

THE BIRTH AND DEATH OF
THE MR. & MS. SPECIAL EDITION

A Baby Thesis Submitted to

the Interdisciplinary Studies Program of
the Ateneo de Manila University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree
A.B. Interdisciplinary Studies

by

Cecilia Alessandra S. Uy-Tioco

2 March 1992

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	
Statement of the Problem	
Significance of the Study	
Scope and Delimitations of the Study	
Theoretical Framework	
Hypothesis and Assumption of the Study	
Definition of Terms	
Review of Related Literature	
Methodology	
Organization of the Thesis	
FREEDOM OF THE PRESS	
AND FOUR THEORIES OF THE PRESS	11
Functions of Mass Media and the Free Press	
Four Theories of the Press	
THE PHILIPPINE PRESS IN THE 1980'S	19
THE MR. & MS. SPECIAL EDITION	27
CONCLUSION	36
BIBLIOGRAPHY	41

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

When Martial Law was lifted in January 1981, press freedom was officially restored in the Philippines. A widely circulated and read entertainment magazine, *Mr. & Ms.*, began printing articles that were political in nature. According to its publisher Eugenia D. Apostol, "We opened our pages to critical articles because we believed there was a need for them, that they would be healthy for the country."¹

The need for political articles evidently grew greater when the nation was stirred by the brutal assassination of former Senator Benigno S. Aquino Jr. on 21 August 1983 at the Manila International Airport (now the Ninoy Aquino International Airport) tarmac. Thousands of Filipinos were outraged by his death and flocked to his wake. Even more so, his funeral procession on August 31. A special edition featuring the funeral of the Senator and another on his life were put out by *Mr. & Ms.* These two special editions culled in the creation of the *Mr. & Ms. for Justice and National Reconciliation*, later reissued by *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*, which published issues from 9 September 1983 to 23 July

¹Eugenia D. Apostol, "Too Late the Memo (of Gen. Ver)," in *The Philippine Press and Society*, Vol. II, (Manila: The National Press Club Committee to Protect Writers, 1985).

These issues were released every Friday of the week, while the regular Mr. & Ms. magazine were released on Tuesdays. The special editions quickly became weekly fare for the church-based middle class opposition in Manila.² Circulation of Mr. & Ms. rose as it grew "hungry for political items which they may not ordinarily read in other publications."

The years that immediately followed the Aquino assassination were years of rallies, protests and demonstrations. People took to the streets to denounce the murder and the group of the Fact-Finding Board. As a means of protest, the streets of financial district were filled with yellow confetti. Snap presidential elections were called for by Pres. Ferdinand Marcos, and the opposition united with Corazon C. Aquino, widow of the slain Marcos Presidential candidate and Salvador Laurel for Vice-president.

The elections on 7 February 1986, as expected, was smeared by rampant cheating and vote buying. It was bloody and dangerous, yet thousands of Aquino supporters and members of the National Citizen's Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) continued turning the ballots, keeping track of forms and rules, risking their lives if need be, to get votes counted.³ Fifteen days later, Juan Ponce Enrile, Marcos' Defense Minister, and Rod Ramos, Vice Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines announced their

² Guy Sacerdoti and Lin Neumann, Bayan Ko! (Philippines: Veritas Publications and Communications Foundation Inc., 1986), p. 20.

³ Eugene D. Apostol, "Too Late the Memo (of General Ver)" in The Philippine Press and Society Volume II, (Manila: The National Press Club Committee to Protect Writers, Inc., 1986), p. 158.

⁴ Guy Sacerdoti and Lin Neumann, Bayan Ko! (Philippines: Veritas Publications and Communications Foundation Inc., 1986), p. 89.

break with Marcos. The outpouring of love, anger, hysteria and courage that marked the four days of February 22nd to 25th, 1986 in the Philippines expressed itself in a complex web of popular will and calculated politics, which ultimately resulted in a triumph of the center and the reaffirmation, by those leading the revolt, of the conservative values of the nation.⁵ Corason C. Aquino was sworn to presidency on 25 February 1986 by Supreme Court Justice Claudio Teehankee at Club Filipino. A new era had begun.

It was amidst these national events that the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* issues were printed. These issues reported on the rallies, demonstrations, investigations and other events that concerned the quest for justice and peace.

Seventeen months after the ascension of the Aquino government, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* ceased publication.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

What forms of information dissemination, other than the "legitimate press" were results of suppression of press freedom during the 1980's?

The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was an alternative form of news dissemination borne from the suppression of the press in the 1980's.

This paper hopes to answer the following specific questions:

1. What conditions led to the publication of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*?
2. What caused the *Special Edition* to cease publication in July 1987?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Newspapers and magazines are vital forms of mass media in disseminating information to the public. Their role in society is important for they do not simply report the news, but mold public opinion as well. They also are a means of entertainment and relaxation for their readers. However, the press also has a responsibility to give out the news as factual as possible to its readers. Certain historical events seem to have caused Mr. & Ms., a popular entertainment magazine, to come out with special supplements that were political in nature. Instead of only printing articles concerning fashion, hairstyles, recipes and short stories, Mr. & Ms. started to write on government-related topics. This was a turning point in the history of both the press and of the nation, for in a time of crisis, a creative and alternative means of disseminating information was found. As the country gears up for presidential elections in 1992, the press may once again need to change its character and style to fulfill the public's needs.

SCOPE AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study shall cover all the special edition issues of Mr. & Ms. from 2 September 1989 to 23 July 1987. The study shall not attempt to cover all the regular issues of Mr. & Ms. and neither shall it cover the Mr. & Ms. Special Edition Agribusiness Weekly which replaced the political Special Edition.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Media has several purposes. According to the functional theory of mass media, the underlying thought is that the media exists to meet certain needs or requirements of society and that a function refers to the meeting of such need.⁶

Four mass media theories have been introduced by Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson, and Willbur Schramm in 1963 in their book Four Theories of the Press. These theories are the Soviet theory, the authoritarian theory, the libertarian theory, and the social responsibility theory.⁷ For the purposes of this study, only the libertarian theory and social responsibility theory shall be discussed in depth.

