know: Journalism is in crisis. Or it's dying. Or already dead. Or it's the best time to be a journalist or journalism student. There's so much innovation and excitement out there.

Ask 20 different journalists or journalism students and you'll get 20 different takes on the industry's future. We know there is tumult in the job market, particularly jobs traditionally tied to print-first news outlets. We can all agree on that.

This issue of Quill — the last in our 100th year of publication — places an emphasis on careers and education. In one feature you'll read epiphanies from three longtime journalists about when the value of journalism clicked for them. In another you'll get practical job-seeking advice from someone who knows what to look for in job applications.

Finally, in this section you'll get three perspectives on careers in journalism and getting a journalism degree. Is it all worth the heartache? Is a journalism degree worth the price of admission? Much like the "journalism is dying vs. journalism is thriving" talking points, there's no one right answer.

VIEW FROM THE (LINGERIE) SIDELINE: A JOURNALISM CAREER STILL WORTH FIGHTING FOR

BY **JIM MOORE**

In the winter of 1978-79, I drove around Washington, Oregon and northern California in my Volkswagen Bug in search of my first newspaper job.

I graduated from Washington State University in the summer of '78 and was excited to start my sportswriting career.

I remember some of the editors being nice and some of them being jerks. I remember the jerks the most. I would get back in my car after a jerk was rude to me or had no time for me and thought: "Someday when I'm in a position to help a young kid, I'm going to help him as much as I can."

Even though I'm 55 now, I haven't forgotten what it was like to be a 22-year-old college graduate searching for my first job.

So when kids want to follow me as a job shadow, I always say yes, hoping they'll learn something that will help them find work.

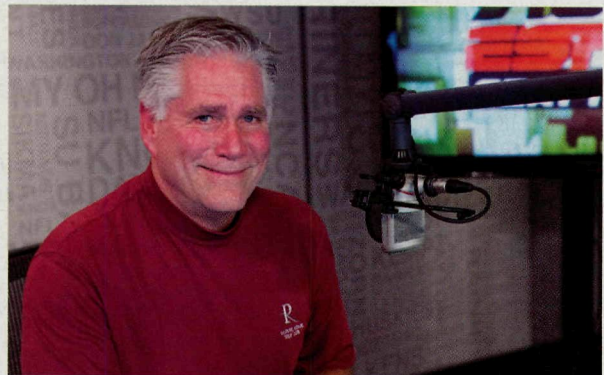
Ten or 20 years ago, this was a pretty easy exercise for me. I'd tell the job shadows to start out at a weekly newspaper or a small daily, get experience and beef up their resumes so a metropolitan daily will hire them.

I'd also help them with their writing, editing and reporting skills and tell them if they're good writers and reporters, they'll have no problem finding a job.

But now? I still agree to every job-shadow request, but I'm not sure what to tell kids anymore. I know this: I don't want to discourage them.

I followed my own advice to job shadows, starting out at a small daily in Ketchikan, Alaska, moving on to a bigger daily in Anchorage and finally landing a job at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Happy as heck as a sports columnist, I planned to retire at the Post-Intelligencer. Growing up, I read the P-I and always wanted to work there. I had my dream job and never wanted to leave.



Jim Moore has gone from newspaper sports reporter/columnist to live radio co-host. Courtesy of 710 ESPN Seattle

But the Post-Intelligencer closed on March 17, 2009, and after 26 years at the paper, I was forced to move on at the age of 52.

I wasn't sure what I was going to do next. I was married and had 5-year-old twin boys, so I had to do something. To be honest, what I really wanted to do was curl up in a ball on the Oregon coast somewhere,

I was clueless when it came to planning a course of action. I thought I could maybe make a go of it as a full-time freelance writer, but looking back, I wouldn't have had the self-discipline to do it.

but no one pays you for doing nothing, which is extremely unfortunate.

I was clueless when it came to planning a course of action. I thought I could maybe make a go of it as a full-time freelance writer, but looking back, I wouldn't have had the self-discipline to do it. Plus it's increasingly difficult to find writing assignments that are worth your while.

Here's a doozy of an example: In my later years at the Post-Intelligencer, I wrote several columns about the Seattle Mist, a lingerie football team.

As a result, I developed a relationship with Mitch Mortaza, the commissioner of the Lingerie Football League. (I can't believe I just wrote that sentence, by the way.)

After the Post-Intelligencer closed, I got an email from Mortaza with an offer to write for the Lingerie Football League's website. I remember thinking: "Why not?"

This guy seems to be on to something, combining good-looking women with football. If I get in on the ground floor, who knows what could happen down the road?"

Mortaza wanted me to cover the teams in the Western Conference. I've interviewed NBA coaches, NFL coaches and major-league managers, and I had to laugh when I pictured myself talking to the coach of the San Diego Seduction about his offensive strategy.

A quick aside ...

For one column in the Post-Intelligencer, Mortaza allowed me to go behind the scenes

during a lingerie football game. I went in the Dallas Desire locker room at halftime of their game with the Mist.

The Desire coach screamed at his players. I distinctly remember having to bite my lip to stop from laughing. I wanted to interrupt him and shake him and tell him: "YOU IDIOT — THIS IS LINGERIE FOOTBALL!"

