

NOIR

IN THIS ISSUE :

HONG KONG

HEADLINES

PUPP

CRIME

STREET



DOWN IN TOWN...

HONEY *suckle*

ISSUE III

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

NOIR – is it a sentiment, a film genre, a color...? To us Noir is anything underneath the headlights, “beneath the shadows.” In our third issue, Honeysuckle takes to the streets of Detroit, LA, Hong Kong and New York; from peoples’ darkest secrets to the pulpiest of headlines. Run the shadowed streets with us, and explore NOIR in all of its vacillating shades.

Ronit Pinto



Down in town Honeysuckle. Where the dames are sweet but the nights are bitta.

One night, Little Sweet Marie was on a payphone dialin in one of her tricks.

Oh Johnny,
where are ya!?
Where did you go!?

He was a sweet one, she thought she mighta loved him. But there was no answa.



PULP, CRIME AND THE HEADLINES OF THE NEW YORK POST

BY DORRI OLDS

Honeysuckle Magazine can't get enough of the New York Post crime section. We're lured in by the gallows humor and titillated by their tasty recipe of bloody, punny headlines and a fascination with the noir side of life. Our journalist Dorri Olds took a long, strange trip inside the Post's scene of scribes who pen the trademark headlines and those who tell the dark tales of killers, liars and nutsos.

Jamie Schram has worked for the Post for 22 years. He began as a copy boy fetching coffee for editors but worked his way up. When the paper was short-staffed he was sent out to cover stories. He was assigned to the police bureau in lower Manhattan inside police headquarters where he shared space with journo's from other outlets including Daily News, New York Times and Associated Press. Schram was promoted to police bureau chief and spent years at that gig, before moving to his current position, covering federal law enforcement in New York and Washington, DC.

Dorri Olds: Do you have direct contact with criminals?

Jamie Schram: Sure. I've spent many years interviewing serial killers—David Berkowitz, Richard Ramirez and I spent two years talking with Charles Manson over the phone. I've spoken to plenty of high profile and low profile serial killers.

Have you become desensitized to crime or do you have nightmares?

I've been doing this for sixteen years, and prior to that I was a crime reporter on the streets. Over time, you become desensitized, particularly here in New York, because, back in the day, there were a lot more murders, and crime. I'm originally from Jersey but came to New York in 1989. From '89 to '93, we had so many homicides. We're not going through a crack epidemic like we did back then. In 1990, we had 2,245 homicides. This past year, we had 350, so you're talking about a lot less murders, and overall, crime in general is down. Assaults and rapes and grand larcenies, everything is down.

Why do you think that is?

There are three factors: better police enforcement these days; a lot of bad guys from the '80s and '90s are dead or in prison; and New York is so expensive to live in now that lower income people have been pushed out of the city.

During your time off, do you read true crime books and watch cop shows?

I do. My favorite book is "Helter Skelter." I read it as a kid, and that put the hook in me. I just finished a true crime book "Monster of

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Florence.” A very interesting read.

I love Ann Rule books. My favorite is “The Stranger Beside Me.”

Oh right, about Ted Bundy. Rule has a lot of fans and she’s done very well in her career.

What is your favorite part of the job?

I really enjoy the reporting aspect, especially when there’s a big story that involves a prominent individual who’s run afoul of the law, or has overdosed on drugs, in a nice section of Manhattan. I know that the paper is going to want every little detail about that crime or O.D. It pushes you to really tap into your sources and report the story better than your competitors. That has always been the inspiration.

Do you negotiate exclusives with the police department?

No, it’s mainly who you know. If you cover a beat for years, you’re going to know a lot of people. As you get to know them, they begin to trust you and give you the stories.

Over time, you become desensitized, particularly here in New York...

Deb Pines is an award-winning New York Post headline writer on the mostly-men’s team called the Copy Desk, where headlines for all sections are written. She’s also the author of a mystery series beginning with “In the Shadow of Death: A Chautauqua Murder Mystery.” Post Copy Chief Barry Gross assigns headlines to Pines and her coworkers. Writers are given specs of a story—length, dimensions and headline width. Then, at breakneck speed, they’re tasked with writing brilliant headers, making the stories fit and handing it all in on time to Gross.

Dorri Olds: Are there parameters for how far you can go with a racy title?

Deb Pines: We walk a fine line between humor and bad taste. With the tragic crime stories we try to be respectful but we make light of stupid criminal stories. You know, the guy who can’t shoot straight, or leaves his credit card behind, or snaps a selfie on a stolen phone, steals a car and gets caught.

Can you name some of your favorite headlines?

My best headline was about the Jet Blue pilot who had a mental breakdown. The concerned copilot locked him out of the cockpit and the passengers restrained him. A picture of him restrained was sent to the Post and I wrote for the front page, “This is Your Captain Freaking.”

In Times Square people are dressed as characters from Sesame street or Disney movies, and some are really just there to aggressively panhandle the tourists. When somebody dressed in a Cookie Monster costume menaced tourists and was accused of hitting a woman, I called him the “Crooky Monster.” In another I called Joan Rivers the “Joan of Snark.” I called supermodel Naomi Campbell “Striking Beauty” because she hits people. She has a pattern of striking her staff, throwing cell phones at them, knocking them around.

Then there was a controversy about a hotel on the Highline. Sup-



posedly the hotel was encouraging people to take off their clothes and perform sex acts in front of the windows. Tourists were hanging out under the windows trying to catch pictures so I called it the “Eye-ful Tower.”

Do you enjoy the dark humor?

Yes, being a tabloid we’re different from a more buttoned down broadsheet newspaper that treats things more soberly. We like to make light of things and give attitude because that’s who we are. When a terrorist was killed we wrote, “Rest in Pieces.” And we’re famous for, “Headless Body in Topless Bar.”

I like the whimsical headlines. The harsher or sexist ones maybe I’m less involved with because I’m the woman on staff. I did like “Deleter of the Free World” for Hillary’s email controversy and I loved when Pope Benedict stepped aside and we wrote, “Pope Gives God Two Weeks’ Notice.”

The Post is briefed when we’ve pushed the envelope. For example, Chinese groups picketed us when we wrote “Wok This Way.”

Those are hilarious.

This will probably get me in trouble, quoting me on this. But I didn’t think the “Wok This Way” was a major offense. We make light of all kinds of people, the same as late night television does. All the Anthony Wiener stuff we probably overdid, I guess, but people expected us to. If we don’t have a crude headline for the New York Post, people are disappointed. Readers expect that. We’ve had some very funny Wiener stuff and some very, you know, well, we’ve sort of gone a little too far. We got some pushback when we ran the cover, “Enjoy a Foot Long in Jail.” You can look at that as making light of prison rape or think it’s hilarious because Jared Fogle, the Subway spokesperson who pleaded guilty to paying for sex with minors, is a pedophile, the lowest of criminals.