The libertarian theory assumes that the media's goal is to convey the truth and that the media will not cave in to outside pressures, such as from advertisers or corporate owners.⁸ In this theory, the media is assumed to present all viewpoints regarding the news and issues reported.

The social responsibility theory reconciles the independence of the press with its obligation to society.⁹ It emphasizes not only high standards of performance but also some of the virtues of balance and impartiality.¹⁰ The social responsibility gives the government

⁶Denis McQuail, Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction, (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications Inc., 1984), p. 73.

⁷Shirley Biagi, Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), p. 14.

⁸Ibid, p. 15.

⁹Denis McQuail, Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction, (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications Inc., 1984), p. 90.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 91.

the responsibility to encourage the press to fulfill their duties. This is where the libertarian theory and the social responsibility theory differ. The libertarian theory assumes the media will work well without government interference; the social responsibility theory advocates government oversight for media that don't act in society's best interest.¹¹

HYPOTHESIS AND ASSUMPTION OF THE STUDY

The hypothesis of the study is that, in times of crisis, political situations determine the forms of information dissemination. The suppression of the press leads to the use of creative and alternative means of reporting the news to the public and in forming the public's opinions. This study assumes that newspapers and magazines are published for specific reasons and goals which are determined by its editors after considering the needs of its readers.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To better facilitate the understanding of this study, it is best to define some terms that shall be used in the course of the study.

1. *magazine* - a collection of articles or stories -- or both -- published at regular intervals.

2. *variety magazine* - magazines that cater to several needs of its readers. It includes

news, entertainment, advice columns, recipe and how-to sections, fashion, fiction and poetry.

¹¹Shirley Biagi, *Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), p. 15.

3. *political magazine* - magazines that center on the government activities of the nation and contain articles, editorials, illustrations and photos that concern government agencies and personalities.

4. *information dissemination* - the giving out of information, reporting of news.

5. *press freedom* - a press free from government control and restrictions. A press that is not suppressed and silenced by threats on its writers.

6. *publication* - the printing and selling of a newspaper or magazine.

7. *alienative press* - the press that did not conform to the policies, ideas and restrictions laid on the legitimate press by the government.

8. *legitimate or establishment press* - the press that conformed and followed government restrictions. It is the common and widely accepted means of information dissemination.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

No study has yet been made about the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*. However, several

books have been written about the Philippine press that are related to the said topic.

Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, in 1984, wrote *The Manipulated Press: A History of*

Philippine Journalism since 1945. Her book discusses how the press in the Philippines came

about and how it battled suppression. The chapter on the Martial Law period and after,

gives a very good background on what situations the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* emerged

The Philippine Press Under Siege Volume II published by the National Press Club

Committee to Protect Writers chronicles the events that occurred during the "painful era in the history of Philippine journalism."¹² The book carries several articles by journalists that record their experiences of military interrogations. A notable one is "Too late the Memo (of General Ver)" written by Mr. & Ms. publisher Eugenia D. Apostol which contain excerpts from her interrogation.

The final edition of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* dated 17-23 July 1987, is a tribute to the magazine. The issue is filled with reminiscence articles about the four years the *Special Edition* was published.

Herbert Brucker's book entitled Freedom of Information discusses what freedom of the press is and that the press, instead of writing and arguing from a set view should dedicate itself in the quest for the truth. Likewise, John Hohenberg, in his Free Press/Free People, discusses the concept of freedom of the press.

Curtis D. MacDougall in his The Press and Its Problems examines the world of the press and the difficulties that arise from being in such a profession. It also contains a chapter entitled "Giving the Public What it Wants" that discusses how to determine what type of news stories the public wishes to read and how this is essential in the life of a paper. The increasing strength of the press and of press freedom is discussed in The Press and Society: A Book of Readings edited by George L. Bird and Frederic E. Mervin. The

¹² Leonor J. Aureus, ed., The Philippine Press Under Siege Volume II, (Philippines: The National Press Club Committee to Protect Writers, 1985), p. xii.

book shows how and why the press influences the public and how and why the public reacts

in certain ways about the press.

METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive-narrative research wherein the researcher shall attempt to

illustrate the reasons that led to the birth and death of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* in the

light of the political events surrounding it. Primary sources of the study shall be the issues

of the *Special Edition* itself, books and interviews with the people who were directly involved

with the magazine and other authorities on newspapers and magazines.

ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This Introduction shall comprise Chapter One of this paper by giving a background

of the study, what the study seeks to find and how it shall pursue these aims.

Chapter Two will discuss freedom of the press and the responsibilities that the press

has. This section will specifically discuss the libertarian and social responsibility theories of

the press.

Chapter Three of this paper shall discuss the conditions of the Philippine press in the

1980's.

The emergence and death of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* will comprise Chapter

Four.

Chapter Five shall be the conclusion of the paper. This chapter will discuss whether or not the *Mr. & Ms.* magazine fulfilled its responsibility to the public through the printing of the *Special Edition* issues.

CHAPTER II

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND

THE FOUR THEORIES OF THE PRESS

FUNCTIONS OF MASS MEDIA AND THE FREE PRESS

The press primarily exists to disseminate information. It exists to let people know of what is happening all over the nation and the world. People rely on the press for news about what is happening around them. It is the journalist's job to cover events and not to leave them uncovered.¹³ Because there is such a great dependence on the press for information, media ought to report news in the fairest, most accurate and most precise ways possible, so as not to be biased, sensationalized or unbalanced.

The function of mass media is to meet the needs or requirements of society.¹⁴ The mass media of any country does not stand outside of society, but exist within it.¹⁵ Since the media is part of society it is part of the entire social system as well, thus the roles between

¹³Edwin Newman, "A Journalist's Responsibility," in The Responsibilities of Journalism, (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 27.

¹⁴Denis McQuail, Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction, (Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications Inc., 1984), p. 73.

¹⁵Jakob Oetema, "The Press and Society," in Press Systems in Asean States, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 136.

the press and society are communicator and receiver, and vice versa. This relationship is not a causal one, but a functional one of exchanging messages.¹⁶

Harold Lasswell, in an article entitled "The Structure and Function of Communications in Society," notes three functions of the mass media: surveillance, correlation and transmission of culture.¹⁷

Surveillance of the environment, the first function, serves to inform and provides the news. Through this, the public may be warned of expected dangers, such as typhoons, in advance and be given time to prepare for the worst. It is also through this function that news which is essential to the economy, the public and the society, such as stock market reports and the like, is made known to members of the society.

