

Post Watch

They Didn't Like the Book— They'll Hate the Movie

It was bad enough when *Power, Privilege and the Post*, Carol Felsenthal's stinging portrait of Katharine Graham and her family, was favorably reviewed in the Grahams' own newspaper. Now Hollywood wants to splash Graham's life-according-to-Felsenthal on the TV screen.

The movie deal might take the heat off *Post* Book World editor **Nina King**, who had the politically treacherous job of running **Ronald Steel's** generous review in the first place. The review touched off a family backlash, beginning with daughter **Lally Weymouth's** broadside on the *Post's* op-ed page, followed by son **Don's** long letter to the *New York Times*. "Lally's diatribe didn't hurt sales," says Felsenthal, a Chicago writer. Thanks in part to Weymouth, the offending book made the *Post's* best-seller list for

two weeks. The *Post* then published Steel's review in its national edition. "From Kay's point of view," Felsenthal says, "that



Nina King

must have added insult to injury."

The real injury to the Grahams would come from the book's being turned into a miniseries or made-for-TV movie, along the lines of *Barbarians at the Gate*. Producers are floating **Glenn Close**, **Kate Nelligan**, and **Stockard Channing** as possibilities to play Katharine Graham. Is **Geena Davis** busy? Is this more



Lally Weymouth

of a **Shirley MacLaine** role? How about **Tom Hanks** for Don?

Lally might not make it into the TV version. "Somewhat extraneous," says Felsenthal.

The next question is whether the Grahams have enough clout in LA to try to kill the movie.

"I know Kay won't relish any publicity," Felsenthal says.

"She puts herself through such anguish."

Morticia's Style

Expectations ran high when **Susie Linfield** became the *Post's* new arts editor in January. But she'd been on the job barely four months when the newsroom started calling her "Morticia." The former magazine editor from New York seemed to go out of her way to insult editors and writers, according to sources in Style.

Could it be that some Posties can't handle a New Yorker with high standards and an abrasive personality? Under Linfield the paper's arts coverage and its Sunday Show section have improved, according to an arts editor from a rival publication, who adds, "It's making Style look bad."



Susan Linfield

Heavy Breathing

The *Post's* fifth-floor newsroom, made famous in *All the President's Men*, looks like a hazardous-waste dump. Wrecking crews are tearing through the walls to remove asbestos from the pipes and the lead left over from years of hot-metal typesetting. National has moved twice. Sports is a mess. The company finally closed the cafeteria because of the lead hazard.

The *Post* has carried at least 29 stories since 1990 mentioning the health risks of lead, but it never mentioned its own sick building. "We've gotten data only upon repeated requests," says **Keith Sinsinger**, a *Post* editor who's monitoring the situation. "To what extent it's a threat to the health of employees, we don't know."

Gibbs Wins Retirement Bowl

A person's life can't be measured in barrels of ink, but the *Post's* coverage of recent retirements gives some indication of how the local paper of record judges its subjects and its readers. The bar graph tells the tale: **Byron White**, for example, a Supreme Court justice who served for three tumultuous decades, gets two stories. **Joe Gibbs**, a football coach whose team won three Super Bowls, rates 22 stories—and a special section complete with its own slug.



Joe Gibbs
22 stories
20,875 words



Thurgood Marshall
17 stories
18,083 words



Isaac Fulwood
6 stories
4,843 words



Byron White
2 stories
2,005 words



J. Carter Brown
1 story
1,373 words



Ben Bradlee
1 story
1,311 words

We've Heard That

At **Bob Kaiser's** 50th-birthday roast, **Richard Cohen** said the managing editor came from a mixed marriage: "One of his parents went to public school, the other went to private school." . . . After basking in their self-righteous decision to boycott the White House Correspondents Dinner on May 1, executive editor **Len Downie** and **Kaiser** (commonly referred to as **LenBob**) discovered that the *Post* was getting an award and were overheard discussing whether just the two of them should attend the black-tie affair.