

C O N F E R E N C E   R E P O R T

DATELINE  
*The West*



*The Andrus Center is dedicated to independent, non-partisan research, analysis, discussion, education, and policy formation on critical issues confronting Idaho and the western United States.*

*The Center is non-profit, privately-financed, and housed on the campus of Boise State University.*

*Contributions to support the Andrus Center are tax-deductible.*

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# ...DATELINE... *The West*

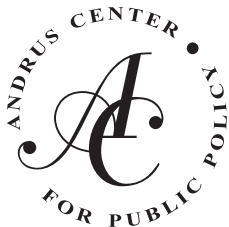
Presented on Friday, December 6, 2002  
At Boise State University  
Boise, Idaho



**Principal Authors:**

Rocky Barker  
John C. Freemuth, Ph.D.  
Marc C. Johnson

Presented by:



**The Idaho Statesman**  
[IdahoStatesman.com](http://IdahoStatesman.com)



# ... DATELINE ...

*The West*

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

### Friday, December 6, 2002

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- 9:00 AM**      **Welcome:** Cecil D. Andrus, Chairman, The Andrus Center  
Margaret E. Buchanan, President and Publisher, The Idaho Statesman
- 9:30 AM**      **Content and Credibility**

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**Understanding Bias, Objectivity, and Balance**  
Walter Dean, a 30-year broadcast news veteran who splits his time between NewsLab, the Project for Excellence in Journalism and the Committee of Concerned Journalists.
- 10:00 AM**      **Cowboys and Cattle Rustling in the 21st Century**  
Conrad Smith, Professor of Journalism at the University of Wyoming, author of *Media and Apocalypse*, a study of the media coverage of the Yellowstone wildfire, the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and the Loma Prieta earthquake.
- 10:30 AM**      **Mediating the Western Environment: Reflections on News Coverage of the Spotted Owl Conflict**  
Jacob Bendix, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Geography in the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. Author of a comprehensive study of the coverage of the spotted owl controversy and other western natural resource issues.
- 11:00 AM**      **BREAK**
- 11:15 AM**      **Panel discussion** among Messrs. Dean, Smith, and Bendix with questions from the audience.  
Moderated by John C. Freemuth, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Andrus Center
- NOON**              Luncheon, Jordan Ballroom, Student Union  
**A Westerner's View of the Media**  
Senator Alan K. Simpson, former US Senator, Wyoming
- 1:30 PM**      **Critters, Controversy, and Confrontation:**

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**The Media's Struggle to Report the West**  
Journalists and decision-makers will consider a series of hypothetical situations in which controversial western issues are played out in a way that helps illustrate the tensions and demands on all the participants.  
Moderated by Marc C. Johnson, President, The Andrus Center

**PANELISTS:**

Bob Barbee, former Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park  
Tim Egan, Enterprise Reporter, *The New York Times*, Seattle  
Bob Ekey, Northern Rockies Regional Director, The Wilderness Society  
Gloria Flora, former Supervisor, US Forest Service  
Rod Gramer, Executive News Director, KGW-TV, Portland  
Peter Jennings, ABC World News Anchor  
Rick Johnson, Executive Director, Idaho Conservation League  
Tom Kenworthy, Denver-based Correspondent for *USA TODAY*  
Scott Kraft, National Editor, *The Los Angeles Times*  
Senator Brad Little, owner of Little Land & Livestock Co., Emmett,  
Idaho and member of the Idaho Senate  
Robert Manne, President and CEO, Pacific Lumber Co.  
Sandra Mitchell, Executive Director, Hells Canyon Alliance, and Public  
Lands. Director, Idaho State Snowmobile Association  
Mark Obenhaus, ABC Senior Producer for *Peter Jennings Reporting*  
Katy Roberts, National Editor, *The New York Times*  
Patrick A. Shea, Director, Bureau of Land Management,  
Clinton Administration  
Jay Shelledy, Editor, *The Salt Lake Tribune*  
Congressman Mike Simpson, Idaho Congressman,  
Second Congressional District  
Mark Steele, Editor, *The Caribou County Sun*, Soda Springs, Idaho  
Jim Strauss, Executive Editor, *The Great Falls Tribune*,  
Great Falls, Montana  
Congressman Pat Williams, former Congressman from Montana,  
now Senior Fellow for the O'Connor Center for the Rocky  
Mountain West

**3:45 PM**

**Observations and Conclusions:**

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A review of the conference day and reflections on the complexity of western issues and their coverage.

Cecil D. Andrus  
Walter Dean  
Peter Jennings  
Senator Alan K. Simpson

**4:30 PM**

**Conference adjourns**

**Evening Address**

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**7:00 PM**

**Public address by Peter Jennings**, Jordan Ballroom, Boise State University Student Union. Reserved seating for conferees.



“Let me suggest that as you talk to each other today, you consider the following questions: Is the issue more about getting the facts right or more about which facts the journalists choose when reporting western issues? How many of the issues you’ll talk about today are really about values?”

- Walter Dean

“Now we’re going to cut to the chase here. The role of the media in shaping public policy on western issues, summarized as ‘They just don’t get it.’ No, that’s not it. That’s too easy. They don’t have time to learn about us.”

- Senator Alan K. Simpson



## INTRODUCTION

A day-long conference, *Dateline: The West*, was held December 6, 2002 at Boise State University and was presented by the Andrus Center for Public Policy, the *Idaho Statesman*, and the Gannett Co. Pacific Group. The purpose of the gathering was to explore how news organizations make decisions about what to report and why, and how those decisions, in turn, affect public opinion and public policy decisions, which are often made far from the west.

In order to give appropriate grounding in the subject to the 400 conferees, we began the morning with three presentations by respected experts in the field of news coverage analysis: **Conrad Smith** of the University of Wyoming, **Jacob Bendix** of Syracuse University, and **Walter Dean** of the Project for Journalistic Excellence and the Committee of Concerned Journalists. These presenters were followed by a panel discussion, moderated by the Center's Senior Fellow, **Dr. John C. Freemuth**. Former Wyoming Republican Senator **Alan K. Simpson**, a frequent and outspoken critic of the media, spoke at noon, and in the afternoon, **Marc Johnson**, President of the Andrus Center, led a panel of journalists, interest-group representatives, and decision-makers through a series of hypothetical news events<sup>1</sup> that illustrated the media's role in portraying and shaping policy and perceptions about the western United States.



Peter Jennings

Headlining the conference was **Peter Jennings**, anchor and senior editor of ABC World News Tonight, who participated in the panel and gave a public address in the evening. Also participating in the conference were **Katy Roberts**, a senior editor at the *New York Times*, **Tom Kenworthy**, national correspondent for *USA Today*, and **Scott Kraft**, national editor of the *Los Angeles Times*.

In addition to the Andrus Center, the *Idaho Statesman*, and the Gannett Co. Pacific Group, the conference was made possible and underwritten by the APME Credibility Roundtables Project and by the Brainerd, Bullitt, Key, Lazar, Mellon and Moore Foundations.

<sup>1</sup> For more in-depth information regarding these hypothetical news events, please refer to the Appendix provided on page 18.

## DATELINE: THE WEST

### The Media and Public Policy

The junction where public policy and journalism meet is a stormy place, and it should be. The makers and implementers of public policy have one job, and journalists have another. Each is dependent on the other in order to carry out their responsibilities.

What we see every day in the columns of newspapers and magazines and what we see and hear from broadcast news outlets are often the products of this mutually dependent clash of responsibilities. As consumers of news, readers, viewers, and listeners in the western United States are often critical, even very critical, of this product, which many see as incompletely or inaccurately portraying their territory, their issues, and their concerns.

The criticism in the west of the media's treatment of western issues is undoubtedly the product of many factors: distance from the nation's media and political centers, the complexity and contentious nature of many of the region's public policy debates, and—it may pain a westerner to admit—a certain parochial attitude springing from the west as a place of rugged individualism and hard-dying myth. It could also be that the national media, in the sense that it can be spoken of as one monolithic entity, just doesn't understand or report on the west very well.

