

PATRICK B. PEXTON

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SUMMARY

A forward-thinking and accomplished **NEWS EXECUTIVE** and former **Washington Post ombudsman** with a wide range of experience in digital media, newsroom leadership and management, national security and foreign policy reporting and editing, local journalism and editing, plus column and op-ed writing.

EXPERIENCE

CQ ROLL CALL, WASHINGTON D.C.

EDITOR CQ TECH NEWSLETTER

POLICY EDITOR, DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS.....*SEPTEMBER 2017 TO PRESENT*
Suggested and launched from start (Nov. 1, 2017) a twice weekly online originally reported newsletter on emerging and advanced technologies plus cybersecurity. We cover topics from disinformation and artificial intelligence to blockchain, nanotechnology and beyond. I assign and line edit all copy and do some reporting and writing myself. I also am the lead editor for foreign policy coverage for CQ.com, and backup editor for defense policy, responsible for the daily postings and editing of stories, plus longer pieces and columns on U.S. foreign and defense policy for CQ weekly magazine.

THE FREDERICK NEWS-POST, FREDERICK, MARYLAND

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.....*JUNE 2015 THROUGH MAY 2017*
As this seven-day daily newspaper's No. 1 editor, in 22 months Pexton re-engineered the 40-person newsroom, halted the multi-year slide in print circulation, increased all digital metrics by 40 percent to 60 percent, and generally remade the newsroom culture into a thriving, happy, accomplished place where people liked to work and had fun doing so.

I hired an entirely new design and copy desk, hired two new city editors, shed one layer of management, and gradually hired a new crop of reporters who emphasized quality, vivid, meaningful and unique journalism over quantity and dull repetition of low-threshold stories. Also added podcasting with steadily increased downloads and subscribers to the podcasts. Frederick County is a highly educated audience, and once we started treating our members/subscribers as adults, circulation picked up.

Accomplishments:

- Managed a \$2 million-plus budget for two years, always keeping it 1 percent to 2 percent under budget
- Stopped the slide in daily print circulation (we lost just 13 subscribers for all of 2016)
- Raised all online and social media metrics by between 40 percent and 60 percent
- Remade the newsroom into a more collegial and collaborative place
- Reorganized the design and copy desk and emphasized visuals, creativity, and photography
- Eliminated a layer of managing editors
- Hired new city editors to improve quality of editing and storytelling
- Raised quality across the board – of stories, editing, photography and design
- Won 49 awards from the Maryland Delaware DC Press Association annual journalism excellence contest for 2016 coverage, including best in show for continuing coverage of the opioid and heroin crisis, best headlines, best illustrations, and best feature photos.

CONNECTIONS MEDIA, WASHINGTON, DC

MANAGING DIRECTOR, CUSTOM CONTENT.....*2013-2015*

Pexton started up a new custom-content practice, a digital newsroom really, for this all-digital public affairs agency. Pexton led a team of young writers to create compelling public affairs messages, blog posts, and stories, on digital platforms—web, mobile, social media, and multimedia – for an array of clients that ranged from foundations and trade associations to corporations.

THE WASHINGTON POST, Washington DC

Ombudsman.....*2011-2013*

The Washington Post ombudsman represented readers who had concerns or complaints on topics including accuracy, fairness, ethics and the newsgathering process. He also served as The Post's internal critic and worked to promote public understanding of the newspaper, its Web site, and journalism more generally. He operated under a contract with The Post that guaranteed him independence.

Pexton wrote a weekly Sunday column in the printed and online editions, wrote a daily online blog, The Omblog, and was the first ombudsman to start and run a Twitter account. He and an aide responded to about 2,000 reader emails per week and 100 reader phone calls. He tackled a panoply of journalistic topics ranging from new and social media to plagiarism, bias, corrections, and overall direction and mission of the Post. His columns frequently drew the maximum number of online comments, 5,000. Pexton also made numerous public appearances and speeches to citizen groups in the Washington area and was a monthly speaker, under the auspices of several international organizations and the State Department, to groups of visitors from foreign governments and foreign media organizations wanting to understand how American media work. Link to ombudsman columns and blog posts: http://www.washingtonpost.com/patrick-b-pexton/2011/02/24/ABkLhYN_viewAll.html

NATIONAL JOURNAL MAGAZINE (PART OF THE ATLANTIC MEDIA CO.), Washington, DC
Deputy Editor..... 2002-2010

Held day-to-day responsibility, under the top editor, for managing weekly magazine staff of 50 people, including writers, managing editors, copy editors, art and layout editors, and photographers. Planned and selected stories, cover stories, and special editions. Served as editor for award-winning national security and foreign policy team of six writers. Coached team, assigned stories, and line-edited all copy related to diplomacy, defense, intelligence, homeland security, and foreign trade. Managed and edited Issues & Ideas section of magazine, which focused on new ideas coming out of the 50 states.

