

Help Us Make a Book

Hello, readers,

In the first year of *The Magazine's* existence, **we published over 130 articles, and well over 200,000 words.** We'd like to bring those articles and essays to you that people told us they found most meaningful, interesting, informative, and plain fun.



The Magazine: The Book (Year One)

by Glenn Fleishman

The Magazine, an electronic periodical, celebrates its first full year with a print and ebook collection of our work.

📍 Seattle, WA

We're using Kickstarter to fund a 200-page hardcover, offset printed book with those stories and an original, commissioned painting for its cover by artist Amy Crehore. This PDF contains a sample of the layout of the book, which will be designed by Simmons Ardell. **You can hold the book in your hand, loan it, and give it away.** The full list of stories intended for the book is on the table of contents that follows. (You can pick an electronic version instead of the print edition.)

Printing a book is an expensive proposition, and we are turning to crowdfunding to align the interest in the book with the quantity we print. This also gives us the chance to offer some unique items in addition to an electronic or print edition of the book: **art prints by Olivia Warnecke and Amy Crehore; and on-site visits from writers Chris Higgins and Lex Friedman.**

The writers, photographers, and illustrators whose work appears in the book were paid when their work first appeared; when the crowdfunding project funds, they will be paid a reprint fee — **this project is designed to benefit everyone involved with its creation.**

While we have a basic goal that funds all the costs of printing, shipping, and paying everyone involved, **we've also set stretch targets that will let us increase the size of the book to 300 pages** and pay our contributors more.

Look through the following pages, and then back this project. **With your support, we can bring a new chapter of *The Magazine* into existence!**

GLENN FLEISHMAN

Editor and Publisher, *The Magazine*

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YOU ARE BORING

TELL ME MORE ABOUT
YOUR FOOD BLOG, PLEASE.

By SCOTT SIMPSON

Everything was going great until you showed up. You see me across the crowded room, make your way over, and start talking at me. And you don't stop.

You are a Democrat, an outspoken atheist, and a foodie. You like to say "Science!" in a weird, self-congratulatory way. You wear jeans during the day, and fancy jeans at night. You listen to music featuring wispy lady vocals and electronic bloop-bloops.

You really like coffee, except for Starbucks, which is the worst. No wait—Coke is the worst! Unless it's Mexican Coke, in which case it's the best.

Pixar. Kitty cats. Uniqlo. Bourbon. Steel-cut oats. Comic books. Obama. Fancy burgers.

You listen to the same five podcasts and read the same seven blogs as all your pals. You stay up late on Twitter making hashtagged jokes about the event that everyone has decided will be the event about which everyone jokes today. You love to send withering @ messages to people like Rush Limbaugh—of course, those notes are not meant for their ostensible recipients, but for your friends, who will chuckle and retweet your savage wit.

You are boring. So, so boring.

Don't take it too hard. We're all boring. At best, we're recovering bores. Each day offers a hundred ways for us to bore the crap out of the folks with whom we live, work, and drink. And on the Internet, you're able to bore *thousands of people at once*.¹

A few years ago, I had a job that involved listening to a ton of podcasts. It's possible that I've heard more podcasts than anyone else—I listened to at least a little bit of tens of thousands of shows. Of course, the vast majority were so bad I'd often wish microphones could be sold only to licensed users. But I did learn how to tell very quickly whether someone was interesting or not.

Most important, interesting people were also the best listeners. They were also inquisitive: willing to work to expand their social and intellectual range.

The people who were interesting told good stories. They were also inquisitive: willing to work to expand their social and intellectual range. Most important, interesting people were also the best listeners. They knew when to ask questions. This was the set of people whose shows I would subscribe to, whose writing I would seek out, and whose friendship I would crave. In other words, those people were the opposite of boring.

Here are the three things they taught me.

Listen, then ask a question

I call it Amtrak Smoking Car Syndrome (because I am old, used to smoke, thought that trains were the best way to get around the country, and don't really understand what a syndrome is). I'd be down in the smoking car, listening to two people have a conversation that went like this:

Stranger #1: Thing about my life.

Stranger #2: Thing about my life that is somewhat related to what you just said.

Stranger #1: Thing about my life that is somewhat related to what you just said.

Stranger #2: Thing about my life...