*"There is a vastness west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian that you people don't understand. There is a culture out here that is different from Manhattan..."*

– Cecil D. Andrus

Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary of Interior in the Carter Administration and four-term Governor of Idaho, is the chairman of the Andrus Center. He described the genesis of the Center's *Dateline: The West* conference:



Cecil D. Andrus

"This conference came about as the result of a series of discussions with a variety of people from coast to coast over the last couple of years. Those discussions often ended with our wondering whether the national news media... really understood how critically... we view their work... There is a vastness west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian that you people don't understand. There is a culture out here that is different from Manhattan... More important, perhaps, we wondered whether we could explore how national news coverage of our regional fights over issues like endangered species and forest fire policy helped shape national policy around those issues."

The Andrus Center for Public Policy explored these perceptions and looked at how public policy, particularly public policy affecting so-called "western issues," is impacted by national media coverage and the perspective of reporters and editors who cover the west but often do not live in the west. This white paper describes the major themes of the conference. There are lessons from the conference for journalists, for public policy makers, and for westerners. They include these observations:

*"Americans in other parts of the country take very seriously the idea that this land is their land, too."*

– Peter Jennings

- 1) Westerners may as well get comfortable with the notion that “their” stories—public land debates and fights over endangered species, for example—are going to continue to be treated as issues of national import.
- 2) Journalists are frequently ill-equipped to cover the complexity of western issues, and they fall back on the easier, simpler coverage of conflict.
- 3) Journalists and public policy makers share a responsibility to the consumer of news to provide context for conflict. Indeed, most western stories that are reported in terms of conflict are really stories that deal with competing values, values that both journalists and policy makers should be at pains to explain.

This white paper also suggests a variety of action steps, which provide several avenues of further exploration and education about the important issues of media influence on public policy.

### Lessons for Westerners About the West and Media Coverage of the West

Some westerners may chafe, but it has never been clearer that the west’s land and resource stories, even those in a westerner’s backyard, are of more than local or regional interest. The west’s stories are national stories, and all Americans, east and west of the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian, are claiming their piece of the west. The national media is reflecting this reality, and Peter Jennings remarked:



Peter Jennings

“The widespread support in other parts of the country for the Endangered Species Act is not going to suddenly evaporate. Whether it is a threat to the coho salmon in the Klamath Valley, the spotted owl, the federal government’s wildfire policy, which we talked about today, highway restrictions, or snowmobiling in the national parks, increasingly, I think, you should know that Americans in other parts of the country take very seriously the idea that this land is their land, too.”

In addition, stories that westerners consider local or, at most, state issues are often of interest regionally. Scott Kraft, national editor of the *Los Angeles Times* in a state often thought to have more in common with the east coast than with the west, commented: “We consider ourselves part of the west and not just because the north-west is a playground for people in Los Angeles but because people in our readership feel very strongly about the environment and land use.”



Scott Kraft

Yet, when thinking about national media coverage of the west and its frequently-contentious issues, many westerners start from the viewpoint that coverage of natural resource and public land issues is biased—biased toward the populated east and west coasts, biased toward protecting wildlife, scenery and recreation, and biased against the west’s extractive, natural resource industries.

With many western states containing hundreds of thousands of acres of public land, managed by a host of federal government agencies, westerners have long felt that they were different and that their relationship with the

land, in a way, defined what it is to be a westerner. Westerners use the public lands for every type of recreation and to sustain whole segments of the western economy; yet policy proscribing how the land will be managed is set far from the west.

*The new, changing, and less mythic west demands journalistic attention to different issues and a different kind of reporting as well.*

No less a western critic of the media than former Wyoming Republican Senator Alan Simpson told the Andrus conference that

reporters for many national news organizations think they enjoy a better perspective on the west than westerners themselves:

“It’s a paternalistic attitude that says we don’t know what we’re doing and they need to lead us forward. We’re the unwashed.”



Panelists at *Dateline: The West*. Patrick Shea, Tim Egan, Mark Obenhaus, Mike Simpson, Brad Little and Rick Johnson

As Idaho Republican Congressman Mike Simpson noted, “75 or 80% of the public land is west of the Mississippi, but 75% of the people live east of the Mississippi.” In a most basic sense, all of the public land in the west is owned by the American public, managed for them by the federal government.<sup>2</sup>

Again some in the west may fervently disagree, but it is clear that the west is still a place of myth and symbol, factors not easily

*“An objective person would argue that it would have been a much poorer place without the federal government.”*

– Peter Jennings

accounted for in daily journalism or perhaps even easily identified in the search for facts and context. The new, changing, and less mythic west demands journalistic attention to different issues and a different kind of reporting as well.

Demographic, ethnic, and economic changes are among the “new” stories that define the region. Journalism that provides attention and perspective to the west’s diverse cultures, changing demographics, and a revolution in the economy must join coverage of the traditional staples of the western story: wildfire and conflict over the uses of the public land.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, we will use the term “public lands” to describe national forests, national parks, BLM land, wildlife refuges, etc. These lands, by federal law, are managed for the American public. Federal lands include such things as interstate highway systems, military installations, etc. The term “federal lands” is frequently used in the western United States in pejorative fashion by those opposed to federal government land management policies. As many journalists know, the control and use of the terminology of the debate around western issues can have a significant impact on how the issues are perceived and understood.

As Peter Jennings put it, “We can see that this [the west] is a new place in many ways with startling features and dynamics that are bound to disappoint a popular culture if that culture is addicted to the rich and homey vaudeville that made Buffalo Bill a millionaire.”

One aspect of the Western myth, commonly held by Westerners, is that rugged individuals built the region, a myth that can easily ignore the role of the federal government in creating the conditions and expending the capital that allowed the west to grow and flourish. In his evening remarks, Peter Jennings observed:

*“In short, you could make an intellectual argument at least that the west is the overwhelming story of government.”*

– Peter Jennings

“I am somewhat puzzled at the tendency here in the west to be anti-government and even to only reluctantly acknowledge that the federal government and western development are incontrovertibly together. Without the government, western development would have been so different. I made the short and obvious list. Without the Louisiana Purchase, without the Mexican War, without the railroads, and certainly without what the government established here during World War II—the western defense industries, the research institutions, the western military bases—surely the west would have been very different.

An objective person would argue that it would have been a much poorer place without the federal government.

*The research also indicates that covering the conflicts in western issues is irresistible.*

...After all, though we don't like to admit it in this neck of the woods, the federal government also took care of the Native American problem by relocating them, built the water supply, provided endless federal subsidies and programs that helped the west develop. In short, you could make an intellectual argument at least that the west is the overwhelming story of government. How could it not be when the government owns or administers most of the land between the Pacific and the eastern slopes of the Rockies?”

### Lessons for the Media on the West and its Issues

Professors Conrad Smith of the University of Wyoming and Jacob Bendix of Syracuse University both made presentations to the Andrus Conference on various aspects of national media coverage of western issues. Smith and Bendix outlined several themes in their studies of national coverage of the west and its issues.

Media coverage of western issues, as with many issues, is biased toward simplicity instead of complexity. Bendix's extensive research on media coverage of the spotted owl issue, conducted with journalism professor, Dr. Carol Liebler of Syracuse University, indicates that the majority of newspaper and television stories framed the “owl controversy” coverage around the theme of “jobs versus owls.” This framing of the issues, Bendix said, favored the perspective of the timber industry. This perspective was true whether the reporting came from Portland, in the heart of spotted owl country, or from Boston or other east coast cities.



Dr. Jacob Bendix

“I think what happened is that you had a communication dynamic,” Bendix said, “in which it is much easier to communicate a simple idea than a complex one, and the pro-cut side had an idea that was very straightforward and easy to communicate.”

The research also indicates that covering the conflicts in western issues is irresistible. As a result, western stories, such as the controversy over water use in the Klamath Valley in Oregon or the dispute between a Nevada county and the U.S. Forest Service over the closing of a road along a stream that is home to endangered bull trout, frequently rise to national attention. At the same time, when these stories, rich with pointed conflict, move toward compromise, the media’s interest wanes.

Congressman Simpson raised an important question in regard to coverage of conflict and protests:

“I am wondering how much of the lack of coverage of legitimate protests on both sides of any given issue leads people to get more and more and more extreme in order to get the coverage. Do we cover sufficiently the causes that generate these protests? Or are we leading to more and more extremism by not covering them and by saying it’s not a story? I don’t know the answer, but it’s a good question.”



