

And consider the source, Shafer cautions. The Newseum is underwritten primarily by the Freedom Forum (formerly the Gannett Foundation), and donors include many of the nation's leading media organizations and dynasties. Like the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, whose content was heavily determined by Native American tribes, "the Newseum suffers from the fact that curatorial power is invested in the home team." In other words, don't look for any exposités.

PRESS & MEDIA

Can This Business Be Saved?

THE SOURCE: "Online Salvation?" by Paul Farhi, in *The American Journalism Review*, Dec. 2007-Jan. 2008.

THE BELEAGUERED NEWSPAPER industry, losing subscribers and advertisers like spring runoff down a steep mountain, has built a solid presence on the Internet and is banking on Web advertising to secure its future. But while such revenue has

more than doubled in the past four years, it may be too weak a financial platform to support the heavy costs of old media.

After years of healthy increases, the Internet audience is barely growing, and while newspaper websites draw a lot of traffic, visitors click on the sites to glimpse the offerings, rather than ponder them. The typical visitor to *nytimes.com*, a site that attracts more than 10 percent of the industry's Internet customers, spends about 68 seconds a day reading the paper online. And that is a far more leisurely visit than the typical newspaper site receives, notes Paul Farhi, a reporter for *The Washington Post* who writes frequently about the media.

The buoyant growth in Web advertising that has sustained the hopes of newspaper publishers in recent years has begun to evaporate. The rate of advertising growth started on a downward slide in 2007, and a worsening economy means the decline will likely continue.

Most at risk are local newspapers without a national brand name. Their traffic is decreasing, sometimes

sharply, as they face tougher competition from local television stations, which can quickly post video clips of breaking events and flog their websites relentlessly on air. Publishers who have enjoyed near-monopoly status in their communities now face literally millions of competitors online, though most of the challengers don't offer the range and depth of the smallest local newspaper.

Despite experiments with online "pay-to-read" news stories, partnerships with Internet giants, and inventive new categories and compilations of news, nobody has figured out a model that will permit newspapers to support the costs of gathering and presenting the news with the revenue generated from Internet advertising alone, Farhi says. One idea is to use the advanced technology available on the Web to target both news and advertising to readers whose viewing habits reveal an interest in certain topics. The challenge is to identify and post these features ahead of the competition. The 24-hour news cycle of journalism's glamour days used to seem frenetic. Now that's the speed of sludge.

HISTORY

The Barbary Precedent

THE SOURCE: "The United States and Barbary Piracy, 1783-1805" by Patrick J. Garrity in *Comparative Strategy*, Vol. 26, No. 5, 2007.

THE WAR ON TERROR ISN'T America's first battle against an amorphous Muslim "quasi-state."

In its first years of existence, the fledgling United States waged war against the Barbary pirate regencies. Buccaneers were their business, and the corsairs energetically targeted American merchant ships peacefully ferrying pickled fish and

wheat across the Mediterranean.

Today, the United States is hardly the feeble upstart it was around the turn of the 19th century, and the Barbary pirates look like puffed-up weaklings in comparison with Osama bin Laden. But the attempt to halt piracy illustrates the extraordinary level of effort required to deter quasi-states from attack when "prestige or religious obligation" is at stake, writes Patrick J. Garrity, a researcher at the University of

Virginia's Miller Center of Public Affairs.

Before 1776 the American colonies' British overlords provided at least one tangible benefit—England bought protection from Algiers, Tunis, Morocco, and Tripoli against piracy. After independence the British protective shield vanished, and it wasn't long before the four Barbary quasi-states were threatening U.S. ships and seamen. The corsairs not only brought home booty and captives who could be held for ransom, but also carried out the important religious mission of fighting the infidels.