Next stop: Boringsville, Population: 2. There's no better way to be seen as a blow-hard than to constantly blow, hard. Instead, give a conversation some air. Really listen. Ask questions; the person you're speaking with will respect your inquisitiveness and become more interested in the exchange. "Asking questions makes people feel valued," said former Virgin America VP Porter Gale, "and they transfer that value over to liking you more."

Watch an old episode of *The Dick Cavett Show*. Cavett is an engaged listener, very much part of the conversation, but he also allows his partner to talk as well. He's not afraid to ask questions that reveal his ignorance, but it's also clear he's no dummy.²

Online, put this technique to use by pausing before you post. Why are you adding that link to Facebook? Will it be valuable to the many people who will see it? Or are you just flashing a Prius-shaped gang sign to your pals? If it's the latter, keep it to yourself.

Tell a story

Shitty pictures of your food are all over the Internet. Sites like Instagram are loaded with photo after photo of lumpy goo. What you're *trying* to share is the joy you feel when the waiter delivers that beautifully plated pork chop. But your photo doesn't tell the story of that experience. Your photo rips away the delicious smell, the beautiful room, the anticipation of eating, and the presence of people you love.

Instead, think of your photo as a story. When people tell stories, they think about how to communicate the entirety of their experience to someone else. They set the stage, introduce characters, and give us a reason to care. Of course, that's hard to do in a single photo, but if you think in terms of story, could you find a better way to communicate your experience? How about a picture of the menu, or of your smiling dinner companions? Anything's better than the greasy puddles you have decided any human with access to the Internet should be able to see.





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This story
originally
appeared in
issue 4,
Nov. 22, 2012.

PWM

Expand your circles

Several years ago, my wife and I went on a long trip. We had saved a little money, and the places we were staying were cheap, so we could afford private rooms in every city but one. Guess where we made the most friends? In Budapest, where we were jammed into a big room with a bunch of folks, we were forced into situations we never would have sought out. I wouldn't have met Goran, the Marilyn Manson superfan who was fleeing the NATO bombing of Belgrade on a fake Portuguese visa. Or Kurt, the Dutch hippie who let us crash on his floor in Amsterdam. Stepping out of your social comfort zone can be painful, but it's one of the most rewarding things you can do.³

As you widen your social circle, work on your intellectual one as well. Expose yourself to new writers. Hit the [Random Article](#) button on Wikipedia. Investigate the bromides your friends chuck around Twitter like frisbees.

When you expand your social and intellectual range, you become more interesting. You're able to make connections that others don't see. You're like a hunter, bringing a fresh supply of ideas and stories back to share with your friends.

The Big Bore lurks inside us all. It's dying to be set loose to lecture on Quentin Tarantino or what makes good ice cream. Fight it! Fight the urge to speak without listening, to tell a bad story, to stay inside your comfortable nest of back-patting pals. As you move away from boring, you will never be bored. ◆

1 Lots of books exist because of how boring you have made the Internet. Books like *The Information Diet* focus on the consumption side of things: how are we, your readers and friends, supposed to deal with the junk you keep sending us? Instead, I'd like to look at the supply side: if you were more interesting, then there would be less junk out there that we would have to deal with.

2 The supply side: if you were more interesting, then there would be less junk out there that we would have to deal with.

3 You don't have to go back to the '70s to find good listeners. My friend Jesse Thorn is a great interviewer who also listens in an engaged way. Check out his show, *Bullseye*. Or if you'd like to shoot for something a bit more academic, BBC's *In Our Time* features great conversation led by another master, Melvyn Bragg.

4 These folks make a great case for the potentially life-changing value of meeting new people: Nassim Taleb's *The Black Swan*, and the previously-cited Porter Gale's *Conversations with 4C*.



Icecapades

The clearer the ice, the smoother the melt.

By ALISON HALLETT

Bartenders and drink historians and cocktail obsessives think about ice all the time, a strange pastime unless you frequent food blogs and read glossy food and drink magazines. Those sources and sites stoke a high-level ice obsession: smoked ice, hollow ice, ice prized for its perfect clarity, and ice hand-carved from giant blocks produced by machines that cost more than my car. (Just kidding: I don't have a car.)

There are only a few times I think about ice.