Mike Simpson



Gloria Flora

Gloria Flora, a former Forest Service supervisor, was involved in the Nevada road closure issues, and she contends the unglamorous work of compromise rarely gets much attention. “Collaboration is not quite as exciting because it’s tiring. It’s messy. It takes a long time. It doesn’t necessarily come to a conclusion. There are no winners and losers,” Flora said.

But a top editor at the *New York Times* disagreed. Katy Roberts, who grew up in the west and has been a long-time editor at the Times, said newspapers with expert and experienced reporters based in the west are covering the compromises and the new processes of governance. Roberts said her Times colleague, another western native, Tim Egan, is a prime example of reporters willing to work hard to provide perspective on western subjects.



Katy Roberts

“He has made a fine career out of being optimistic about western issues and has made the stories sexy—the collaboration stories, the compromise stories,” Roberts said. “We have strong competition from *USA Today* and from Tom Kenworthy, who has done wonderful work in Utah... the same with the *Los Angeles Times*. I think it [the attitude that the media is only interested in conflict] just means the people aren’t really reading the eastern press.”

***“The thing I found that most pleasantly surprised me is how much more most reporters know now about wildfire than they did in 1988...”***

**– Conrad Smith**

Patrick Shea, former national director of the Bureau of Land Management, gave one reason why getting to the real issues, values, and solutions surrounding a controversy is often very difficult:



Patrick Shea

“In Washington, in Boise, in other state capitols, in Scotia, California, there are people now who are getting themselves in policy positions because they like the publicity, not the policy. One of the challenges for the media is how to figure out who is going to really articulate what the policies ought to be, not self-aggrandize or publicize themselves. When you had a Mike Mansfield, when you had Pat Williams—and I would say Congressman Simpson is of this quality—when you have people genuinely concerned about public policy, that’s what you want. But the vast majority of the people I saw in the halls of Congress, as I was summoned to different meetings, were people interested in getting on Peter Jennings’ show.”

On at least one western issue—forest fires—analysis of the content of media coverage indicates that the reporting is getting better. Conrad Smith, who studied media coverage of forest fires and other disasters since 1988, conducted content analysis of the 2002 coverage of President Bush’s Healthy Forests Initiative for his presentation to the Andrus conference. Smith reviewed 75 news stories and 33 opinion columns from news organizations across the country, including the three major networks, CNN, and National Public Radio:



Peter Jennings and Katy Roberts

“The thing I found that most pleasantly surprised me is how much more most reporters know now about wildfire than they did in 1988,” Smith said. “Most reporters on wildfire are really pretty knowledgeable about the issue. That was definitely not true in 1988.”

Recent fire coverage, Smith said, was well rounded and featured depth and context. The ongoing scientific debates about thinning and prescribed fires have increasingly been integrated into the more traditional political stories about western fires. Tom Kenworthy of *USA Today* explained one reason why this might be happening:

“Fire stories tend to be very much the same. You have to use them to explore larger issues. How has the federal policy changed since the Yellowstone fires of 1988 in terms of fighting fires in national parks? What does it say about forest management? ...you try to explore these larger issues.”



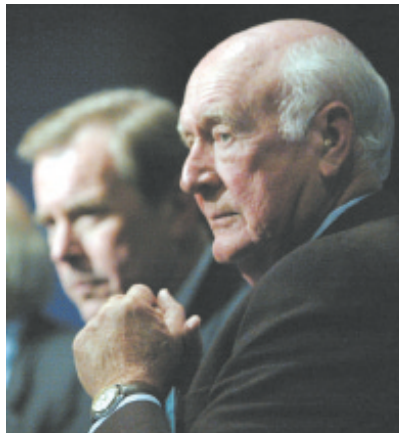
Tom Kenworthy

Following last August's announcement of the "Healthy Forests Initiative" by President Bush, however, most of the resulting stories were framed around the perspective that the Bush Administration was making new fire policy, and environmental groups were positioning as the opposition to the policy. Fire coverage at this point, Smith said, lost a diversity of voices, including the perspective of scientists and Forest Service managers.

*"One big question we've had a lot of discussion about over the last decade is whether the corporate ownership of the media, the profit margins, the cutting of staff, and so forth prevent them from actually doing the job right."*

- Bob Ekey

"Almost all the sources after that were 'he-said-she-said,'" Smith reported. "To me the policy made some kind of sense. It would take forever to thin those trees if the land agencies did it, so letting the timber companies do it maybe made sense. But it was treated as though the whole plan was just an excuse to go log all the big old trees... **the stories gave me no information about how to evaluate the merit of those two claims.**" [Emphasis added.]



Peter Jennings and Cecil D. Andrus

Several conference participants made the point that budget cuts at many national news organizations have an effect on regional coverage in the west and elsewhere. The *New York Times* and *USA Today*, among other national publications, have western bureaus—in some cases more than one. Yet, as Andrus Center Chairman, Cecil D. Andrus, a westerner who has dealt with and influenced coverage from both Idaho and Washington, D.C., pointed out, resources and quality of coverage are different sides of the same coin.

"It's a budget issue for many of the media people," Andrus said. "We must get them prepared to give their people some extra time in the western United States to learn the background of problems or stories or potential stories. They need to see firsthand what we see on a daily basis."



Bob Ekey

Bob Ekey, a former award-winning journalist and currently regional director in Bozeman, Montana for the Wilderness Society, put the problem in a nutshell:

"There are high expectations that things be reported well and better than they have been. One big question we've had a lot of discussion about over the last decade is

whether the corporate ownership of the media, the profit margins, the cutting of staff, and so forth prevent them from actually doing the job right. All these people here know what they would like to do. The question is whether they have the resources to do it. As citizens, we might want to be pushing the media to do that.”<sup>3</sup>

## Lessons About Media Bias and Perspective

Every consumer of news has opinions about the bias and perspective of the journalist that has produced what is read and viewed. It was a working assumption of the Andrus Conference that many who attended this gathering had firm opinions about media bias, including the notion that “the media is generally pro-environment” and that “the eastern media subscribes to simplistic views about the west and its culture.” An important lesson from the conference, however, was that such generalizations can themselves be very narrow and, indeed, “biased.” The truth about media bias and perspective is more textured and more complicated.

**“Anything you create in journalism will have bias.”**

– Walter Dean

Walter Dean, a former television news director and CBS News executive, now with the Project for Excellence in Journalism and the Committee for Concerned Journalists, put it succinctly in his opening presentation to the conference: “Anything you create in journalism will have bias.” But, as Dean pointed out, most of us will find many biases acceptable. For example: “Peace is better than war. Democracy is better than dictatorship. Deceit should be exposed. Order is better than chaos.”

What bothers Dean and undoubtedly bothers many consumers of news about western public policy issues is “the unacceptable biases that creep into news coverage.” As a counter to this, Dean proposed “transparency” in the way reporters gather and use information. He called for a “strict discipline of verification” where “the journalist was not and could not be objective, but his method could be.” Dean described the process as having three key rules.



Walter Dean

- 1) The Rule of Transparency. A journalist should, “tell your readers and viewers what you know and what you don’t know. Tell them who your sources are and, to the extent you can, what their biases are. Tell them how you got the information and why you made the choices you did. The best way readers and viewers can judge a story is for the journalist to explain his methods, how he knows what he knows, and why he did what he did with that information.”

<sup>3</sup> T.R. Reid, one of the *Washington Post’s* most experienced and talented correspondents, reported from the Post’s Denver bureau in the late 1980s. Reid’s presence in the west brought a new depth to the Post’s coverage of issues ranging from forest fires and national parks to the emerging regional technology revolution. When Reid left to man the paper’s Tokyo bureau, however, the Post left the Denver base vacant. Eventually, Tom Kenworthy, who covered the Department of the Interior for the Post, persuaded his editors to allow him to cover the beat from the west. But before long, budget considerations prompted the Post to close the bureau again in 2000.

It may have been a coincidence, but in an editorial that year about the great fires burning across the region, Post editorial writers confused national forests with national parks, two very different things, managed by two different federal agencies in two separate departments. As a happy footnote to this example of resources inevitably shaping coverage, it is worth noting that Reid has returned to Colorado and will soon begin reporting for the *Washington Post* on a contract basis.