The second function is the correlation of the parts of society in responding to the environment. This involves the selection and interpretation of information about the environment. Often, criticism and prescriptions of how one should react to such events is made by media. This function is also the editorial and propaganda content of the media. It serves to impose social norms and maintain consensus by exposing deviants, confers status by highlighting selected individuals in the media and can operate as a check on government.¹⁸ Through carrying out this function, the media is capable of impeding threats to social stability and may often monitor or manage public opinion.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 137.

¹⁷Werner J. Severin and James W. Tankard Jr., Communication Theories, (New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1979), p. 213.

¹⁸Ibid.

The transmission of culture functions to communicate information, values, and norms from one generation to another or from members of a society to newcomers. By widening the base of common experience, this function hopes to increase social cohesion. The transmission of culture also aids in the integration of individuals into a society by continuing socialization after formal education has ended as well as by beginning it during the preschool years.

A fourth function of mass media was added by Charles Wright in his book *Mass Communication*. This function is entertainment. Here, media is seen as a respite from a hard day's work and everyday problems. Entertaining magazines, newspapers, television shows and the like also fill leisure time. Through entertaining, media can expose many people to a mass culture of art and music.

To fulfill its functions, the press needs a certain amount of freedom. To be able to report news that actually happened, the press must be free from outside pressure. News and information must not be curtailed by anyone, because the public has the right to know exactly what is going on and how these events may affect their lives. The media then has the right to inform them of this. Freedom of information for newspapers and related media will not have only the historic sense of freedom from government, but also include freedom from any attachment, direct or indirect, to any class, political party, economic group, or other section of society.¹⁹ Moreover, freedom of the press has its utilitarian function in enhancing

¹⁹ Herbert Brucker, *Freedom of Information*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949), p. 276.

the discovery of truth, the processes of self-government and in checking abuse of authority; as well as being an intrinsic human right.²⁰

Hand in hand with a free press is a responsible press. Being free does not mean that a newspaper has the right to print anything it wants to. A newspaper has the obligation to respect the rights of others, as well as its own. It must be careful as not to abuse its freedom by printing sensationalized and false articles. It must not trample on the rights of others by plagiarizing, destroying reputations and starting rumors. Individual freedom is meaningless without responsibility because one is not free unless he is responsible for his acts.²¹

Freedom of the press is often curtailed in nations with authoritarian governments. Prior to the Aquino administration, freedom of the press in the Philippines was only experienced between repressive colonial governments under Spain, the United States and Japan; and the Marcos dictatorship. The freedom of the press is an ideal that the Aquino government has embraced and continues to push.

In 1963, Fred S. Siebert, Theodore Peterson and Wilbur Schramm introduced the Soviet, the authoritarian, the libertarian and the social responsibility theories in their book Four Theories of the Press. These theories describe mass media systems operating within different government systems.²²

-
- ²⁰Achal Mehra, Press Systems in Asian States, (Singapore: Asian mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 3.
- ²¹Crispin C. Maslog, Communication Values and Society, (Los Banos, Laguna: Philippine Association of Communication Educators, 1992), p. 129.
- ²²Shirley Biagi, Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), p. 14.

FOUR THEORIES OF THE PRESS

The media exists in all nations, even under the most repressive, authoritative and dictatorial of governments. Under such conditions, however, the media cannot fully fulfill its functions because news is controlled by the state.

The Soviet theory is theory used by the Soviet Union where top media executives are also leaders in the Communist part. Media employees are government employees serving the government's interests. Because the media is under the state's ownership, government control comes before any media is published or broadcasted.

Under the authoritarian theory, media can be privately owned but is under certain controls and restrictions of the government. Thus, if something unfavorable about the government is published or broadcasted, licenses of media companies may be revoked by the state.

The libertarian and social responsibility theories advocate freedom of the press. These theories give the media their own identity, separate from any attachment to government or private controls. It is through these theories that media may fulfill its function to disseminate news as accurately as possible.

The libertarian theory is probably the theory adopted by most press of democratic countries. For democratic countries, man is a rational animal with an inherent dignity and individual sovereignty to determine his acts and destiny.²³ Man is assumed to have the

²³Achal Mehra, *Press Systems in Asian States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 1.

capacity of knowing which information is true and which are false. The human being is expected to be able to make rational decisions after weighing facts carefully.

For the libertarian theory, it is media's goal to convey the truth and to stay away from outside pressures of government, advertisers and corporate owners. This theory assumes that all sides of the story is presented and that various viewpoints shall be heard. Several western democratic nations, such as the United States, advocate this theory. Among the Southeast Asian nations, however, it is only the Philippines and Thailand who have opted for the western liberal model of the press, with its concomitant stress on press freedom and the role of the press as watchdog and inquisitor of government.²⁴

Thailand, being the only uncolonized nation in Asia, has enjoyed independence for 100 years. The idea of a libertarian press stems from Thailand's attempts to become a democratic state. Thai journalists view press freedom as a gradually growing process.²⁵

On the other hand, the adoption of the libertarian theory by the Philippines was a result of over 100 years of a controlled press. The years under Spanish, American and Japanese colonizers, not to mention the suppression experienced under the Marcos dictatorship gave birth to an underground press longing and fighting for freedom. With that background, it is not surprising that the press sees its responsibility as a public fiduciary and as a watchdog of government.²⁶ But unlike western nations, the Philippine press is not an

²⁴Ibid., p. 7.
²⁵Ibid.
²⁶Ibid.

adversary of the government. Unless the government is abusive, the Philippine press is a partner in the fight for democracy.²⁷

In 27 March 1947, the Commission of Freedom of the Press, better known as the Hutchins Commission, published a volume entitled "A Free and Responsible Press." From this grew out the social responsibility theory.