Created and sustained collegial, cooperative newsroom culture. Edited and oversaw more than 20 award-winning projects and stories. Held responsibility for final sign-off on all pages and coordinating all of magazine's departments.

- ◆ **Leadership and management:** Drafted and implemented plan for redistributing duties among managing editors. Ran newsroom. Directed story and cover selection. Oversaw all departments of magazine, including photographers, copy editors, managing editors, production editors, and writers. Improved quality of magazine, winning many more journalism prizes than in prior years. Among awards won under my watch and by my direct-report writers: Gerald Ford Award for Distinguished Reporting on National Defense (twice), Aldo Beckman Award, the James Aronson Award for Social Justice Journalism, Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi Award for Public Service Reporting, the Edgar A. Poe Award, the Stewart Alsop Media Excellence Award, the Edwin Hood Award, the Peter R. Weitz Prize, and six top prizes from the Military Reporters and Editors Association.
- ◆ **Weekly Magazine Operations:** Edited, led, and directed up to 72 pages of editorial copy every week.
- ◆ **Hiring:** Recruited and hired Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist as one of two White House reporters.
- ◆ **Successfully Launched a New Blog:** Organized and launched National Security Experts' Blog, leading to steadily growing readership and experts wanting to participate. Recruited many of 60 experts who participated in blog. Moderated blog every fourth week and set most of discussion topics every week.
- ◆ **Coordinated Iraq War Coverage:** Oversaw, organized, equipped, edited, and kept up daily satellite phone contact with three reporters embedded with U.S. military in 2003. Acted as chief point of contact. Directed and edited war coverage. Received Chairman's award for distinguished work under stress.
- ◆ **Achieved Higher Quality:** Coached writers covering other beats, leading to more awards in all categories, including those outside of defense and foreign policy.
- ◆ **Investigative Editor:** Encouraged magazine in more investigative reporting direction by hiring full-time investigative reporter and training other writers in those methods, leading to recognition and additional publicity for magazine.
- ◆ **National Journal's Convention Daily 2000, 2004, 2008:** Led and organized publication of temporary daily newspaper in six political convention cities over three presidential election cycles for Republican and Democratic National Conventions. Created daily newspaper on site with local printers.

National Journal Magazine - Managing Editor, defense and foreign policy.....1998-2002

Directed seven reporters and writers covering U.S. military, foreign policy, international affairs, the intelligence community and homeland security, plus foreign trade. Oversaw, organized, assigned, brainstormed, and edited all stories, including cover packages and special reports. Coordinated photographers, graphic artists, and copy and production editors. Served as editor for all economics and education stories as well as Issues & Ideas section. Served as managing editor for National Journal's Convention Daily.

- ◆ **Quality Editing:** Edited National Journal's media critic who won awards three straight years for his media criticism.
- ◆ **Speed, Volume and Quality:** Recognized as fastest and highest-quality editor of staff.

- ◆ **Team Building:** Formed national security and international affairs team. Mentored and trained team members into award-winning reporters. Strengthened coverage of military, diplomacy, and international economics.
- ◆ **Issues & Ideas Section:** Improved section with stories from staffers and freelancers about new ideas from think tanks and state capitals as well as issues of national debate, such as abortion, social issues, gender, and race.
- ◆ **Special Projects Editor:** Managed special cover packages, including foreign/military affairs, such as wars in Balkans, as well as social issues, such as fading of school busing, welfare reform, and increasingly violent police tactics.
- ◆ **Op-Ed column writer:** Regular contributor to The Washington Post's op-ed page, writing on defense and foreign policy topics.

ARMY TIMES PUBLISHING Co., Springfield, Virginia

Managing Editor of Navy Times1998

Held responsibility for staff of 12, including writers, copy editors, production editors, and photographers. Managed, edited, organized, directed coverage, assigned, and selected stories. Oversaw all aspects of newspaper.

- ◆ Strengthened cover stories, story selection, headlines, and cover layouts to secure stronger sales on newsstand.
- ◆ Ensured newspaper read better throughout with improved editing.
- ◆ Created special cover packages and projects to raise reader interest and quality.
- ◆ Assured smooth transition during launch of a new offshoot publication, Marine Corps Times.
- ◆ Put out weekly newspaper with circulation of 40,000 to 60,000 per week.

Managing Editor for Times News Service1996-1997

Served as No. 2 editor for in-house wire service, called Times News Service. Oversaw six reporters and four editors, reporting, writing, editing, copy-editing, laying out, and producing stories published in Army Times, Navy Times, Air Force Times.

- ◆ Increased output and morale of six reporters on staff by improving motivation and listening to ideas.
- ◆ Improved content of stories, ensuring stronger investigative bent and more hard news.
- ◆ Hired and trained copy editor for news service.
- ◆ Worked closely with special supplements editor to craft useful, interesting guides for military people about military health care, military bases, pay and benefits, and other news-you-can-use topics.