- 2) Keep an open mind. Journalists must strive to stay open to new information or new interpretations of old information. Be open about the ability to understand what you are hearing with regard to a particular story. Be careful about assumptions.
- 3) Finally, Dean cautioned about the temptation by journalists to utilize second-hand information without doing the original work of checking facts and sources themselves.

As to covering the west, Dean urged reporters to pay attention to values because the conflict over values is often at the heart of many western issues. How a reporter chooses which values to report and how those values are interpreted say much about a story.

*“Getting the facts right isn’t enough. The real challenge is to present the right facts.”*

- Walter Dean

Both Professors Smith and Bendix shared the observation that the media sometimes oversimplifies western values. One example was the national coverage of the Wyoming murder of gay college student Matthew Shepard, which was portrayed by some news organizations as an “old west style” lynching. Bendix noted that some who are charged with reporting on western issues, including contentious issues that impact on economic stability and life-style values, “don’t really have to understand or empathize with the impact of environmental issues on western rural communities.”

As Dean said about covering the west, “Getting the facts right isn’t enough. The real challenge is to present the right facts.”

## Conclusion

*Dateline: The West* posed an important question: Does national media coverage of western issues affect the policies that surround those issues?

The conference produced numerous examples where western stereotypes were perpetuated and where simplicity of coverage often focused on conflict and camouflaged complex debates about values and culture. There are clearly stories produced by the national media that betray a real ignorance of the west, its values, and its culture.

At the same time, it is apparent that although less-than-precise or incomplete reporting may appear sinister or intentional, it is frequently the product of inadequate budgets, intensive pressure to do more stories, and fierce competition.

There is much good journalism going on in and about the west. The interaction of nationally-known reporters and editors, along with their regional and local counterparts, revealed a sincere interest by all conference participants to better understand and convey the importance of western issues, as well as a desire, to paraphrase Walter Dean, to move in the direction of “getting the right facts.”

In this vein, the search for authentic voices, whose diverse and deeply-held values help tell the rich western story, remains vital. All Americans do have a stake in what goes on beyond the 100<sup>th</sup> meridian. To appreciate and influence public policy in the west, the entire country, including policy makers and hard-core westerners, must strive for better understanding of the complexity and competing values that define just what is at stake out here in the west.

To this end, the Andrus Center commits to contribute to the search through sponsoring and encouraging several follow-up efforts from the Dateline conference, which are enumerated in the Action Agenda below.

The western story is truly a national story. All of us, whether we live in Denver or Detroit, Missoula or Manhattan, own our own piece of the west. We are captivated by the mind's-eye world of images and myths, critters and cowboys, but we live in a world that forces us—through the making of public policy—to confront enormous issues about land, water, economics, energy, changing demographics and spectacular growth, among many others.

Our perception of these and other issues is influenced by those who determine what gets reported and who does the reporting. It is a complex interdependency, a process that is, even most journalists will agree, far from perfect and always in need of improvement.

It is our hope that this white paper opens up some new ground and offers some new insight into how to not only report the western story in the right way, but at the same time provide vital perspective on what we might call the “right” west—a complicated, important and fascinating region, infused with myth and conflict, and deserving of public policy reporting that strives to understand and interpret all that is the modern west.



### **Action Agenda**

Based on discussions during and following *Dateline: The West*, here are the Andrus Center's recommendations for further study and action:

1. More discussion is warranted around the west on the issues of media credibility and bias.
2. More research is needed on the effects of media coverage on the formulation of public policy issues.
3. There is a need for increased training of journalists to help individual reporters develop expertise in western issues.
4. The continuing discussion and dialogue on these issues would be enhanced by the development of a handbook for journalists and citizens on addressing credibility and bias issues on a local and regional basis.

### **More discussions around the West on media credibility and bias**

*Dateline: The West* was the first regional discussion of media credibility and bias that included both the media and public. It should not be the last.

Local newspapers from Spokane to Tucson have sponsored and organized Credibility Roundtables under the auspices of the Associated Press Managing Editors' Credibility Roundtables Project, funded by the Ford Foundation. (The APME Credibility Roundtables Project was a sponsor of *Dateline: The West*.)

These credibility roundtables have allowed 70 news organizations in 43 states to discuss directly with their readers, viewers, and listeners the issues important to each of their communities. The roundtables, which use real-world examples, are ideal when one news organization is having a discussion with its own readers, viewers, and listeners. When several news organizations are involved, the discussions become more complex and more universal.

Using a format similar to *Dateline: The West*, several news organizations and perhaps journalism schools in western communities could address these issues on a wider basis and provide relevance to a wider audience. Also, editors from across the west could benefit by coming together to share the individual challenges of covering local issues of national importance. In such a forum, the hypothetical format is especially useful in demonstrating the various reactions of the many players. One specific item that will be produced by the Andrus Center will be a step-by-step guide on how to prepare and present a hypothetical, such as the one presented during the Dateline conference.

### **More research on the effects of media coverage on public policy issues**

Additional research on the role of the media in shaping public policy issues in the west and elsewhere will help increase the understanding among journalists and their consumers about the effects of their work. This knowledge will be particularly helpful to young journalists as they recognize the gravity and responsibility of the decisions they make on what to cover, whom to call, how to frame an issue, and how to write and package their reports.

Journalism schools are the first line of such research, but, as Jacob Bendix's collaboration with Professor Liebler demonstrates, the involvement of other disciplines expands the depth and breadth of such research.

### **Increased training of journalists to develop expertise in western issues**

Clearly news organizations at all levels desire more expertise at all levels on the issues important to the readers. Several programs in the west offer training and seminars to journalists on western issues. Among them:

- The Western Knight Center for Specialized Journalism at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California. These programs offer mid-career fellowships to working journalists, who are brought together with subject experts to discuss complex, controversial issues, such as the recent program on "Water in the New West: Economics, Politics and Nature." More information is available at the Center's website: [www.usc.edu/schools/annenberg/asc/projects/wkc/whowere.html](http://www.usc.edu/schools/annenberg/asc/projects/wkc/whowere.html).

- The Institutes for Journalism and Natural Resources, based in Missoula, Montana, take journalists and their sources on expedition-style journeys together to examine issues such as ranching, energy development, forestry, and mining. Additional information is available at [www.ijnr.org](http://www.ijnr.org).
- The Scripps Howard Institute on the Environment at the University of Colorado offers broad workshops for journalists reporting on the environment. The program also offers longer-term fellowships for journalists to study and enroll in academic classes on environmental issues. For more information: <http://www.colorado.edu/journalism/cej/>.

### Development of a handbook

A handbook addressing regional credibility and bias issues should be developed to assist in additional regional discussions of the issues explored during *Dateline: The West*. The handbook could include information developed by the APME Credibility Roundtables Project, *Dateline: The West*, and other sources. Such a tool would be helpful to journalists seeking to develop a broader discussion in their own communities, not only on western land issues but also on issues like diversity, economic transition, and rural policy. The handbook could also provide tips for developing a hypothetical panel, offer sources for background materials, and serve as a guide for putting together other discussion formats and programs.

*The Andrus Center will produce two versions of an “advice and tips” paper that could be used as part of any handbook that is developed. One version will be targeted to western journalists on how to produce accurate and educational stories; the other, to non-western journalists.*

### Publications

A transcript of the entire conference and this conference report are available on the Andrus Center website ([www.andruscenter.org](http://www.andruscenter.org)) and may be downloaded without charge. Printed versions may be ordered through the Andrus Center. Conference photos by Darin Oswald.



## A P P E N D I X

### C a n d o r , I n s i g h t F l o w f r o m D a t e l i n e P a n e l

Here's a recipe for something special: Bring together one of the world's best known and most respected network journalists with top editors from the *New York* and *Los Angeles Times*, add in two of the best environmental reporters in America, ladle on a measure of several top regional reporters and editors, and then mix with opinionated current and former public officials and interest advocates.

At the recent Andrus Center *Dateline: The West* conference, with the help of some splendid participants, we were able to shape that recipe into a fascinating discussion, joined at the point where journalism hinges with public policy.

It can be admitted now, after assembling a huge and dynamic panel, that it was a raw experiment in exploring the news business and the policy business and how they impact each other. Part of the grand experiment was to ask the panel to consider, not the issues in the morning paper, but rather a series of "hypothetical" scenarios that contained a significant measure of truth.