The Commission's report was not favorably accepted by the American press community. It was denounced by all, but a handful of American newspapers because it was seen as a blueprint for government regulation of the press.²⁸ Among the five goals for the press listed by the commission was the need for truthful and complete reporting of all sides of an issue. It concluded that the American press' privileged position in the Constitution means that the press must always work to be responsible to society.²⁹ The commission held that if the press failed to do this, then it was up to the government to make sure that the media did so. It is on this point that the libertarian and social responsibility theories differ. The libertarian theory assumes that the media will work well without government interference; the social responsibility theory advocates government oversight for media that

²⁷Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines" in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 81.

²⁸Elie Abel, "Hutchins Revisited: Thirty-five Years of Social Responsibility Theory," in *The Responsibilities of Journalism*, (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 40.

²⁹Shirley Biagi, *Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), p. 15.

don't act in society's best interest.³⁰ Under the social responsibility theory, the press will only do its job well if it is periodically reminded and prodded by the government.

As earlier mentioned, the Philippine press today is not an adversary of the government but a partner and ally in the cause of democracy. In addition to being watch-dog and critic of the government, the Philippine press joins the government as educator -- through information on current issues, history, development; through the dissemination of culture and cultural values.³¹

The experiences of the Philippine press under years of suppression from the government has made it wary of any government intervention or regulation. Though it admits to have a great responsibility to society to report news accurately and concisely, the Philippine press relies on itself to do the check and balancing. The press, in a democracy, must be responsible to its readers and to itself.³² The Philippine Press Institute and the Press Council were formed for the purpose of regulating the press and preventing corruption, commercialization, sensationalism and dishonesty. Likewise, professional associations for communicators such as People in Communication and the Philippine Communication Society are involved in the upgrading of the press through seminars, dialogues, and publications.³³

³¹Ibid.

³²Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 81.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., p. 79.

CHAPTER III

THE PHILIPPINE PRESS IN THE 1980'S

On 16 January 1981, President Ferdinand Marcos issued Presidential Decree 2045, officially ending eight years of martial law. A few days later on January 23, the print and media councils were abolished, and the right to publish without having to obtain prior license was restored.³⁴ Despite the official return of press freedom, media still could not exercise their rights to inform the public of what was happening in the country. Media still received phone calls telling them what they could or could not say.³⁵ Domini Torrevillas, former editor of *Panorama*, currently a columnist of *The Philippine Star*, recalls that, "We were not supposed to come out with stories critical of government and military."³⁶ The situation wasn't any different from martial law.³⁷

³⁴Rosalinda Pineda-Orengo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 144.

³⁵Guy Sacerdoti and Lin Neumann, *Bayan Ko! (Philippines: Veritas Publications & Communications Foundation Inc., 1986)*, p. 13.

³⁶Interview with Domini Torrevillas, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.

³⁷Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.

The climate of fear was still very much evident then because of the continued operation of repressive decrees and the institution of new and erstwhile "secret" decrees.³⁸ Decrees such as PD 1737 or the Public Order Act gave the president the power to detain persons or entities to prevent them from acting in a manner that would harm national security or public order. PD 1737 also gave the president the power to close down subversive publications and other mass media entities. The National Security Code, another repressive decree, had a provision against those

"uttering, publishing, distributing, circulating and spreading rumors, false news and information and gossip, or causing the publication, distribution, circulation or reading of the same which cause or tend to cause panic, divisive effects among the people, discredit of or distrust for the duly constituted authorities, undermine the stability of the government and the objectives of the New Society, endanger the public order, or cause damage to the interest or discredit of the state."³⁹

In July 1983, Pres. Marcos issued PD 1875 and PD 1876 repealing the Public Order Act and the National Security Code. However, other presidential decrees such as PD 1834 and PD 1835 were still in effect, stipulating strict penalties for rebellion, sedition and other crimes that may affect national security. Originally dated 16 January 1981, these PD's were kept frozen and "secret" for almost a year and a half, and were finally rendered operational in July 1983 after its publication in the *Official Gazette*.⁴⁰ Both decrees are referred to in PD

³⁸Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cachó Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 145.

³⁹Mila Astorga-Garcia, "The Philippine press: What are the boundaries of Freedom?" *Business Day*, 25 January 1983, p. 13, quoted in Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cachó Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 147.

⁴⁰Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cachó Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 145.

1877, issued on July 1983, giving the president the power to issue Preventive Detention Arrests. Through the PDA, persons could be arrested and detained by the government for a period less than a year. All equipment used in the commission of the crime was to be requested by the government, and detention may be extended by the President himself. All evidence against the person detained shall be evaluated only after the arrest is made, and the detained is stripped of his right to present his side. In addition, the detained is denied bail.⁴¹

According to Paulynn P. Sicam, former editor of the *Manila Chronicle*, though "you wanted to say something, you didn't want to say it directly. If you did you'd get into trouble with."⁴² Instead journalists would have to write between the lines and "the most wonderful thing about it was that readers understood you."⁴³ There were several things journalists were not allowed to cover, such as the arrival of former Senator Benigno S. Aquino Jr. in 1983.

Dominí Torrevillas says,

"It was difficult (to be a good journalist) because people expected us to fulfill our function of telling the truth but we were hampered. The restrictions were not written in black and white."⁴⁴

Often times, journalists had to rely on their gut feeling and intuition. They would print articles that they thought were fair. Sometimes the government would think otherwise, thus

⁴¹Ibid, p. 146.

⁴²Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Interview with Dominí Torrevillas, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.

many journalists were slapped with libel suits and others had to undergo interrogations. The government also tried to keep the press happy and entertained with events such as the Manila International Film Festival where journalists with press passes could watch as many movies as they wanted. But when it came to covering what was essential, it was very difficult.⁴⁵

Pressure from government officials as well as from editors, publishers and newspaper owners were felt by journalists all over the nation. Perhaps the most famous of government interventions on media was the Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc case. As a result of an editorial she had written and published on the inauguration of the New Republic, Magsanoc was forced to resign from the editorship of *Panorama*, the largest circulated Sunday magazine in the country. The Letty Magsanoc case brought about the dawning of the age of forced resignations in the "establishment" press.⁴⁶ Other examples are the "retirement" of *Bulletin* editor Ben Rodriguez, the "deep freeze" treatment given to *Bulletin* deskman Antonio Nieva and columnist Arlene Babst, the "disappearance" of women columnists Arlene Babst, Ninez Gacho-Olivares, Melinda Quintos-de Jesus and Sylvia Mayuga from the *Bulletin's* editorial page, and the resignation of *Tempo* editor Recah Trinidad.⁴⁷

⁴⁵Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.