I think about ice when I'm hosting a party and I have to run to the corner store to buy a bag of it. Invariably, the cubes have clumped together into a giant mass, and I have to stomp on the bag to break it up. Artisanal foot-ice, I call it.

I think about ice vis-à-vis the grandmotherly implications of plopping a few cubes in a glass of rosé when it's hot outside.

I think about ice when I reach into the freezer only to find that the ice trays ◆◆



◆◆
This excerpt
originally
appeared in
issue 10,
Feb. 14, 2013.



Light Motif

A pinhole lens cap finally brings infinite focus and undistorted images to digital cameras.

By DAVID ERIK NELSON

Justin Lundquist was watching TV in 2009 and saw a commercial for one of the first cameras built around the new Olympus/Panasonic “Micro Four Thirds” system. These are high-end digital cameras with interchangeable lenses, and are similar to digital single-lens reflex (DSLR) designs, which show precisely through the viewfinder what the camera captures via its lens.

The design goal with Micro 4/3 was to make a professional camera significantly more compact than any DSLR. What got Lundquist on the phone to his soon-to-be business partner — another Chicago-based photographer, Ben Syverson — was a word that probably didn’t impress anyone else watching that ad: “mirrorless.”

In order to shrink the camera body, Olympus/Panasonic did away with the angled reflex mirror at the heart of any high-quality camera, which allows a shooter to see the lens’s view through a tiny viewfinder. Because the design had a compact camera body and no mirror in the way, Syverson and Lundquist (who happens to be my brother-in-law) realized that they could remove the lens entirely and place a usable pinhole within a few millimeters of the camera’s CCD sensor.

Lundquist, a freelance photographer, has experimented with pinhole cameras for decades. The mirrorless guts of the Micro 4/3 allowed him to finally see ♦♦

PFT



♦♦

This excerpt originally appeared in issue 9, Jan. 31, 2013.



WOOD STOCK

A once-obscure bit of printing history on the shores of Lake Michigan finds rekindled interest.

By JACQUI CHENG

The remnants of the Hamilton district in Two Rivers, Wisconsin — the former headquarters of the country’s largest producer of wood type in a town that once hummed with manufacturing — now largely sits quiet. The industrial building housed two last bits that came out of over 100 years of wood manufacture: a laboratory furniture operation, and the Hamilton Wood Type Museum. Save some old business cards scattered on the ground, the factory is empty.

Thermo Fisher Scientific, the descendant owner of Hamilton Wood Type Manufacturing and its buildings in Two Rivers, announced abruptly in 2012 that it would shut down its furniture division in Two Rivers. The museum was forced to move, and found a space a few blocks away. Now relocated and only recently chugging back to life, its unofficial motto is unchanged: “Preservation through use.” The museum houses one of the few remaining shops in the world that can produce wood type, a mainstay for a century in the production of many kinds of printed work. Like vinyl records, the sales of which have climbed back into the millions ♦♦



♦♦
This excerpt originally appeared in issue 20, July 4, 2013.



Summit Cum Laude

The straightest path has pitfalls in life and hiking.

By CHRISTA MRGAN

Rime ice has encrusted my sneakers when I reach for them at 4:30 a.m. I had forgotten to tuck them under my sleeping bag the night before. I pull them on anyway, cursing softly in the darkness. Roughly 50 yards from the Star Pad (the exposed rock where I sleep most nights this final summer in Yosemite) stands the stone kitchen, warmed just enough by the pilot lights of its old propane stoves.

Being alone there with the battery-powered radio picking up San Francisco's KQED before anyone else in camp has woken is nearly enough to make up for the cold, dark, terrible earliness.

Yosemite University

At the base of a 11,400-foot peak and eight miles from the nearest road, I make breakfast for the 50 or so guests of Vogelsang High Sierra Camp, plus the eight employees who are around that day, then pack myself a bag lunch. It's my fifth summer in Yosemite National Park. I'd lived there for a full year when I first left Florida to take some time off school, and I'd returned every summer until I finished college.

To other misguided youths, I cannot recommend this course of action enough. It allowed me the time and space for the important work of one's early twenties — namely, having adventures of self-discovery — without racking up excess ♦♦



♦♦
This excerpt
originally
appeared in
issue 16,
May 9, 2013

The author at Yosemite, captured in a photo by her future husband, Neven Mrgan.