

Brian Lamb

389-90

JAN 25 REC'D

Long Beach
January 22nd

Dear Brian: FEB 12 ANS'D

As a C-Spr junkie, I am also
a selected Brian Lamb fan - as
Billy C. might say, "you are
marvelous!!"

Also, since I have complained
so often in the past about those awful
trumpets that used to start every program,
I'm happy to compliment whomever
for the wonderful variety of music
that is now played.

Enlora is on while I found
fascinating. If you have already
interviewed Mr. Johnson - please
ask him - if he has not appeared with
you, I urge you to consider him.

We have all too many "SOB"
types around - they need no more
attention. But when speaking to
rest about a man with John
Johnson's character and modesty!
His values are well worth emulating.

Best wishes -

Johnson and Neuharth: Rags to Riches One Way or Another

■ **Media:** What are contemporary American values? Two titans of publishing define the territory in polar opposites.

By JOAN KONNER

If success is the guiding star in the murky firmament of this capitalist culture, never were the navigational lanes more visible than in two recent autobiographies by media moguls.

"Confessions of an S.O.B." by Al Neuharth, founder of USA Today and builder of the Gannett media empire, and "Succeeding Against the Odds" by John Johnson, founder and publisher of Ebony and Jet magazines, recount the classic rags-to-riches, poverty-to-power story and, in the process, define the values struggle that is the issue of our time.

The plot lines are remarkably parallel. Both were poor. Both lost their fathers at an early age, and both were raised by strong and struggling mothers. Both established media empires, though the Johnson route was entrepreneurial and independent and Neuharth's a corporate climb on somebody else's capital. Both take pride and pleasure in their power, access and money (Johnson is on the Forbes list of the 400 richest Americans), and both are enjoying their hard-won ride through life in a first-class cabin.

But their road was forked from the beginning. Johnson is black. Neuharth is white. Less obvious and more significant are their differences in principles, character and values. Given the influence of the media over the public mind, each is helping to shape a different kind of country. Their differences draw the battle lines of a civil war for the future. Here are some quotes, condensed, from both books:

Johnson: For me, journalism was a skyscraper value precisely because it combined the ultimate business challenge with the ultimate social challenge.

Neuharth: The power of the press hooked me when I became editor of the Echo, our Alpena High School paper. As editor I was finally a big shot on campus. If having control of a newspaper could do that for me, I liked it. I indulged in, and enjoyed, the ancient and once honorable art of using the power of the press to favor



Associated Press

Magazine publisher John H. Johnson

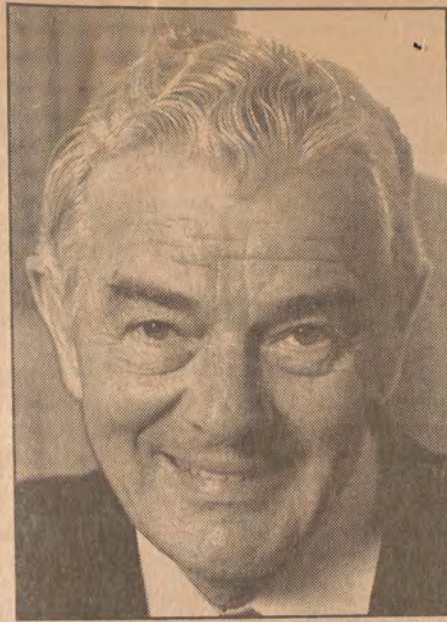
my friends and get my enemies.

Neuharth: Fame meant more to me than fortune, probably because we were nobodies when I grew up on the wrong side of the tracks in Eureka, S.D. I wanted to become important.

Johnson: We knew—how could we help knowing?—that all the high ground and money and weapons were in the hands of our adversaries. But it was worse than useless in that day to grind our teeth and curse racism. The question, the only question, was what were we going to do with what we had in order to make things better for ourselves.

Johnson: Step by step I began to understand the revolutionary importance of the new journalism. Black newspapers were doing a good job of reporting discrimination and segregation, and we needed, in addition to traditional weapons, a medium to make blacks believe in themselves. In a world of negative black images we wanted to provide positive black images. In a world where blacks could do few things, we wanted to say they could do everything.