⁴⁶Leonor J. Aureus, ed., *The Philippine Press Under Siege Volume II*, (Philippines: National Press Club Committee to protect Writers, 1985), p. 107.

⁴⁷Ibid.

On December 1982, in a twin move, the government attempted not only to intimidate but to hamstring the press.⁴⁸ *We Forum*, the first protest newspaper was allowed to publish for a period of a time without pressure from the government due to its small circulation. However, on December 7, *We Forum's* editor Jose Burgos as well as its columnists and staffers were arrested after printing a story on the false war medals of Marcos. Its printery and office were locked and placed under guard, and its typewriters, files and other supplies were confiscated by the military.

A few days after, the country's highest intelligence body, the National Intelligence Board, invited eight women journalists for interrogation at a military camp. Summoned were *Panorama* contributors Ma. Ceres P. Doyo and Jo-Ann Maglipon, *Bulletin Today* columnists Arlene Babst and Ninez Cacho-Olivares, *Panorama* editor Domini Torrevillas-Suarez, freelance writer Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, Mr. & Ms. editor Eugenia Apostol and staff member Doris N. Nuyda. These women journalists were asked questions ranging from their personal life, to their religious beliefs, to their income from writing and to whether or not they were members of the Communist Party of the Philippines.⁴⁹

According to Paulynn Sicam, the military had a special way of reading articles. They did a content analysis and an intent analysis, thus journalists felt as if they were walking on

⁴⁸Joker P. Arroyo, "Military interrogations Stopped, But Rash of Libel Suits Followed," *The Philippine Press Under Siege Volume II*, (Philippines: The National Press Club Committee to Protect Writers, 1985), p. 139.

⁴⁹Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism 1945-1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 151.

eggs as the military could interpret their articles any which way they wanted.⁵⁰ Writing in the 1980's meant a lot of self censorship on the part of the journalists. Instead of running the risk of getting interrogated, some journalists opted to refrain from writing on potentially dangerous topics.

Nevertheless the protests against government grew louder and stronger, and as it did, so did the sanctions made by government. In addition to the Presidential Decrees and the letters of instructions, threats and questioning, arrest and detention, closure of publications and firing of journalists, came the libel suits.⁵¹ These libel suits came in several fashions. Some were announced but not filed, others were filed but not pursued. There were those that were for ridiculously astronomical amounts that no Philippine journalist could expect to earn in a lifetime, meant to carry the clout of power and the threat of position, and identify journalists and publishers into submission.⁵² Of course the ultimate threat to journalists was death, and many were killed, especially in the provinces, in the pursuit of truth and justice.

Despite the sanctions and dangers their jobs brought them, these journalists extended the limits of what could be written about, and paved the way for the alternative or non-royal press.⁵³ These interrogations and closures united the press starting with the Magsanoc

⁵⁰ Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.

⁵¹ Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 76.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 75.

case in mid-1981, where resistance was building up, gaining momentum after the *We Forum* closure and reaching its peak at the wake of the Aquino assassination, laying the foundation for the alternative press.⁵⁴

On 20 August 1983, the Women Writers in Media Now (WOMEN) launched a boycott of the crony newspapers *Bulletin Today*, *Daily Express* and *Times Journal*. The day after, on August 21, former Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. was murdered on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport. The nascent boycott movement found an ideal opportunity as it rode the crest of the waves of protest which followed the Aquino assassination.⁵⁵ A statement issued by the Press Freedom Committee of the Justice for Aquino, Justice for All Movement read that "the coverage by the local media of the assassination and its aftermath stressed the suppression of truth and the stranglehold of the Marcos government over the already timid press."⁵⁶ Together with the call for boycott of the government run newspapers was the call to support the alternative press that did a good job in covering the Aquino murder. After the Aquino assassination, people were hungry for real news, and the demand for the alternative press grew. The special supplements of *Mr. & Ms.* featuring Aquino-related stories broke commercial records while the irreverent tabloids with sensational

⁵⁴Rosalinda Pineda-Oreño, *The Manipulated Press: A history of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1984), p. 154.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

headlines sold like hot cakes on the street.⁵⁷ The repressive Marcos control of the press thus caused the rise of the protest journalism that eventually assisted in its downfall.⁵⁸

Just as the public saw the necessity for the an alternative press, so did those employed in the business. Domini Torrevillas stresses the fact that there was indeed a need for the alternative press. "It was necessary and it redeemed the image of journalism. It proved that journalism had other functions other than as the mouthpiece of the government."⁵⁹

The return of democracy to the Philippines also brought the return of a free press. As a reaction to the previous regime, the Aquino administration has been strict in its adherence to freedom of the press, and has not implemented orders about any kind of censorship.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Ibid, p. 155.

⁵⁸Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 76.

⁵⁹Interview with Domini Torrevillas, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.

⁶⁰Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 78.

CHAPTER IV

THE MR. & MS. SPECIAL EDITION

On 21 August 1983, former senator Benigno S. Aquino Jr. was shot dead at the Manila International Airport. Ten days later, thousands of Filipinos attended his funeral march. People from all walks of life, rich or poor, educated or uneducated flocked to his funeral procession. An ordinary funeral would have taken only two or three hours, but this was different, it took the whole day. With a snail-like pace, the truck carrying the body travelled from Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City to Manila Memorial park in Paranaque. Despite the rains and the heavy traffic, people still joined the final procession for the slain senator.

On the day following the funeral, September 1, no major daily had covered the massive funeral march. The *Times Journal* headline was about a man hit by lightning and that the First Lady, Mrs. Imelda Marcos was instructing the Luneta Park administration to resurrect the tree the man was atop. Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc recalls that "It was their story of the day when we had just had the largest funeral in the history of mankind."⁶¹ Eugenia

⁶¹ Interview with Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, Manila, 10 December 1991.

