

Letters

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cial comic section. It will be popular in comics and cartooning circles, and the only ad revenue there is if there's an arrangement with the holders of the print advertising on the page of ads included in the block to shell out a little extra based on downloads. In this case, yes, the Web would not be making any money for the *Reader*.

Now past the issue of whether bloggers prevent money from flowing to the print media or actually help it, there's the issue of whether online journalists can do anything besides link to print sources (and help the revenues of the print

sources who have an online revenue model). Is there original journalistic content online? Of course. Check out *Chicagoist.com*. While they link to some print-originated material, they do plenty of original work in areas print publications gloss over.

Chicagodailynews.org should be up and running before too long and will be specializing in original material. You can hardly be online for half an hour without accidentally tripping over political commentary. Liberal, conservative—whatever—the commentary is out there. Print columnists expanding their output online, people who are online only. The value of the

political commentator is determined by the individual reader, not the editor, and certainly not by whether the commentator's words are on paper or a screen. It is freedom of what you want to read.

Newspapers and magazines have revenue models that are based primarily on advertising. Alternative weeklies like the *Reader* are based exclusively on advertising. Web pages are based primarily on advertising, with a few entering into the realm of subscription and another set reaping the benefits of selling merchandise that complements their product and/or topic area. The product is not so different; the medium the prod-

uct is distributed in is a little different. The Internet is also a much more inclusive and robust distribution system.

I hope Mr. Lenehan can quit wailing like an infant with soiled diapers and learn about the different types of ways to distribute a news story and to get a check for it. The model is changing, and you can either adapt or go have a drink with those nice young men from the buggy-whip factory.

Todd Allen

Adjunct professor of e-business
Columbia College

Michael Lenehan replies:

Over here at the Buggy Whip Gazette we are very grateful to

Professor Allen for so patiently sharing his e-business expertise, particularly in the area of advertising, a subject we know very little about. I fear, however, that my humble attempt at humor has eluded him in a variety of ways, of which I'd like to address just one: With capital letters and a great deal of condescension, Mr. Allen informs us that blogs provide FREE ADVERTISING for newspapers and generate traffic for their Web sites. In his eagerness to deliver a lecture, he seems to have completely missed my point about the Wonkette item in question, which was precisely that it did neither. Forgive me for repeating myself, but Wonkette linked to Sploid, a sibling blog, and to a page on Yahoo News. The item made no mention of the *Houston Chronicle*, which originated the story, or the AP, which delivered it to Yahoo.

Damn the Health Taliban

After reading Ben Joravsky's piece on Chicago's smoking ban [The Works, December 30], I found it odd that he fails to mention the fact that "second-hand smoke" damage itself is about as proven as "intelligent design." Or the fact that despite humanity being aware of possible damage from inhaling smoke since the first caveman tried building a fire within the cave, not to mention the fact that citizens have many choices of places to go that don't allow smoking, some people feel Big Mother needs to step in and form the Health Taliban.

But since the conservatives have their own pseudoscience justifying the War on Drug Users, liberals need some too, evidently.

John Biederman

DailyLimerick.net

Ben Joravsky replies:

My point was that the city started with the assumption that secondhand smoke is dangerous then did nothing about it.

Swift Justice

Dear Michael [Lenehan],

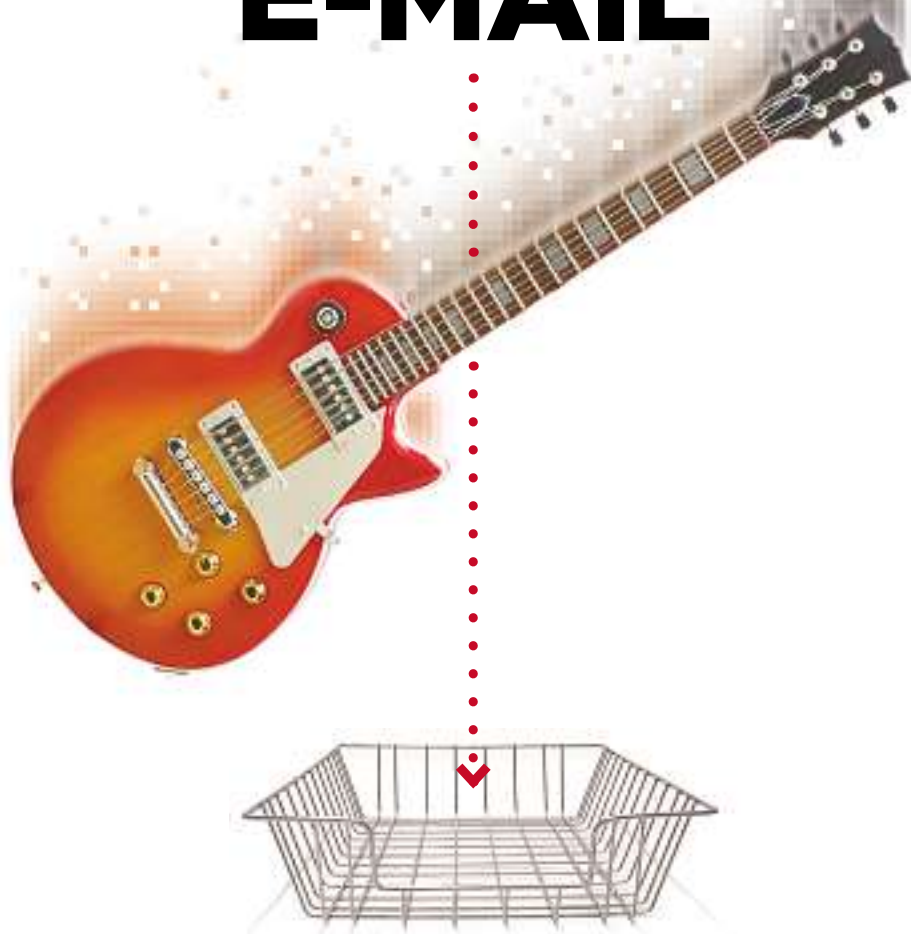
I enjoyed your piece in the latest *Reader* ["A Year Without Journalism," December 30], and your modest proposal for a year's sabbatical for journalists. As I'm sure Swift would've agreed, perhaps those daughters (and sons) of reporters and writers who are unsuitable for lives of prostitution can be eaten.

