

PRESS & TELEVISION

burg Post reaches some 125,000 black readers.

Black-owned papers have led an even more precarious existence. When the election of Afrikaaner governments, beginning in 1948, brought tougher segregation laws, many black dissident groups and all but a few black publications were driven underground. Not until black riots broke out during the 1970s did the authorities sanction several "legal" weeklies, such as *The Nation* and *The Voice*. Both face the continuing threat of censorship and banning. Numerous smaller outlawed black publications that preach either violence or simply "socialistic" philosophies are either printed clandestinely inside South Africa or smuggled in from London.

South Africa's newspapers for blacks are "certainly not shattering the foundation of apartheid," Lefort acknowledges. But they have encouraged anti-apartheid attitudes that, in the long run, seem unlikely to respect the government's curbs on dissent.

Why 'Jimmy' Happened

"On Integrity in Journalism" by James A. Michener, in *U.S. News and World Report* (May 4, 1981), P.O. Box 2624, Boulder, Colo. 80302.

How could her editors have printed it? How could they have pushed it for a Pulitzer Prize? How could the Pulitzer advisory board have honored it? These questions have dogged journalists since April 15, 1981, when *Washington Post* reporter Janet Cooke resigned after admitting that she had fabricated her Pulitzer Prize-winning article on "Jimmy," an eight-year-old heroin addict. Michener, a novelist and Pulitzer winner himself (1947), also wonders how someone ignorant of journalism's best traditions rose so far so fast in the profession.

"It takes about a decade to make a good newsman," Michener writes. Until recently, most reporters began slowly, "under some cantankerous editor with high professional and grammatical ideals." Young reporters associated with policemen, bartenders, and politicians; they learned "painfully to distinguish between truth and fiction." During this period, too, they accumulated standards: "I do not betray confidences. . . . I must have two confirmations of a statement like that."

Today, however, "attractive young people posing as newsmen" regularly land jobs in television. Others become print reporters "without any knowledge of English or American history." Cooke joined the prestigious *Post* only three years out of college, in 1979. In 1980, at age 26, she invented "Jimmy." "She had not," explains Michener, "paid her dues."

Many trades and occupations have long used apprenticeships to ingrain standards, and the author recommends that all young journalistic hopefuls serve them. Without such basic training, reporters will develop neither a commitment to the traditions of journalism nor a deeper understanding that it is trust which "makes a newspaper acceptable to its community."