D. Apostol, publisher of a women's magazine called *Mr. & Ms.*, was outraged by the minimal coverage done by media on the Aquino funeral. It was an event that had paralyzed traffic in the metropolis and was attended by thousands of Filipinos of all walks of life, yet it did not make the front pages of the dailies. Stories of the event centered on the man struck by lightning and photos were cropped so that it looked like there were very few people who attended the funeral. Even prior to the Aquino funeral, the establishment press had to follow certain guidelines: no emotional photos of the Aquinos were allowed and no aerial shots of the long lines of people queuing to view Aquino's body would be printed. Because of this, Eugenia Apostol decided to put a special issue of *Mr. & Ms.* featuring the slain senator and his funeral.

"The next morning, I brought all our photos and printed everything. I handled it myself. It was like I put in everything, the past 35 years, all in one afternoon, into that special edition."⁶²

The glossy variety magazine came out with Ninoy articles immediately after his funeral. The staff was composed of the regular *Mr. & Ms.* staff who put together all the wire reports and pictures from the *Associated Press (AP)* and *Reuters*. It was "a rag-tag, touch-up work with things from different sources, none of which were original."⁶³ Stories were taken from the foreign press mainly because the event was not covered locally. Paulynn Sicam recalls being in the *Mr. & Ms.* office when Eugenia Apostol decided to put together the Ninoy Aquino pictures and stories.

⁶²Eugenia D. Apostol in *People Power*, (Manila: The James B. Reuter S.J. Foundation, 1986), p. 17.

⁶³Interview with Lety Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, 10 December 1991.

"The day that Eggie decided that, I happened to drop in on her and she was showing me all the papers (without the Aquino burial story) and then she showed me the AP (Associated Press) story and she said, 'Look at this! This never saw print.' And then she said, 'You know I'm thinking of putting this in a special edition,' and I said, 'Yeah, why not?' and she asked me to help her choose the pictures."⁶⁴

When Aquino was killed, and the big dailies chose silence over rocking the well-anchored boat of the country's prime suspects in Malacanang, *Mr. & Ms.* went on a giddy Ninoy spree, an issue of articles on Ninoy Aquino which sold out, was reprinted, sold out, reprinted -- *four times!*⁶⁵ It was becoming too costly to reprint the glossy, colored covers of *Mr. & Ms.* so the publisher decided to come out with it in black and white, without advertisements and only containing the Ninoy articles.

The people's response to the issue was positive. This issue on the Aquino funeral broke all circulations records. The regular circulation of a major daily is 300,000, and *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was coming out with 300,000 to 500,000.⁶⁶ The reception of the people was simply so massive that Eugenia Apostol decided to come up with the special edition weekly. "She felt there was a hunger for news, for Ninoy news, to know what was going on in the country that could not be found in the newspapers of that time."⁶⁷ According to Mrs. Apostol,

- ⁶⁴Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.
- ⁶⁵Candy Quimpo, "The Special Edition: Year One," *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*, 17-23 July 1987, p. 4.
- ⁶⁶Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.
- ⁶⁷Interview with Lety Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, 10 December 1991.

"It was supposed to be an *ad hoc* thing. It was supposed to be only when it was needed that we would come out with something. But then it became a regular thing. Every Friday, every week. So that is how it was for three and a half years."⁶⁸

The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* worked with a skeleton staff of three or four writers

with Lety Jimenez-Magsanoc as editor-in-chief. Because of her stint with *Panorama* that led to her firing, Mrs. Apostol felt that it would be wise to exclude Mrs. Magsanoc's name from the staff box, lest they get closed down or raided by the military. It was only after a year that Mrs. Apostol saw it safe to acknowledge Mrs. Magsanoc's role in the paper. Mrs. Magsanoc's job was on a contractual basis, thus if the paper would be forced to shut down, she would lose her job without and separation pay from the company. She did not have a job tenure or work benefits because the very nature of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was uncertain. No one knew how long the edition would last, or whether they were going to be closed down the next day.

"We didn't plan. We said we'd keep it up so long as it's needed and then fade away when it's no longer needed. That's how it was."⁶⁹

They relied solely on street sales. There were no subscriptions or advertisement revenues as the *Special Edition* worked with a shoestring budget. According to Doreen Fernandez, whenever Mrs. Apostol was asked how long the *Special Edition* was going to be published, she would reply, "Till Marcos falls."⁷⁰

⁶⁸Interview with Eugenia D. Apostol, Chairman of the Board, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 20 January 1992.

⁶⁹*Ibid.*

⁷⁰Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.

The production staff of the *Special Edition* were members of the regular edition's staff. The typesetters, strippers and other production people would work on the *Special Edition* after the regular glossy *Mr. & Ms.* was put to sleep. The staff worked in an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. The typesetter, Nita del Rosario would spend hours typing the *Special Edition* huddled in a blanket which could not stop her shivering -- not from the cold, but "out of fear."⁷¹ A peephole on the door of their tiny office in the Citytrust building allowed them to check if visitors were from the military or not. On certain occasions, the entire production crew would transfer to Mrs. Apostol's home in Dasmariñas Village, taking with them the typesetting machines. Travelling to Dasmariñas was a fearful experience as they had to pass through several military checkpoints. They lived in constant fear of bomb threats and raids; and were hiding from the military. At one point, Mrs. Magsanoc recalls putting up a sign on their office door reading "LJM Garmenis" (her initials) to ward off unwanted visitors.⁷²

But these dangers did not stop people from writing for the *Special Edition*. Columnists and writers included Max Soliven, Ninez Cacho-Olivares, Horacio V. Paredes, and Sylvia Mendez-Ventura. Later, as months passed, they were joined by Joaquin Bernas, SJ, Ester Dipasupil, Jose Ma. Nolasco and many, many more. Photographers of the regular

⁷¹Candy Quimpo, "The Special Edition: Year One," *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*, 17-23 July 1987, p. 5.

⁷²Interview with Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, 10 December 1991.