In 1794, the government of President George Washington offered as much as \$800,000 to the Barbary

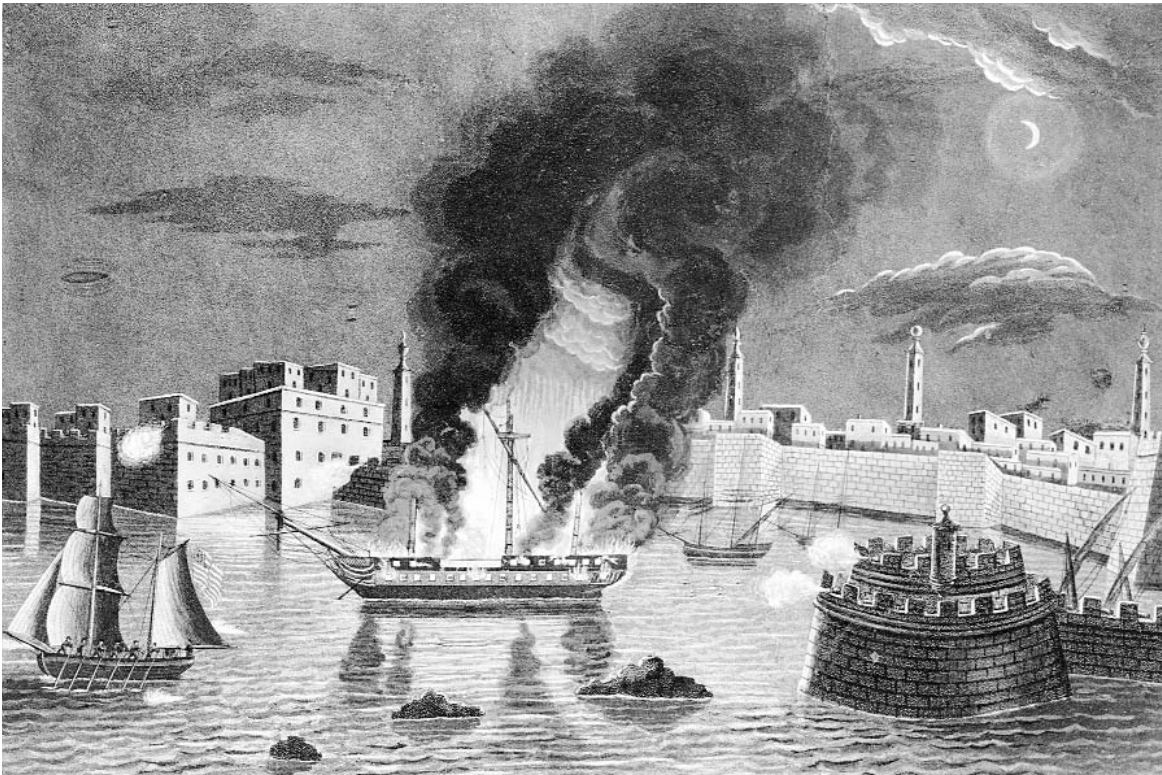
regents in ransom and protection money. Not incidentally, the United States also decided to build a navy. Diplomacy brought the emperor of Morocco to a settlement on easy terms. But the Dey of Algiers demanded \$2.5 million—more than the entire federal budget. Tunis then sought a similar settlement, and Tripoli demanded cash, presents, a naval vessel, and supplies. The Americans eventually paid something to all three, but gave Algiers pride of place and demanded that the dey keep the other regencies in line.

But the United States fell behind on its payments. When the frigate *George Washington* sailed into the harbor of Algiers in 1800 with overdue tribute, its commander, anchored under the city's bat-

teries, was forced to hoist the Algerian flag and take a \$40,000 side trip to Constantinople to carry out some business of the dey's. Meanwhile, Yusuf, the Pasha of Tripoli, having murdered one brother and ousted another in a coup, declared war on the United States. After struggles as confusing as those in modern Fallujah, the Americans eventually blockaded the harbor of Tripoli.

In 1803 the American frigate *Philadelphia* ran aground in the Tripoli harbor while trying to chase down a blockade runner, and the corsairs captured 300 men and threw them into prison. Yusuf demanded \$3 million in ransom.