Neuharth: I've always liked bigness. Big opportunities. Big jobs. Big deals. Big companies. Big league. Long before the



ELENA SEIBERT

Newspaper publisher Al Neuharth

creation of USA Today, I knew what I wanted: the biggest newspaper in the country.

Johnson: My mother never went beyond third grade. Yet she was the best-educated person I ever met. She was daring, she was caring, she believed you could do anything you wanted to do, if you tried. She gave me that faith and that hope, and that has guided my life. I couldn't fail her, for she had sacrificed too much for me.

Neuharth: He (my father) died two months before my second birthday. My mother considered marrying again. I despised every man who came to visit her.

When I was in the first grade, she called a family powwow to ask my brother and me how we felt about her marrying a widower farmer who had proposed. I threw a tantrum. I screamed, "If you marry him, I'll run away."

I was just being a brat to get my way. It worked. My mother rejected her suitor's proposal. I don't think she ever dated again. I've often wondered if I did the right thing for mother. I know it turned out to be the right thing for me. That tantrum was probably my debut as a self-centered s.o.b.

Johnson: I never really knew him (my father). He was killed in a sawmill accident

when I was 8. The next year my mother married James Williams, who delivered groceries for a bake shop. He was a good stepfather, and we never had a cross word.

Johnson: What impressed me about Eunice in comparison with the other young women I had known is that our relationship was not just a romantic fling—it was a meeting of the minds on what was going on in the world. She made me feel that maybe I would be somebody one day.

Neuharth, as told by Wife No. 1: Cheerleading brought us together when we were 16 in South Dakota. Al was the first boy cheerleader I had ever seen. Even then, he knew how to draw attention to himself. He was loud and constantly in motion. That hasn't changed much in nearly 50 years.

Neuharth, as told by Wife No. 2: He outgrew Loretta, his first wife. And he outgrew me. Neither Loretta nor I ever had a chance with Al. Nobody does.

Johnson: We've strayed in black America and in white America—from the values of family, community and hard work. And we've got to go back to that future. We've got to go back to the time when being an adult was a dangerous vocation that required a total commitment to the community and every child in it.

Neuharth: Life is a game. It is not an undefeated season. You win some. You lose some. To enjoy life to the utmost, you must play every game to win. Your won-lost record is the most important thing on the report card for how you lived your life.

The question today for those who would participate in shaping the country's future is no longer: Are you a Democrat or a Republican, a liberal or a conservative, wed as the media are to those archaic categories of thought. The philosophical choice, in economics, politics, the culture, is one of values. Are you a Johnsonian or a Neuharthian? Are you adversarial or collaborative? Is life a game that you play to win at all costs, or a collective human enterprise?

There is a clue as to which side the media are on. Neuharth's book was widely reviewed. Johnson's was widely ignored in all except hometown—Chicago—papers and, ironically, in USA Today.

Joan Konner is dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University and a contributor to New York Newsday.

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A friend suggested I should attend a Bezaire Living Trust Seminar and learn how I could save unnecessary income and estate taxes, while allowing my family to avoid the frustration, cost and inconvenience of time consuming probate.

I found the seminar to be most interesting and extremely informative. The session was held in a warm and friendly atmosphere and I learned how to avoid probate, about the best way to hold title to real estate, how to avoid conservatorships, about children's trusts, and so much more.

It was the best 2 hours I had spent in a long time and I strongly recommend the seminar to anyone who truly cares about their family. I want my family to have peace of mind...everything is now taken care of.



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GLENDALE
2:00 PM - Thurs., Jan. 11
Holiday Inn
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Irvine Hilton
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SAN GABRIEL
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WSGV Board of Realtors
1532 S. Palm Ave.

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21333 Hawthorne

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Airtel Plaza Hotel
7277 Valjean

VAN NUYS
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Airtel Plaza Hotel
7277 Valjean

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Hyatt Westlake Plaza
880 S. Westlake Blvd.

WHITTIER
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Whittier Hilton
7320 Greenleaf Ave.

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7:00 PM - Thurs., Jan. 11
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