

OPINION

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Happy Father's Day

VIEWPOINT



MARTHA R. CARR
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to be there, in that seat. All of us want our children to reach beyond what seems possible or easy and go for what challenges them, what brings out their talents and then tests the boundaries at least a little. We've learned by now that that's where the real rewards are waiting but if you can't risk it and show up, your chances of finding it go way down. That's the exact spot where it comes in handy if you had a dad who went beyond what seemed easy or convenient and just showed up without wondering what was in it for them. They were there fitting into the small desk or at the dinner table or standing on the sidelines and they were cheering for your success.

We may not know what rewards await us for trying every day, but we've been given this wonderful example that going first is a big part of the process. It's like going to the gym every day in the early morning hours because being fit matters and then waiting months to see the results. Every morning, there you are in the spinning class doing your part. It's even about dating a lot of people but not settling for someone who seems okay but just isn't quite right for you.

You wade out again into the choices and believe in the possibilities of what might be there because you have a great dad who showed up and believed in you even though you were blowing the wrong note during the flute concert or were distracted by fireflies during the soccer game.

Dads are great at being open to the idea that your greatness is still evolving and chasing fireflies might be a part of the bigger picture.

When our children are grown it's even about showing up to say nothing at all and encouraging our children to need us less because we know they now have all the tools that they need to build their own dreams. To all of us, like me, whose great dad has passed away, may we live our lives in a way that honors their humor, their passion and their beliefs in us. Happy Father's Day everyone!

Martha's latest book is the memoir, *A Place to Call Home*.
www.MarthaRandolphCarr.com

'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances'
— First Amendment
United States Constitution



Please, don't save us

VIEWPOINT



DAVID HARSANYI
Syndicated Columnist

You know what journalism could really use more of? Government participation. Who better, after all, than a gaggle of technocrats and political appointees to guide the industry in matters of entrepreneurship, fairness and coverage?

Thankfully, the good folks at the Federal Trade Commission are all over it, cobbling together a report aimed at saving newspapers, called "Potential Policy Recommendation To Support the Reinvention of Journalism." It's only the first step in a long-term plan to rescue the Fourth Estate from itself.

As you can imagine, the paper is crammed with groundbreaking ideas: industry bailouts, higher taxes on the stuff you buy to help subsidize the stuff you don't, etc. There is even talk of a government-sponsored journalist-education program, because God knows there simply aren't enough J-school students.

Now, I suppose some of you might find it a bit creepy that civil servants have tasked themselves

with "reinventing" journalism. How healthy, you may wonder, could it be for government to pick journalistic winners and losers in a democratic society?

"Not very" would be the correct answer. Then again, if the FTC can't repress its authoritarian impulses — an affliction that's catching these days — it, at the very least, could have the decency to offer up some ideas that sound vaguely innovative.

But as Jeff Jarvis, a new-media expert and professor at CUNY Graduate School of Journalism, points out, "The word 'blog' is used but once in 35 pages of text — and then only in a parenthetical mention of soccer blogs."

Before you know it, the FTC will pull together a report called the "Potential Policy Recommendation To Support the Reinvention of the No. 2 Pencil." Technological advances (such as the iPad) are vital in this budding plan only if we can tax them.

The larger problem, though, is that the entire discussion is predicated on a myth.

The majority of the FTC draft focuses on ways to bail out the newspaper business, which isn't exactly the same as "saving" journalism. I love newspapers. I make my living at a newspaper (for now). But journalism doesn't need salvaging. Newspapers — as in, news on paper — are struggling, for now. But consumers (scrupulously ignored in the FTC report) have an array of news outlets from which to choose, and most often,

the coverage offered by them is far more thorough than what we've had in the past.

How we disseminate information is being reinvented — it *always* is being reinvented — and one day soon a breakthrough will allow newspapers to be compensated more fairly for the content they produce. But propping up antiquated models is no way to save any industry.

Let me put it another way. In 1985, the FTC did not set forth recommendations on how to "reinvent music" and propose a 5 percent tax on compact discs as a way to subsidize companies that produced vinyl records. That kind of intervention would have hindered technology rather than driven it.

Hey, bookstores are going out of business at an alarming rate. No one is suggesting we reinvent "writing."

So though it might seem tragic to the people at the FTC that the future of journalism may not include every magazine and television station they admire, it's not the government's job to alter the trajectory of journalism. Journalism should be off-limits. And the FTC "discussions" are a way to preserve, not save, and to control, not innovate.

David Harsanyi is a columnist at *The Denver Post* and the author of "Nanny State." Visit his website at www.DavidHarsanyi.com. To find out more about David Harsanyi and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit www.creators.com.



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