



# News Is a Verb

*Pete Hamill*

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"When screaming headlines turn out to be based on stories that don't support them, the tale of the boy who cried wolf gets new life. When the newspaper is filled with stupid features about celebrities at the expense of hard news, the reader feels patronized. In the process, the critical relationship of reader to newspaper is slowly undermined."

--from NEWS IS A VERB

NEWS IS A VERB

Journalism at the End of the Twentieth Century

"With the usual honorable exceptions, newspapers are getting dumber. They are increasingly filled with sensation, rumor, press-agent flackery, and bloated trivialities at the expense of significant facts. The Lewinsky affair was just a magnified version of what has been going on for some time. Newspapers emphasize drama and conflict at the expense of analysis. They cover celebrities as if reporters were a bunch of waifs with their noses pressed enviously to the windows of the rich and famous. They are parochial, square, enslaved to the conventional pieties. The worst are becoming brainless printed junk food. All across the country, in large cities and small, even the better newspapers are predictable and boring. I once heard a movie director say of a certain screenwriter: 'He aspired to mediocrity, and he succeeded.' Many newspapers are succeeding in the same way."

*From the Trade Paperback edition.*

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