Mr. & Ms. found themselves shifting from fashion photography to news and rally photography, being baptized by tear gas and water canons.⁷³

The presence of the Foreign Press Corps was a welcome sight for the Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition* as it was a deterrent to their being closed down.⁷⁴ Also, by this time people had become more vigilant and watchful, so closing down the Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition* would cause quite a stir.⁷⁵

The Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition* was cattily called "The Ninoy Newsletter" by many.⁷⁶ But it was through their partisanship that they achieved their purpose of reporting what was not being reported. They were also called "The Rally Magazine" because it covered all the Ninoy rallies that no other paper did.⁷⁷ Later, when the snap elections were announced by President Marcos, the *Special Edition* was all out pro-Cory. The Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition* was biased in being completely anti-Marcos because it supported anything anti-Marcos.⁷⁸

⁷³Candy Quimpo, "The Special Edition: Year One," Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition*, 17-23 July 1991, p. 6.

⁷⁴Interview with Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Manila, 10 December 1991.

⁷⁵Interview with Domini Torrevillas, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.

⁷⁶Candy Quimpo, "The Special Edition: Year One," Mr. & Ms. *Special Edition*, 17-23 July 1991, p. 6.

⁷⁷Ibid.

⁷⁸Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.

It was very biased, but justly biased because those weren't normal times and a *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* would not flourish in normal times.⁷⁹

Even prior to the death of Ninoy Aquino, the regular glossy *Mr. & Ms.* had already been printing a few political articles that were against the government and the Marcos administration. Columnists Rene Saguisag, Kit Tatad and S.P. Lopez were a bit out-of-place in a women's magazine. Eugenia Apostol explains that,

"In 1981, martial law was supposed to be lifted. So I said 'Well, we should take Mr. Marcos seriously.' So, we started inviting S. P. Lopez and Kit Tatad to write."⁸⁰

Eventually with the birth of the *Special Edition*, the glossy magazine was able to concentrate on being a women's magazine.

In 1987, seventeen months after the assumption of Corazon Aquino as President of the Republic, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* ceased publication. The press had become free once more and newspapers were opening up left and right. The return of the free press brought about the end of the alternative press. Newspapers could now print what was going on without the fear of being arrested or interrogated. According to Eugenia Apostol, "there was complete freedom to record and to write about what was going on, so the need for it *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was no longer there."⁸¹ The circulation of the *Special Edition* reflected this. Less and less people were buying the newspaper and it was becoming

⁷⁹ Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.

⁸⁰ Interview with Eugenia D. Apostol, Chairman of the Board, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 20 January 1992.

⁸¹ Ibid.

increasingly difficult to maintain a circulation of 150,000 to break even. "The market had changed completely."⁸²

The clamor for news was no longer loud and the publisher and editors of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* felt that there was a need to channel its readers to a more pressing issue: agribusiness. "When we decided to stop publication of the *Special Edition*, I thought we could become very positive and write about the agribusiness needs of the country because not much attention was being paid to that."⁸³ But readership for agribusiness is very limited and the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition Agribusiness Weekly* now only prints monthly.

The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* is something that cannot be overlooked in the history of Philippine journalism. Through its fearless reportage, the *Special Edition* was able to feed the people's hunger for news when no other newspaper could.

"It was committed journalism. *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* decided it was going to take a risk and give the people the news that you couldn't get anywhere. And they did this with great aplomb."⁸⁴

The publishing of the *Special Edition* also gave birth to another newspaper, the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. "It (the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*) gave us a lot of courage to venture into a new publication."⁸⁵ When the trials for the Aquino murder began, the Editorial Board felt that a separate publication, concentrating only on the trial, was needed.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Interview with Paulynn P. Sicam, Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991.

⁸⁵Interview with Eugenia D. Apostol, Chairman of the Board, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 20 January 1992.

Thus, another weekly called the *Philippine Inquirer* was created solely for that purpose. However, in late 1985, when President Marcos announced the snap elections, the Editorial Board felt that a daily was now needed, and the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* was born.

The *Special Edition* did not only fill the people's need for news, but it also gave journalists something to be proud of at a time when they could not do their jobs well. "It redeemed the image of journalism."⁸⁶ It gave back to journalism, the credibility, honor and integrity that was lost during the Marcos years.

⁸⁶Interview with Domini Torreallas, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

From 1983 to 1987, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was published weekly, responding to the need of the Filipino to be informed of what was going on in the country. Despite the lifting of martial law in 1981, the press continued to live in an atmosphere of fear and anxiety. They were still not allowed to publish news that was critical of government or the First Family. Journalism was very uncertain because journalists knew there were things they could not write about but this was not written in black and white. At any moment, they could be called for military interrogations, slapped with libel suits or even killed for writing something against the government. In writing, freedom of the press was restored, but in reality, the press was still under authoritarian rule. "It was martial law with a smiling face."⁸⁷

However, the death of former Senator Benigno Aquino on the tarmac of the Manila International Airport woke a sleeping nation. The thousands of Filipinos who flocked to view his body showed that many were disgusted and angry with the government. The establishment press' timid coverage of one of the largest funerals ever brought about the

⁸⁷ Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.

indignation of many journalists. One such journalist was Eugenia D. Apostol, publisher of a variety magazine called *Mr. & Ms.* Because of her "anger" at the measly coverage done by the local press, Mrs. Apostol published a special edition of her magazine containing stories and photos that were never printed by local media.

The public's response to the funeral issue of *Mr. & Ms.* was astounding. Copies were sold out, reprinted, sold out, reprinted -- four times. It broke all circulation records in the history of the Philippine press. People were hungry for news. People clamored to know what was going on. All of a sudden, people were tired of reading the same old news from the establishment press. Eugenia Apostol realized this need and decided to make the special edition a weekly.

The main purpose of the *Special Edition* was to meet the needs of the people. Lety Jimenez-Magsanoc says that, "from the response to the funeral issue, we could see that there was a need for the people to have an alternative from what was being printed in the controlled press."⁸⁸ The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* brought out what the other newspapers would not bring out.⁸⁹ According to the libertarian theory of the press it is media's goal to convey the truth and not give in to outside pressure, either from government, corporate owners or

⁸⁸ Interview with Lety Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 10 December 1991.

⁸⁹ Interview with Doreen Fernandez, Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991.

advertisers.⁹⁰ The truth should be printed and the public ought to have the capacity to know what is right or wrong. The public, under the libertarian theory, is given the responsibility to know what is the truth and what is false. All sides to a story is expected to be printed and different views aired.