Anyway, I accepted Mortaza's offer and asked him about the terms of the deal. He told me he wasn't paying the other writers that he had hired, so he didn't plan to pay me either because it wouldn't be fair to them.

I wasn't expecting much, just something more than nothing. I guess in Mortaza's mind, the honor and privilege of writing about scantily clad women should be enough.

I turned down the offer. I mention this as an example of the writing landscape from my point of view. It seems as if lucrative freelance opportunities are harder to find than ever before.

Here's another thought that might work better for you than it has for me. I decided to "syndicate" a regional sports column around the state of Washington.

I planned to write a weekly column for your news outlet for \$50. I told editors that

New America

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POSTMARK DEADLINE:
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every column would be about the Seattle Seahawks, Seattle Mariners or Washington Huskies, teams of interest to readers in their circulation area.

I figured \$50 would fit in their budget, and that maybe they'd want columns from a sportswriter with my experience.

I thought if I could find 10 papers, I'd make \$50 from each one and earn \$500 per column, about what I used to make per column at the Post-Intelligencer.

But I've had only one paper, the Kitsap Sun, sign up for the regionally syndicated column. I've been working for the Sun since January, and even though I'm making only \$50 a column, I enjoy it because I love to write and appreciate the opportunity they're giving me.

I said I didn't want to discourage you, but when I mention the Lingerie Football League and syndicated column, those aren't exactly uplifting examples for anyone planning a journalism career.

The landscape has obviously changed, but I maintain that even though print publications are disappearing, there are more writing opportunities than there were in the past.

Here's some advice that might help you: Instead of solely focusing on being a reporter and writer, learn all you can about public relations, broadcasting and other related fields. Make yourself more marketable by having a diversified resume. I thought I'd be a sportswriter for the rest of my life, but now I'm a sports talk-show host on 710 ESPN Seattle.

I would have greatly benefited from taking broadcasting courses at Washington State. If you listen to our show, I'm clearly a print guy on the radio, still learning on the job, still butchering things from time to time getting in and out of breaks.

And while you're at it, write, write and write some more. Blog often. Get a website up and running. Write daily. My website,

jimmooorethego2guy.com, has not been a money-making venture, but down the road, maybe it will be, maybe it won't.

In the meantime, it's just fun to write. The best posts on your website or blog should impress prospective employers and editors.

I wish I could be of more help, wish I had all of the answers or at least some of them. I'm a displaced oldster who is trying to find his way just like you.

I'll tell you the same thing I tell myself: Don't give up hope. I never got rich being a journalist, but I've never regretted it, because I loved going to work every day.

From my experience, a career in journalism is still worth fighting for. ✨

Jim Moore appears weekday afternoons from 3 to 6 p.m. PT on 710 ESPN Seattle. He writes for kitsapsun.com and 710Sports.com. Reach him at jimmooorethego2guy@yahoo.com or interact on Twitter: @cougsgo.

IS J-SCHOOL NECESSARY?

A VIEW FROM ACROSS THE POND

BY **ASHLEY MILNE-TYTE**

When I entered journalism in late 2001, I was a career changer. I'd spent my 20s working in industries such as publishing and Web design, hoping to settle into a long-term career relationship. But nothing clicked.

I dalled. I dithered. My father had been a journalist all his life, working first in print and then in radio at the BBC. He had prodded me over the years, gently suggesting journalism might be something I wanted to pursue. But even though I loved writing, I reasoned that being a journalist meant asking people awkward questions they didn't want to answer. It meant making people ill at ease. I wasn't interested.

It wasn't until I was 30 and working as a copywriter at a digital marketing agency, while also writing some freelance articles on the side, that I finally concluded journalism was something I wanted to explore. I did not head off to journalism school, though, at least not J-school in the American sense.

A little background here: I'm half-English, half-American, born and raised in London; I moved to New York in 1996. In Britain, traditionally, journalism was

thought of as something you couldn't be taught in an academic setting. Journalism was a trade, something you learned by doing. Still, I wanted to study because I knew it would give me much-needed confidence. I just didn't want to take a year out of the workforce, and I balked at the expense of graduate school.

Instead, I headed back to London on the eve of 9/11 for a relatively inexpensive, three-month certificate course at the Lon-

For anyone thinking about an internship, a little advice: have a good attitude all the time. Do everything you're asked to do willingly, even if you consider it beneath your abilities — or your dignity.

don School of Journalism. I'm glad I did. Being in school for one semester on the basics of news writing and reporting convinced me I was heading down the right path — that this was indeed a career I wanted to pursue.

In the meantime, I'd fallen in love with public radio. This was quite a turnaround

for someone who grew up thinking radio was the fustiest medium on earth. I was raised in the shadow of multiple radios, all crackling with the clipped tones of BBC journalists talking about "current affairs" as my dad called news (the very words made my heart sink), sport or the shipping news.

But soon after moving to the U.S., I realized public radio was the only place I could get in-depth stories about the rest of the world (other than The New York Times,

whose wordiness took some getting used to). I started listening more and more and became entranced by the storytelling those reporters pulled off every day. I wanted to do that myself.

So when I returned to New York in 2002, I started bugging my local public radio station, WNYC, for an internship. I interned

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