How might a Secretary of the Interior handle a major initiative on grazing rights, knowing that a significant part of the policy calculation involves planning, anticipating, and managing the media and interest group reaction to the policy? How does the thought process unfold when editors at the *New York Times* evaluate how to play major policy information that is leaked from the White House? And, does network TV news fundamentally report "our" western stories differently than the journalist who lives close to those stories?

With appropriate credit to the late, great, former CBS News chief, Fred Friendly, who pioneered this approach to the discussion of public issues, the Andrus Center's hypothetical panel was both great fun and tremendously enlightening. There is something liberating about serious, thoughtful people dealing with tough, important issues without having, necessarily, to defend long-held positions. One thing that often emerges in these situations is refreshing candor, great insight into issues and motivations, and, importantly, good humor and real understanding of how complex and confounding policy making—and reporting it—can be.

If only our "real" public policy discussions were always held on such a lofty and civil plane. Then again, the Andrus Center has always believed that bringing diverse voices together and allowing them to talk are the critical first steps in making good public policy. We'll keep trying new approaches in hopes of continuing to stimulate the dialogue and enlighten the policy. That is what we are here to do. Come join us next time, or join us again.

Marc C. Johnson, President  
Andrus Center for Public Policy

## Hypotheticals Help Illuminate Issues

Each scenario for the afternoon panel was accompanied by a graphic projected on screens in the auditorium and introduced by the panel's moderator, Marc Johnson, President of the Andrus Center. Below are reproductions of the graphics and his introductory remarks:

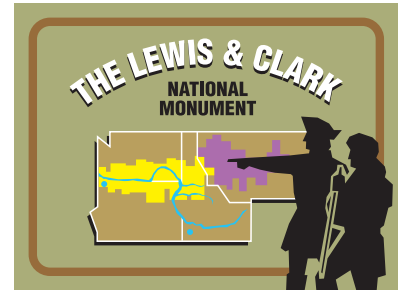
### Scenario I: The Lewis and Clark National Monument

"It's sometime in the not-too-distant future. President George W. Bush, after two terms in the White House, is retired back to Crawford, Texas. The new president was elected largely on a campaign pronouncement that she was going to roll back some of the environmental excesses of the Bush Administration. The electoral votes that elected this new president came not from the Rocky Mountain West but from the west coast—Oregon, Washington, and California—and from New England and places like New York and the rust belt. To carry out this mandate of rolling back the excesses of the previous Administration, this new President has decided, as a symbolic and very substantive first move, to create, under the Antiquities Act without any Congressional approval and certainly without much consultation with folks in the west, a massive new national monument to commemorate Lewis and Clark. This new monument will stretch all the way from Montana to Oregon and cover the entire route in those states of the Corps of Discovery. Of course the new Administration has leaked this story to the *New York Times*.

Ms. Roberts, for many years, you have been the go-to editor on environmental issues for the Times. You've been leaked this story by the Administration. Interesting story?"

### Scenario II: Ending Grazing on Public Lands

"Interior Secretary Shea, you are a busy fellow. The Administration has decided that it had such success with its Lewis and Clark Monument designation that you've been instructed by the White House to begin to develop a process to phase out grazing on the public lands. The notion is that, at a premium, the government will pay ranchers to get off the public lands. How do you start to develop that story for public consumption?"



### Scenario III: Conflagration at Glacier National Park

“Amid all this discussion about grazing fees and national monument designations, we’re into the first summer of this new Administration. Fires have blown up all over the west: Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Arizona, Colorado—big fires. But the BIG fire is in Glacier Park. Mr. Barbee, you’re the superintendent, and they’re coming. Why aren’t you protecting the grizzly bears? What about Lake McDonald Lodge? You don’t have time for this, do you? You’re fighting fires. You’re protecting property and lives. How do you deal with this onslaught?”



### Scenario IV: Environmental Protesters

“Mr. Manne, this Administration has been enormously favorable to the environmental community. Mr. Ekey and Mr. Johnson have had everything pretty much their own way since this new President came into office, but there are some in the environmental community that are just not satisfied. They want to push the envelope a little. They are willing to take direct action and to protest. They’re coming after you. In fact, you have some protesters that have chained themselves to trees on your ground in California. Kenworthy and Egan are dying to come onto your land. Mr. Gramer wants to bring a TV crew onto your property, private property. What do you do?”



### Scenario V: Manipulating the Media

“Mr. Shelledy, Senator Little is on the phone. He wants to talk to you about a story. It seems that he has discovered documents that he wants to share with you. He has the goods about a real conflict of interest on a leader in the environmental community. Senator Little has come across a memo written by a member of Mr. Johnson’s family business. Not him, not Rick, but Mr. Johnson’s family business. The document seems to show that the company has been dumping toxic waste illegally. Senator Little wants to give those documents to you, but he doesn’t want his fingerprints on them. Are you OK with that?”



## PARTICIPANTS

**Cecil D. Andrus:** Chairman, Andrus Center for Public Policy; Governor of Idaho, 1987 to 1995; Secretary of Interior, 1977 to 1981; Governor of Idaho, 1971 to 1977. During his four terms as Governor of Idaho and his four years as Secretary of Interior, Cecil Andrus earned a national reputation as a “common-sense conservationist,” one who could strike a wise balance between conflicting conservation and development positions. He played a pivotal role in the passage of the Alaska Lands Act and the National Surface Mining Act of 1977 and in the creation of the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness Area, the Snake River Birds of Prey Area, and the Hell’s Canyon National Recreation Area. Governor Andrus elected not to run again in 1994 and subsequently established the Andrus Center for Public Policy to which he donates his service as chairman. His awards include seven honorary degrees, the William Penn Mott Park Leadership Award from the National Parks Conservation Association, Conservationist of the Year from the National Wildlife Federation, the Ansel Adams Award from the Wilderness Society, the Audubon Medal, and the Torch of Liberty award from B’nai B’rith. In 1998, he authored with Joel Connelly a book about his years in public service: *Cecil Andrus: Politics Western Style*. He and his wife, Carol, have three daughters and three grandchildren.

**Bob Barbee:** Senior National Park Service Manager (retired). Bob received both a BS and an MS from Colorado State University. Following service in the U.S. Army, he spent his entire 40-year career with the National Park Service, serving in a number of NPS units in various capacities from park ranger to park manager. He was the superintendent of several parks, including Cape Lookout and Cape Hatteras National Seashores, Hawaii Volcanoes NP, and Redwood NP. For 12 years, he was superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, years that included the 1988 Yellowstone wildfire. He finished his career as Director for Alaska National Park Units, comprising some 54 million acres in 15 parks, and he has maintained a lifetime interest in public policy as it relates to natural resources and wild lands. His honors include the U.S. Department of the Interior Meritorious and Distinguished Service Award, Meritorious Executive in the Senior Executive Service (Presidential Rank award), Honor Alum, Colorado State University College of Forestry, and Lifetime Achievement Award, Colorado State University Department of Natural Resources. Bob now lives in Bozeman, Montana with his wife, Carol. The Barbees have grown daughters and seven grandchildren.

**Rocky Barker:** Environmental reporter from the *Idaho Statesman*, is the 2003 Visiting Fellow at the Andrus Center. Barker is currently on sabbatical from the newspaper to write a book, *The 1988 Yellowstone Fires of and Their Legacy*. He is the author of *Saving All the Parts: Reconciling Economics and Endangered Species Act*, which was published in 1993 by Island Press and cited for “excellence in achievement” by the Sigurd F. Olson Nature Writing Award judges. With Ken Retallic, he co-authored *The Flyfisher’s Guide to Idaho* and *The Wingshooter’s Guide to Idaho*. He inspired and helped organize several Andrus Center conferences: *Snake: The River Between Us*, *Rural Idaho: Challenged to Change*, *The Fires Next Time*, and the Center’s most recent conference, *Dateline: The West*.

As environmental reporter for the *Idaho Statesman*, he was the primary researcher for an award-winning series of editorials, calling for the breaching of four Snake River dams to save salmon. The team was the first winner of the Dolly Connelly Environmental Journalism Award in 1998. He is a contributor to National Public Radio’s “Living on Earth” program and is syndicated as a columnist in more than 60 newspapers across the west by *Writers on the Range*, a service he co-founded. The National Wildlife Federation awarded him its National Conservation Achievement Award in 1999.