Fred Donini-Lenhoff

River Forest

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Books

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Keeler mystery is impossible to divine from mere clues, and Keeler had a penchant for introducing twist upon turn upon complication right up to the final page. Clay's impeccably reasoned solution quickly crumbles when the truth comes out; the final answer involves so many unlikely coincidences and almost avant-garde literary devices (including four characters who all turn out to be the same person) that it's almost postmodern.

It's not too surprising that this sort of tomfoolery didn't play too well in post-World War II America. As cold war paranoia set in, mysteries grew increasingly straight and serious and the popularity of hard-boiled writers like Mickey Spillane and Erle Stanley Gardner skyrocketed. Even Ellery Queen swapped his pince-nez for a psychology textbook. Against this buttoned-down backdrop—when a “cult writer” meant someone like Kafka—Keeler must have appeared hopelessly screwy, if not downright un-American. But with the line between high and low culture now so intractably blurred, his time may have finally come. **B**

Ink Well by Ben Tausig

Subscription Descriptions

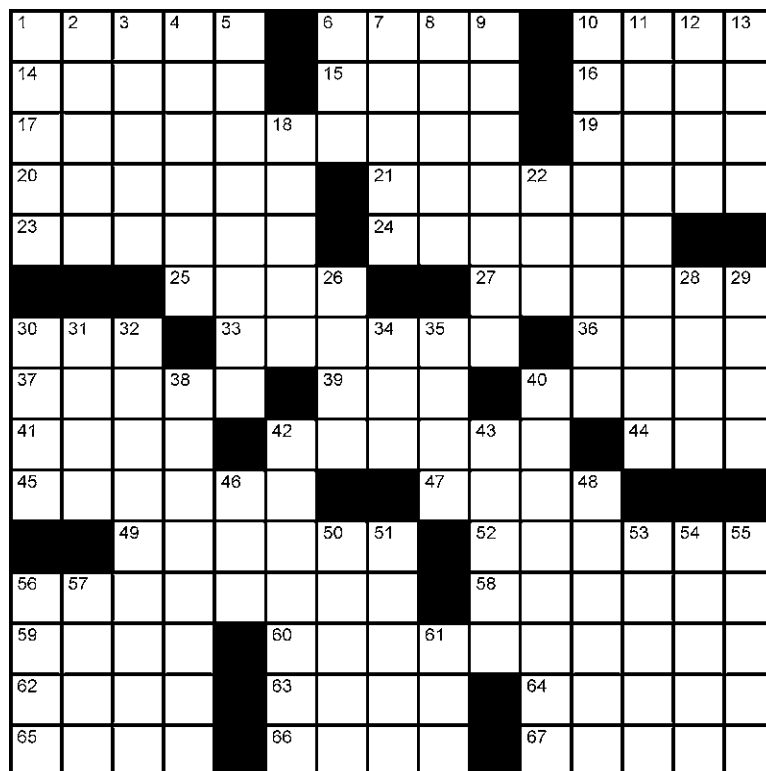
ACROSS

1. “No problemo!”
6. Quarters in college
10. Genghis or Chaka
14. “___ a drink . . .”
15. Trice of hip-hop
16. Reprehensible
17. Driving instructor?
19. Premade waffle option
20. Riffs
21. <
23. Take down the aisle, in a way
24. Really
25. Not busy
27. More sore
30. Chi. summer hours
33. Add slack
36. Plus-size model
37. Stand-up responses
39. What a swish misses
40. False start?
41. Early garden

42. Arbitrator who calls strikes
44. Puncture sound
45. Buckle up
47. Four: prefix
49. Greenpeace target, at times
52. Desisted
56. Mr. or Ms. Right
58. Hit the big time
59. Smart
60. Crepe paper?
62. Ancient South American empire
63. Land of limericks
64. Halloween 2005 nominee
65. Stern's opposite
66. Went platinum, perhaps, but probably not gold
67. Phone company that merged with Bell Atlantic in 1996

DOWN

1. Cuban, e.g.
2. Battery terminal
3. Carter and Gwyn
4. Flouts
5. Nuts
6. One may lead the blind
7. Division symbols
8. Out of bed
9. Seinfeld, notably
10. Bitches
11. Joint publication?
12. Seaweed, e.g.
13. Dodge model
18. Playground retort
22. Pouch
26. Apple problem
28. Big Aussie birds
29. Bolsheviks
30. Child, notably



31. Subversive art movement
32. Rap sheet?
34. Nurse
35. Give off
38. Civil War battleground
40. Perpetual child
42. Like a model in a life-drawing class
43. Play the highlight reel
46. Wing
48. Nearly never
50. Type of tower
51. Bottled spirit
53. Protest strategy
54. Online party-planning resource
55. Dry out, so to speak
56. “Get ___!”
57. Litter's littlest
61. Not to mention

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