

BEFORE THE INTERNET

by Pat Anderson

What did I do before the Internet? I read, and actually held in my hands, newspapers, magazines, and books in order to learn what was happening and to be entertained. I had my favorites, of course. For newspapers, I read the Omaha World Herald, the Hastings Tribune, and the Clay County News which was a weekly but sometimes printed action shots of my boyfriend's athletic success. There were many magazines faithfully delivered by our rural postman, such as Nebraska Farmer, Seventeen, Look, and the Saturday Evening Post which even did a 2-page spread on a wedding in Sutton. Books came from the local libraries, or as an occasional gift. Today you most likely have a favorite TV newscaster, sports commentator, or a blogger who you seek out.

Jimmy Breslin was my favorite. He wrote a Sunday column for the New York Daily News for decades. He was a kid from the poor Irish part of Queens in New York City. Let me correct that. He was quoted as saying he was not poor but instead he was impoverished. What is the difference? He answered that the difference was the Public Library. Its walls held all the knowledge in the world and was available to him at no cost. Jimmy became an influential, although controversial, writer using his newspaper column to level the powerful and elevate the powerless. He was also a successful author. My favorite book of his is "The Gang That Couldn't Shoot Straight". A movie based on the book came out in 1971 and starred Robert De Niro. The movie poked fun at the Mafia, who retaliated with an almost fatal beating.

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