The 28-year newsman has covered environmental issues ranging from mining in Wisconsin, nuclear waste problems at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory, acid rain in Canada, and rain forest protection in Hawaii to fish and wildlife conservation in Russia’s Far East and Africa. The Sandwich, Illinois native holds a bachelor’s degree

in environmental studies from Northland College in Ashland, Wisconsin, which awarded him an alumni award for environmental achievement in 1994. His work has appeared in *High Country News*, *Outside Magazine*, *Wisconsin Sportsmen*, *Fin and Feathers*, *Wisconsin Natural Resources*, *The Chicago Tribune*, the *Denver Post*, the *Minneapolis Tribune*, the *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*, the *Seattle Times*, and the *Los Angeles Times*. He and his wife, Tina, have twin sons, 23, and a 17-year-old daughter.

**Jacob Bendix, Ph.D.:** Associate Professor of Geography in the Maxwell School at Syracuse University. He is also a Senior Research Associate in the Maxwell School's Center for Environmental Policy and Administration and an Adjunct Associate Professor of Earth Sciences. A native of the west coast, Dr. Bendix graduated from the University of California and worked as a Forest Service firefighter in California before earning graduate degrees at the Universities of Wisconsin and Georgia. Primarily an environmental scientist, he has published numerous scholarly articles about the impacts of wildfires and floods on California ecosystems. He has also conducted research on how news media cover environmental issues ranging from Amazonian deforestation to the controversy over protection of the northern spotted owl. As a scientist, he is interested in how the scientific aspects of these issues are portrayed. As a citizen, he is concerned about their impacts on policy formulation. The research he will discuss, regarding coverage of northwest forest issues, was conducted jointly with Dr. Carol Liebler, Chair of the Department of Communication in the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.

**Margaret E. Buchanan:** Vice President of the Gannett Co. Pacific Group and President and Publisher of *The Idaho Statesman*. Ms. Buchanan graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelor's Degree in marketing and an MBA in finance. Upon graduating from college, she worked in sales for Cincinnati Bell and IBM. Since the joining the Gannett Company in 1986 as a general executive for the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, she has served as both Marketing Director and Advertising Director for the *Rockford Register Star* in Rockford, Illinois. Before her move to the *Statesman*, she served as President and Publisher of the *Star-Gazette* in Elmira, New York. She was named Vice President of the Pacific Newspaper Group in November 2001. Ms. Buchanan is married to Greg Buchanan, has two sons, and serves in the community as a board member for the Boise Metro Chamber of Commerce, Fundsy, the Idaho Shakespeare Festival, St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center, the YMCA, and the Foothills Community Advisory Group.

**Walter Dean:** A 30-year broadcast news veteran who splits his time between NewsLab, the Project for Excellence in Journalism and the Committee of Concerned Journalists. He was a staff producer and news assignment manager at the Washington Bureau of CBS News for 14 years. Prior to that, he was a reporter, anchor, executive producer, and associate news director at WOWT-TV in Omaha. After leaving CBS in 1998, he served two years as associate director of the Pew Center for Civic Journalism where he produced *A Journalist's Toolbox*, a series of training videos now being used in more than 1500 newsrooms and classrooms across the country. More recently, he created the broadcast version of CCJ's Traveling Curriculum and, as part of a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts and the Knight Foundation, is coordinating its teaching in broadcast newsrooms. Mr. Dean is a graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln where he was a member of the Innocents Society, the senior men's honorary. He has taught broadcast news writing at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Creighton University and is a past president of the Omaha Press Club.

**Timothy Egan:** National enterprise reporter, *New York Times*, Seattle. In 2001, he won the Pulitzer Prize as part of a team of reporters that did a series on how race is lived in America. He has done special projects on the West, the census, sprawl, endangered species, and the state of Indian country. He has also been a featured radio essayist for the British Broadcasting Corporation. Mr. Egan is the author of three books. His book on the Northwest, *The Good Rain: Across Time and Terrain in the Pacific Northwest*, has been a regional bestseller for ten years and was recently rated in a poll by Seattle's leading

newspaper as one of ten essential books ever written about the region. His most recent book, *Lasso the Wind, Away to the New West*, won the 1999 Governor's Writing Award from Washington State, the Mountains and Plains Booksellers Award, and was named a Notable Book of the Year by the *New York Times* Sunday Book Review. Mr. Egan graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in journalism in 1980 and was awarded an honorary doctorate of humane letters by Whitman College in 2000 for his writings on the land.

**Bob Ekey:** Northern Rockies Regional Director, The Wilderness Society, Bozeman, Montana. Ekey is an established leader on conservation efforts in the Northern Rockies and often focuses efforts on building coalitions to achieve conservation goals. His work also focuses on building broader public support for protection of wild lands, including our national parks, Forest Service roadless lands, and wildlife refuges. He serves as chair of the Yellowstone to Yukon conservation initiative. Prior to joining the Wilderness Society in 1998, Ekey served as communications director for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition where he was a leader in the campaign to stop the proposed New World gold mine adjacent to Yellowstone Park. A former award-winning journalist in Montana, Ekey gained national recognition for his coverage of the 1988 Yellowstone fires. He wrote the book *Yellowstone on Fire!* and later a children's book on the fires. He is a graduate of the Ohio University School of Journalism.

**Gloria E. Flora:** Director, Sustainable Obtainable Solutions, Helena, Montana. For 22 years, Ms. Flora worked for the U.S. Forest Service, most recently as Forest Supervisor on the Lewis and Clark National Forest in Montana and on the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest in Nevada and eastern California. Well-known for her leadership in ecosystem management and public involvement, she made a landmark decision to prohibit oil and gas leasing on the Rocky Mountain Front in Montana. She later resigned from the Forest Service to call national attention to persistent anti-federalist activities in Nevada, which included harassment of public land managers and their families and wanton ecological destruction of aquatic and range habitats. Ms. Flora earned a B.S. in Landscape Architecture from Pennsylvania State University, which recently gave her a Distinguished Alumnus Award. She is the recipient of many other regional and national awards, including the Murie Award for courageous stewardship of public lands (The Wilderness Society), the Environmental Quality Award for exemplary resource decision-making (Natural Resources Council of America), American Fisheries Society Individual Service Award, the Giraffe Award (Giraffe Foundation, honoring people who stick their necks out), and an outstanding performance award for her work in Nevada from the U.S. Forest Service. Her federal career has been highlighted in *Public Integrity: Exemplar Series* of the American Society of Public Administrators. Gloria is now working to ensure sustainability of public lands and the plant, animal, and human communities that depend on them through her non-profit organization, Sustainable Obtainable Solutions.

**John C. Freemuth, Ph.D.:** Senior Fellow, Andrus Center for Public Policy, and Professor of Political Science and Public Administration, Boise State University. Dr. Freemuth's research and teaching emphasis is in natural resource and public land policy and administration. He is the author of an award-winning book, *Islands Under Siege: National Parks and the Politics of External Threats* (University of Kansas, 1991) as well as many articles on aspects of natural resource policy in such publications as *Society and Natural Resources*, *Denver Law Review*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, and the *International Journal of Wilderness*. He is the author of three Andrus Center white papers on public land policy, based on Center conferences in 1998, 1999, and 2000, and he has worked on numerous projects with federal and state land and resource agencies. He serves also as chairman of the National Science Advisory Board of the Bureau of Land Management. In earlier years, Dr. Freemuth was a high school teacher and a seasonal park ranger. He holds a B.A. degree from Pomona College and a Ph.D. from Colorado State University. He was named Idaho Professor of the Year for 2001.

**Rod Gramer:** Executive News Director, KGW Northwest News Channel 8, the NBC affiliate in Portland, Oregon. For ten years previously, he was the Executive News Director at KTVB-TV in Boise. While at KTVB, he also hosted Viewpoint, the longest running public affairs show in Idaho. From 1975 to 1988, Gramer worked for *The Idaho Statesman* in various reporting and management positions, including political editor, city editor, and editorial page editor. Gramer is also co-author of the award-winning biography of Senator Frank Church, *Fighting the Odds*.