Amid the tumult, William Eaton, the newly named Navy



An American naval assault force sneaked into the harbor of Tripoli in 1804 and torched the *Philadelphia* after it was captured by the Barbary pirates.

agent to the Barbary regencies, hit on a new strategy: regime change. Eaton met Hamet, Yusuf's deposed brother, in Egypt, and, with a few Marines and several hundred mercenaries, marched across the desert toward Tripoli. Faced with threats of mutiny and desertion (some from Hamet himself) and shortages of food and water, the force captured the coastal city of Derne in April 1805 and asked for help in negotiating the last stretch to Tripoli. Eaton intended to install Hamet on the throne and inflict a "death blow to the Barbary system." Any claim of mission accomplished, however, was premature.

The American consul general in Algiers, Tobias Lear, perhaps anticipating the "you break it, you own it" doctrine of Colin Powell, put his foot down. If the Marines installed Hamet as pasha in Tripoli, Lear argued, they would be saddled with propping up an unpopular and incapable ruler.

Instead, to secure peace, Lear agreed to pay a ransom of \$60,000 for the *Philadelphia's* crew and make a "gift" of about \$6,000 to Yusuf.

In the end, despite their extraordinary march (which is celebrated in the Marine Hymn), Hamet, along with Eaton and his Marines, were evacuated from Derne, leaving Hamet's allies in the lurch. Despite four years of war, 10 years of diplomatic negotiations, and millions of dollars in protection money, the Barbary pirates lived to rob again. A second war would be fought before Commander Stephen Decatur shelled Algiers into submission and quelled the Barbary threat—in 1816.

HISTORY

A Lincoln for Every Altar

THE SOURCE: "Lincoln and the Will of God" by Andrew Ferguson, in *First Things*, March 2008.

A FAMED 19TH-CENTURY mystic reported that President Abraham Lincoln levitated at a séance in Georgetown. Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy believed that the martyred president became a proponent of Divine Healing even before she discovered it. A California guru announced that the 16th president had once been a yogi in the Himalayas. Cardinal George Mundelein of Chicago identified the Great Emancipator as a closet Catholic. Episcopalians, Baptists, and Presbyterians (whose pews he occasionally warmed) have also claimed him as one of their own, as have atheists and Ethical Culturalists.

There has been an especially great hunger to believe that the martyred president was a devout and orthodox Christian, writes Andrew Ferguson, senior editor of *The Weekly Standard* and author of *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America* (2007). Lincoln's secretary wrote that he "talked always of Christ, his cross, his atonement." A clergyman confirmed the secretary's account and added an enticing detail: Lincoln's last words to his wife had been, "We will visit the Holy Land and see those places hallowed by the footsteps of the Savior." But Honest Abe never

joined a church, and his purported "last words" about Jerusalem were delivered as he watched a trashy play at a slightly disreputable theater on Good Friday.

Simultaneously approachable yet remote, Lincoln had a personal magnetism that drew people to him, but his interior remained hidden, Ferguson writes. He made statements that seemed to reveal him as both a believer and a skeptic.

His law partner, William Herndon, said that Lincoln's response to the majesty of Niagara Falls was a deflating "Where in the world did all that water come from?" But in a note found after his death, Lincoln mused that he saw in the falls some immensity that human reason can't explain. According to the freethinker Herndon, Mary Lincoln, the president's widow, said he had "no hope and no faith," and was a "religious man" but not a "technical Christian."

Lincoln developed his own civil religion, Ferguson believes. In another note found after his death, the agonized president grappled to understand why the carnage of the Civil War continued when God "could give the final victory to either side any day." Lincoln's eventual answer, delivered at Gettysburg in 1863 and in his second inaugural address, was that the Union embodied the ideals of human liberty and equality, and the war was a test of whether these principles, as Ferguson puts it, "could be safely entrusted to human institutions."