It was through the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* that the libertarian press was able to succeed in a time of authoritarian rule. Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc believes that the *Special Edition* was doing the role of a free press which is basically to inform.⁹¹ Its function was that of a free press when there was none. Despite the dangers of printing anti-Marcos articles, photos and poems, the *Special Edition* came out every Friday with stories on Ninoy Aquino, his family, his life; on rallies and court hearings. The *Special Edition* did not allow itself to cave in from fear of government intervention. The staff did not allow their tears to stop them from coming out with the truth.

Though admittedly anti-Marcos and pro-Aquino, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was still a free publication. It was certainly identified with a particular group of people, but it was still free from government and advertising pressures. It was able to print what was really happening despite the danger involved.

The political events in the 1980's led to this unique publication. The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* was a weekly that came out on Fridays. It was tabloid size, black and white using newsprint. The *Special Edition* relied strictly on street sales for income because it did

⁹⁰ Shirley Biagi, *Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media*, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988), p. 14.

⁹¹ Interview with Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 10 December 1991.

not give out subscriptions or advertisement space. "This was probably an unprecedented first in Philippine journalism."⁹²

The anger felt by its publisher and the growing need of the public led a well-known variety magazine to print political articles, and later publish an entirely different edition concentrating on political events. When there was control, there were urgent and imaginative solutions such as the underground presses and "xerox" journalism; there were protests, and struggles to be free.⁹³ Because of the repressive controls of government, people would photocopy banned articles from the foreign press and pass them around. Many private and religious publications were mimeographed and often typewritten were likewise passed around. This type of protest journalism was a result of the repression by the Marcos government and consequently led to its ruin.

With the emergence of the Aquino administration, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* found itself beset by more than a dozen new newspapers and magazines, all doing what they had begun: printing the truth and informing the public of what was happening. It was time to go. As one staffwriter wrote, "one day in February 1986, we woke up to discover that, overnight, we had become crony press, and the end began."⁹⁴ The return of democracy and press freedom in the country led to new publications, all espousing freedom of speech. The alternative press ceased to exist as the new and free legitimate press came to be. The *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* had fulfilled its function. It had reported news when news could not

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asian States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 81.

⁹⁴Francoise Joaquin, "Foot in Mouth," *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*, 17-23 July 1991, p. 22.

be reported. It thwarted the pressures from government and military. It fed the people's hunger for information.

Journalism played a great role in the removal of the Marcos administration. The alternative press, through their fearless reportage informed people of what was really happening. This paved the way for ideas to grow and critical thinking to prosper.

The Philippine press today is free. The repressive controls of the past have made the government and media persons strict in its faithfulness to freedom of the press. Government does not implement any kind of censorship. With this freedom comes a free exchange of ideas and a venturesome pursuit of the truth -- but also the abuses of irresponsible freedom.⁹⁵ The suppression of the press in the 1980's coupled by the death of Ninoy Aquino led to the publication of the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition*. It was a weekly newspaper that people looked for in the streets and newsstands. Under any normal circumstances, the *Mr. & Ms. Special Edition* would not have survived. But the times were different, and the *Special Edition* was needed to fill the people's need to know the truth.

⁹⁵Doreen Fernandez, "Philippines," in *Press Systems in Asean States*, (Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989), p. 81.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. BOOKS

- Aureus, Leonor J., ed. The Philippine Press Under Siege Volume II. Philippines: The National Press Club Committee to Protect Writers, 1985.
- Biagi, Shirley. Media/Impact: An Introduction to Mass Media. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1988.
- Bird, George L. and Mervin, Frederic E. eds., The Press and Society: A Book of Readings. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1951.
- Brucker, Herbert. Freedom of Information. New York: Macmillan Company, 1949.
- DeFleur, Melvin L. and Dennis, Everette E. Understanding Mass Communication. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981.
- Hohenberg, John. Free Press/Free People. New York: Columbia University Press, 1971.
- Maslog, Crispin C. Communication Values and Society. Los Banos, Laguna: Philippine Association of Communication Educators, 1992.
- Maslog, Crispin C. Philippine Communication: An Introduction. Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1988.
- MacDougall, Curtis Daniel. The Press and Its Problems. Iowa: WM. C. Brown Company Publishers, 1964.
- Mehra, Achal, ed. Press Systems in Asean States. Singapore: Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre, 1989.
- Mercado, Monina Allarey, ed. People Power. Manila: The James B. Reuter S.J. Foundation, 1986.

McQuail, Denis. *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications Inc., 1984.

Ofeneo, Rosalinda Pineda. *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*. Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: Cacho Hermanos Inc., 1984.

Sacerdoti, Guy and Neumann, Lin. *Bayan Kol*. Philippines: Veritas Publications & Communications Foundation Inc., 1986.

Schmuhl, Robert. *The Responsibilities of Journalism*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.

Severin, Werner J. and Tankard, James W. Jr. *Communication Theories*. New York: Hastings House Publishers, 1979.

Wolsley, Roland Edgar. *Understanding Magazines*. Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State University Press, 1965.

Wood, James Playsted. *Magazines in the United States*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956.

II. PERIODICALS

Hernandez, Doreen. "Women in Media in the Philippines: From Stereotype to Liberation." *Media Asia* Vol. 14 No. 4 (1987).

Mt. & Ms. Special Edition. 2 September 1983 and 6 September 1983.

Mt. & Ms. for Justice and Reconciliation. 9 September 1983 to 7 September 1984.

Mt. & Ms. Special Edition. 14 September 1984 to 23 July 1987.

III. INTERVIEWS

Apostol, Eugenia D. Chairman of the Board, *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 20 January 1992. (Recorded on cassette tape.)

Hernandez, Doreen. Chairperson, Communications Department, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 4 December 1991. (Recorded on cassette tape.)

Magasanoc, Letty Jimenez, Editor-in-Chief of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, Malate, Manila, 10 December 1991. (Recorded on cassette tape.)

Stam, Paulyn P. Commissioner on Human Rights, Loyola Heights, Quezon City, 29 November 1991. (Recorded on cassette tape.)

Torreallas, Domini, columnist of *The Philippine Star*, Pasig, Metro Manila, 26 November 1991.