**Peter Jennings:** Anchor and Senior Editor, *World News Tonight*. Peter Jennings has established a reputation for independence and excellence in broadcast journalism. He is the network's principal anchor for breaking news, election coverage, and special events. He has reported many of the pivotal events that have shaped our world. He was in Berlin in the 1960s when the Berlin Wall was going up, and he was there in the 1990s when it came down. He covered the civil rights movement in the southern United States during the 1960s and the struggle for equality in South Africa during the 1970s and 1980s. He was in Poland for the birth of the Solidarity movement, and he was one of the first reporters who went to Vietnam in the 1960s. He went back to the killing fields of Cambodia in the 1980s to remind Americans that unless they did something, the terror would return. He is the author, with Todd Brewster, of the acclaimed *New York Times* best seller, *The Century*. Their next collaboration, *In Search of America*, has just been published. Jennings led the network's coverage of the September 11th attack for more than 60 hours that week and provided a reassuring voice during the time of crisis. *TV Guide* called him "the center of gravity." Prior to his current appointment, Jennings served as chief foreign correspondent for ABC News and was the foreign desk anchor for *World News Tonight* from 1978 to 1983. He has been honored with many awards for news reporting, including 14 national Emmys, several Alfred I duPont Columbia University Awards, several Overseas Press Club Awards, and a George Foster Peabody Award. Jennings currently resides in Manhattan with his wife, Kayce Freed, a producer for *20/20*. He has two children.

**Marc C. Johnson:** President of the Andrus Center and Boise partner of the Gallatin Group, a Pacific Northwest public affairs/issues management firm with offices in Boise, Seattle, Portland, Spokane, and Helena. Mr. Johnson served on the staff of Governor Cecil D. Andrus from 1987 to 1995, first as press secretary and later as chief of staff. He has a varied mass communications background, including experience in radio, television, and newspaper journalism. He has written political columns and done extensive broadcast reporting and producing. Prior to joining Governor Andrus, Mr. Johnson served as managing editor for Idaho Public Television's award-winning program, *Idaho Reports*. He has produced numerous documentaries and hosted political debates. Several of his programs have been aired regionally and nationally on public television. He is a native of South Dakota and received a B.S. degree in journalism from South Dakota State University. His community involvement includes a past presidency of the Idaho Press Club and the Bishop Kelly High School Foundation, and he serves as the Chairman of the Idaho Humanities Councils and on the boards of the Federation of State Humanities Councils and the Housing Company, a non-profit corporation devoted to developing low-income housing projects in Idaho.

**Rick Johnson:** Executive Director, the Idaho Conservation League, an organization devoted to protecting and restoring Idaho's water, wildlands, and wildlife through citizen action, public education and professional advocacy. It is widely recognized as one of the region's foremost conservation organizations. From 1986 until 1995, Johnson worked for the Sierra Club in Seattle. Much of that time was focused on protecting the region's ancient forests and the infamous spotted owl. This led him from the forests of the coast to the highest levels of government in Washington, D.C. where, as a lobbyist, he spent close to 100 days a year. This work included President Clinton's Forest Conference in 1993. Johnson has also provided staff support for several U.S. Senate

and House campaigns in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho as well as in the 1976 and 1992 presidential races. He has degrees in history and political science, has owned a construction company, and has worked as a journalist.

**Tom Kenworthy:** Denver-based correspondent for *USA Today*. He has covered western public lands and natural resource issues for more than a decade, first for *The Washington Post* and, for the past three years, for *USA Today*. He has written extensively on forest management, endangered species, public lands grazing, water resources, energy development, wildfires, national parks, and the politics surrounding land use. Kenworthy began his newspaper career in Massachusetts with the *Lowell Sun* and has also been a reporter with the *Washington Star* and the *Baltimore Evening Sun*. A native of Washington, D.C., he is a 1970 graduate of Cornell University. Since 1995, he has lived in Golden, Colorado with his wife and two children. He is an avid hiker, mediocre skier, and lousy fisherman.

**Scott Kraft:** National Editor, *Los Angeles Times*. Since 1984, Scott Kraft has held a variety of positions with the *Los Angeles Times*, including deputy foreign editor and bureau chief in Paris, Johannesburg, and Nairobi. Previously, he was a New York-based national writer for Associated Press and worked also in Wichita and Kansas City. His many awards include the *Los Angeles Times* Editorial Award for the best article in the *Times Magazine*, the distinguished service award from Society of Professional Journalists, finalist for a Pulitzer Prize in 1985, and the Peter Lisagor Award from the Headline Club of Chicago. Mr. Kraft earned a B.S. degree in Journalism from Kansas State University in 1977.

**Brad Little:** Mr. Little operates a cattle ranch and farm in southwestern Idaho. Senator Little serves in the Idaho Legislature from District 11 and is a member of the Resources and Environment Committee and the Agricultural Affairs Committee. He was Council of State Governments Toll Fellow in 2002. He also serves on the boards of the Idaho Community Foundation, the *High Country News* (an regional environmental media foundation), the University of Idaho, and the Gem County School District Foundation. He is past chairman of the Idaho Association of Commerce and Industry, Idaho Business Week, the American Sheep Association Public Lands Committee, and the Idaho Wool-growers Association. Senator Little has spent considerable time meeting with national livestock, timber, political, and environmental leaders to resolve grazing and timber issues. He holds a B.S. in agri-business from the University of Idaho. Brad and his wife, Teresa, live in Emmett, and their two sons, Adam and David, attend the University of Idaho.

**Robert Manne:** President and Chief Executive Officer, The Pacific Lumber Company, Scotia, California. Robert Manne has over 30 years of experience as an executive officer and entrepreneur in the high technology, telecommunications, resources, and manufacturing industries. Prior to joining Pacific Lumber, Manne was President, CEO, and Director of Myrio Corporation, a software company focused on allowing telecommunications network operators to deliver fully interactive television over internet protocol. He spent 18 years with General Signal Corporation, and in 1986, Burlington Resources recruited Manne to join Plum Creek Timber Company where he ultimately served as Executive Vice President. He also served as President and CEO of Savia International, an international startup hardwood manufacturing organization. Manne holds a B.S. in Industrial Engineering and Management and an M.B.A. from Temple University.

**Sandra F. Mitchell:** Executive Director of the Hells Canyon Alliance and Public Lands Director for the Idaho State Snowmobile Association. Ms. Mitchell represents recreation interests on the Southwest Idaho Regional Advisory Council, Southwest Idaho Basin Advisory Group, North American Motorized Recreation Coalition, Hells Canyon Subgroup. She also serves on the Board of Directors of the Blue Ribbon Coalition. Mitchell attended the Universities of Idaho and Wyoming. For twelve years, she was a Staff

Assistant in the Lewiston District Office for Representative/Senator Steve Symms. She is past president of the Northwest Children's Home and of the Lewiston Chamber of Commerce.

**Mark Obenhaus:** ABC Senior Producer for *Peter Jennings Reporting*. Mr. Obenhaus has been associated with ABC News since 1991. Among his achievements are the ABC prime-time magazine show, *Day One; Dangerous World, The Kennedy Years*; and the twelve-hour ABC series, *The Century*, with Peter Jennings. Recently, he produced two prime-time hours for the ABC series *In Search of America*. Prior to working with ABC, Obenhaus produced and directed documentaries and commercials for many clients, including the three major networks and Public Television. He produced six programs for the Public Television series, *Frontline*. In addition, he produced and directed films about music and performers: *Miles Ahead: the Music of Miles Davis* and *Einstein On the Beach*, both for Great Performances. His historical films include *The World that Moses Built, Mr. Sears Catalog*, and *JFK: A Time Remembered* for the PBS Series *The American Experience*. His work has been recognized by five national Emmys, the Columbia Dupont Journalism Award, two Robert Kennedy Journalism awards, the Gabriel Award, the Ohio State Award, the Writers Guild of America Award, four American Film Festival Awards, and numerous other honors.

**Katy Roberts:** National Editor, *The New York Times*. Roberts received a bachelor's degree in politics at UC Santa Cruz in 1974, studied Russian language at the University of Toronto, and received an M.A. degree in journalism and Russian area studies from Indiana University in 1977. Named National Editor of *The New York Times* in November 2000, Roberts had been the newspaper's Op-Ed Page editor since 1995, and had worked in several other positions at *The New York Times*.