Chief Pentagon Correspondent 1995-1996

Served as Times News Service's senior reporter, covering Defense secretary, military Joint Chiefs of Staffs, Pentagon budget, overall U.S. military strategy and doctrine, as well as committees of jurisdiction in House and Senate that authorize and oversee Pentagon's budget and personnel policies.

- ◆ Wrote five or more stories per week, many serving as cover stories for all Times newspapers.
- ◆ Traveled widely to military bases in U.S. and abroad, covering military topics.
- ◆ Wrote on high-level military strategy and operations and problems of military families and other social issues in military, including women in combat, gays in military, and racial problems.

Staff Writer, Navy Times..... 1991-1995

Reported on Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations, Navy strategy and doctrine, Navy budgets and weapons, U.S. Naval Academy, as well as social issues in military, including women in combat, gays in the military, and racial problems.

- ◆ Helped expose cover up of Tailhook sexual harassment scandal, leading to Navy instituting broad changes on sexual harassment and gender as well as resignation of Secretary of the Navy and chief of naval operations.
- ◆ Helped uncover flawed initial investigations into scandal, leading to several additional and more thorough investigations by Congress and outside investigators.
- ◆ Wrote pamphlet for sailors on sexual harassment, published by Navy Times.

- ◆ Exposed Naval Academy cheating scandal, in which more than 100 midshipmen cheated on electrical engineering exam, leading to resignation of Naval Academy superintendent and reforms of school's famous honor code.
- ◆ Exposed discriminatory treatment of Navy women fixed-wing aircraft pilots, helping to prompt President Clinton's move to lift ban on women serving in Naval aviation.
- ◆ Exposed discriminatory treatment of African Americans in Navy's pilot training programs and small percentage of African Americans serving as pilots.
- ◆ Exposed flaws and operational shortfalls of Navy's mine sweeping ships, active in Persian Gulf in wake of Gulf War.
- ◆ Reported on widespread presence and underground network of gays and lesbians in Navy, helping to spark national discussion on gays in military and eventual adoption of President Clinton's 'don't ask, don't tell' policy.
- ◆ Appeared on dozens of media outlets talking about sexual harassment and gender issues in military, including CNN, NPR, and The News Hour.

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

TIMES JOURNAL CO., THE ALEXANDRIA JOURNAL, Alexandria, Virginia, **Staff Writer**, 1991. Covered city of Alexandria in all of its aspects.

TIMES JOURNAL CO., THE MONTGOMERY JOURNAL, Rockville, Maryland, **Staff Writer, Social Issues**, 1990-1991. Created new beat covering social issues. Wrote on homelessness and causes, domestic violence, teen pregnancy, problems of immigrants, social service agencies and budgets, charities, as well as food banks. Covered Gulf War in 1990 and 1991 from local angle, featuring Maryland citizens affected by war.

Staff Writer, State Politics, 1986-1990. Covered the Maryland governor, General Assembly and all members of Montgomery County statehouse delegation. Covered issues ranging from abortion to gun control. Appeared on news-roundup cable TV shows about state politics on Maryland Public Television and Montgomery County Community Television. Won numerous awards for state house coverage.

Copy Editor/Business writer, 1985-1986. Second-ranking copy editor on the copy desk, filled in for copy desk chief. Occasional overnight stints at printing plant checking pages, overseeing paste-up artists. Wrote business stories during the day.

SHORELINE TIMES NEWSPAPERS, North Haven, Connecticut, **Staff Writer**, 1984-1985. Exposed Upjohn Company's mismanagement of local factory and violations of pollution permit. Won awards for environmental and education stories.

EXECUTIVE SUBARU, Wallingford, Connecticut, **Sales Associate**, 1982-1983. Sold new and used cars. Recognized as No. 1 salesman for dealership while also writing news stories part time.

SMITH, BERLIN & ASSOCIATES, Washington, DC, **Shift Supervisor**, 1979-1982. Conducted and managed public opinion polling on telephone, including editing, fact-checking, and quality control of survey research while attending graduate school.

EDUCATION

JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF ADVANCED INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, Washington, DC
M.A., International Relations, 1980

CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE, Claremont, California
B.A., cum laude, Political Science and History, 1976

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE POYNTER INSTITUTE; Graduate Seminar on Coaching Writers, 1997
SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS, Computer-Assisted Reporting and Investigative Reporting, 1995, 1996

OTHER SKILLS

I have done volunteer charity work for most of my life, including fundraising, for everything from Head Start centers for poor kids in Los Angeles, to a domestic violence shelter in Washington D.C.
I was a multi-year member of Toastmaster's International, learning public speaking, which is something I thoroughly enjoy.
I'm also a certified high-performance driving instructor with the BMW Car Club of America.