**Patrick A. Shea:** Attorney, Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, Salt Lake City, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Minerals Management. In that role, he oversaw the Bureau of Land Management, Minerals Management Services, and the Office of Surface Mining – agencies responsible for the management of over 270 million acres of land and for all offshore drilling for oil and gas production in the United States. Before entering government service, Mr. Shea was a lawyer, educator, and businessman in the Intermountain West. Along with practicing law in Salt Lake City and the District of Columbia, Shea was an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at the University of Utah and taught at the Brigham Young Law School. In September 1996, he was appointed by President Clinton to serve on the White House Commission on Aviation Safety and Security. Mr. Shea teaches seminars on Land Use Management and Biotechnology for Federal judges. Prior to his private law practice, he served as General Counsel and Assistant Secretary to a private communications company, operating television, radio, and newspapers. He also served as counsel to the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S. Senate. Shea is a native of Salt Lake City and received his undergraduate degree from Stanford University in 1970, a master's degree from Oxford University in 1972, and a law degree from Harvard University in 1975.

**Jay Shelledy:** Editor, *Salt Lake Tribune* since 1991. Jay Shelledy received his B.A. in journalism from Gonzaga University and attended law school at the University of Idaho. He is the former editor and publisher of the *Moscow Pullman Daily News* and the editor of the *Lewiston Morning Tribune*. Mr. Shelledy worked as a reporter for both the LMT and the Associated Press and as a high school teacher and coach in the late sixties. Among his more colorful employments was a brief stint in 1966 as a railway brakeman. When Governor Andrus looked for Idahoans of impeccable integrity to serve on the Lottery Commission, Jay Shelledy was one of the people he chose. He has lent his time and talents to many civic causes, including the boards of the YWCA Community Advisory Board, the Rose Park Library Project in Salt Lake City, Investigative Reporters and Editors, the Washington-Idaho Symphony, and the Idaho Governor's Task Force on Education. His after-hours activities include sailing, golf, public speaking, and tutoring in at-risk schools. He is married to Susan E. Thomas and has one child, Ian Whitaker Shelledy.

**Alan K. Simpson:** U.S. Senator from Wyoming from 1978 to 1994. Senator Simpson is a significant part of the Simpson family's legal tradition in Wyoming, one that began two generations earlier with the first Simpson attorney, William L. Simpson. Milward Simpson, his son, carried on the tradition and passed it on to his son, Alan K., who practiced law in Cody for 18 years. His two sons currently practice law in Cody. Following college, Senator Simpson joined the Army and served overseas in the 5th Infantry Division and in the 2nd Armored Division in the final months of the Army of Occupation in Germany. In 1964, he was elected to the Wyoming State Legislature where he served for the next 13 years, holding the offices of Majority Whip, Minority Floor Leader, and Speaker Pro Tem. In 1978, he was elected to the U.S. Senate and was re-elected in 1984 with 78% of the vote and again in 1990. His distinguished career includes chairmanship of the Subcommittee on Immigration and creation of the Subcommittee on Social Security and Family Policy. Senator Simpson did not seek re-election in 1996, and he and his wife Ann, moved to Boston where he taught at Harvard University.

**Mike Simpson:** U.S. Representative from Idaho's Second District, Congressman Simpson has just been re-elected to his third term in the House of Representatives where he serves on the Agriculture, Resources, Transportation, and Veterans Affairs Committees and on six subcommittees. Prior to his election to Congress, he served fourteen years in the Idaho Legislature and three terms as Speaker of the Idaho House of Representatives. During that time, he was appointed Vice Chair of the Legislative Effectiveness Committee for the National Conference of State Legislatures. He also received the Boyd A. Martin Award from the Association of Idaho Cities for exceptional contributions benefiting Idaho city governments because of his diligent work to pass legislation stopping unfunded state mandates. Congressman Simpson favors small government by transferring certain federal responsibilities back to the states. He believes in lowering taxes on married couples, eliminating the death tax, and encouraging economic growth for small businesses. Simpson has become one of the House's leading advocates for a new energy policy and a renewed commitment to research and development of improved nuclear energy technologies. He is a member of the House Nuclear Clean-up Caucus and also of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus. He is an advocate of a strong national defense and of the establishment of a stable agriculture economy. Mike Simpson attended Utah State University and graduated from Washington University School of Dental Medicine in St. Louis. He began practicing dentistry in Blackfoot in 1978 and has recently received the Idaho State Dental Association President's Award in recognition of outstanding service to ISDA and to the people of Idaho.

**Conrad Smith, Ph.D:** Professor of Journalism at the University of Wyoming, author of *Media and Apocalypse*, a study of how news organizations reported on the 1988 Yellowstone wildfires, the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska, and the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake near San Francisco (Greenwood, 1992). He taught journalism at Idaho State, Colorado State, and Ohio State Universities before assuming his present position. His 1974 documentary, *Against the Flow of Time*, regarding efforts to establish a national recreation area in Idaho's Hell's Canyon, included interviews with Governor Cecil Andrus and Senators Church, Hatfield, and McClure and was broadcast by 17 commercial and public TV stations in the Pacific Northwest. He serves on the faculty of the Forest Service's National Advanced Resource Technology Center in Arizona where he teaches federal land managers how to interact with journalists.

**Mark Steele:** Editor/Publisher, *Caribou County Sun*. Mark Steele grew up on the family ranch in Soda Springs, Idaho. Following high school, he enlisted in the Army Security Agency and served in the highly classified unit. His education includes a B.S. in journalism from Utah State University and a full fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health, which allowed him to complete his master's degree. While working as the editor of the *Solomon Valley Post* in Beloit, Kansas in 1976, he and his wife, Wendy, had the opportunity to purchase their old hometown paper and returned to Soda Springs. The rest is pretty much old news with no regrets. Work experience has mostly

been with community newspapers in rural settings although he was the script writer for a weekly half-hour agriculture TV program at Utah State University where Steele said he learned more about turkeys than he ever wanted to know. Other work includes stringing for the Associated Press, a weekly mental health column for newspapers in Kansas, reporter and editor positions on rural weekly papers, and mostly as editor/publisher for the *Caribou County Sun* for the past 25 years. Community service includes SSPD police reserve captain for 25 years, service on several Fish and Game committees, Chamber of Commerce board, local education foundation board, past Idaho Newspaper Association board, deputy coroner, and other small-town duties. Related professional experience includes environmental reporting in a series on issues including selenium leaching from southeast Idaho phosphate mines and its impact on livestock, fisheries, and mining; Superfunding of phosphorus production plants, radioactivity of slag and the impact on the community and industry, and southeast Idaho wildlife issues. Personal dislikes are computers, emails, voice mail, cell phones, some (maybe most) politicians, free trade, corporate mergers, greed disguised as either deregulation or the free market place, rude people, and narrow minds. Things that make Steele happy are a manual typewriter, a rotary dial phone, old John Wayne movies, trucks with clutches, horses with spirit, deals sealed with a handshake, and the thought that a little humor or an occasional fist fight can resolve most issues.

**Jim Strauss:** Executive Editor, *Great Falls Tribune*, Great Falls, Montana. A native of Minnesota, Strauss is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-River Falls with degrees in economics and journalism. He received his master's degree in business from the University of Notre Dame. Strauss worked in regional business magazines in Wisconsin and Minnesota for three years after college before taking his first job in newspapers at the *Billings Gazette* in 1983. He was with Knight Ridder from 1986 to 1995, where he was business editor and later assistant managing editor of the *News Sentinel* in Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 1995, he was named to his present position in Great Falls, Montana. Strauss and his wife, Dee, have five children.

**Pat Williams:** Senior Fellow, O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West in Missoula, Montana. Pat Williams is an educator who served in the United States Congress for nine terms from 1979 to 1997, immediately following two terms in the Montana Legislature. In the Congress, Williams was Deputy Whip of the U.S. House and member of the following committees: Budget, Education and Labor, Interior, and Agriculture. Congressman Williams was elected to the U.S. House for more consecutive terms than anyone in Montana history. He returned to Montana after leaving the Congress in 1997, teaches at the University of Montana, and serves as senior fellow at the O'Connor Center. Williams also writes a regular newspaper column, which is carried by many newspapers in the Rocky Mountain West. He hosts a region-wide program on public radio and also provides a monthly commentary on Montana Public Radio.



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