

ANCHOR MAKES SPLASH ON WEB

Peter Jennings on the Net, TV, and Peter Jennings

By Sean P. Egen

Peter Jennings dislikes the moniker *celebrity*. He prefers *journalist*. How about *icon*? For over 35 years he's been a staple on our television screens in the roles of reporter, foreign correspondent, and anchor of *ABC World News Tonight*. He's covered many of the events that have shaped and defined history. The man has just about seen it all—including the explosion of the Internet, which he's clearly embraced. Jennings sends out a daily email offering insight into the creation of each evening's broadcast. You can sign up for it at *ABCNews.com* (www.abcnews.com).

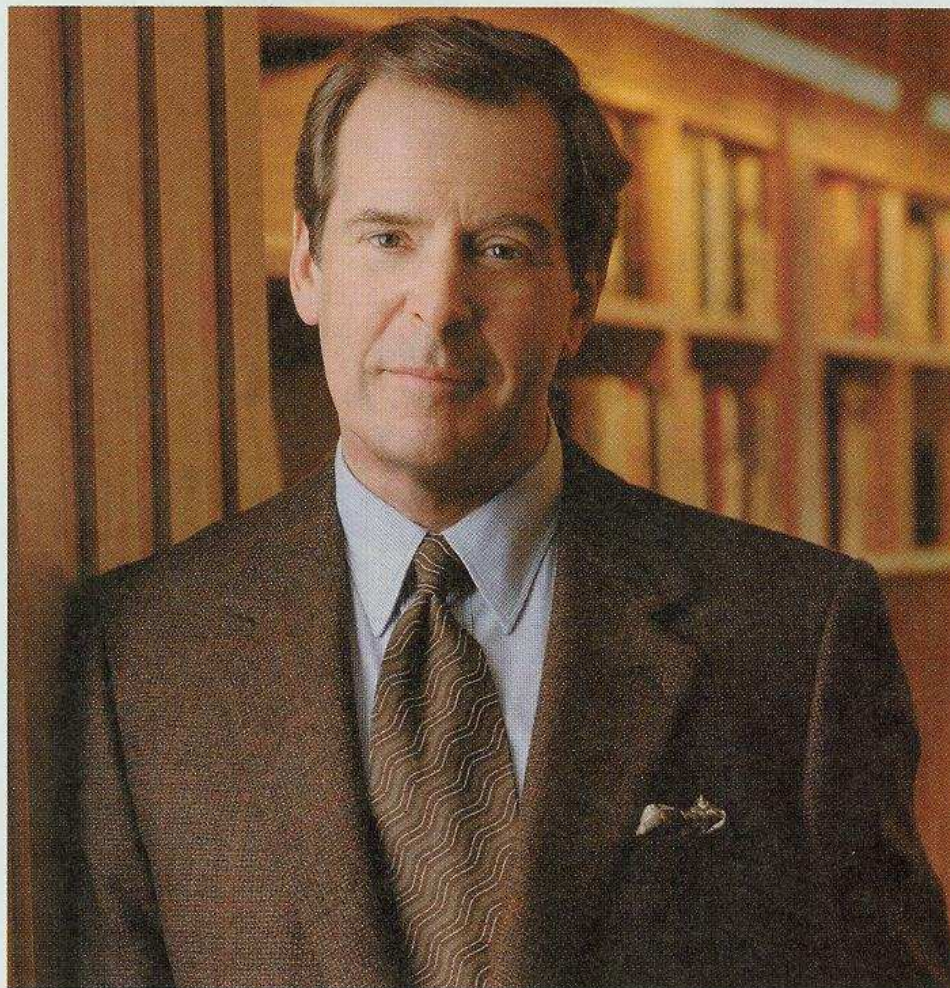
We caught up with him between broadcasts at ABC News headquarters in New York.

bLink: You've called the Internet "the new frontier of journalism." What does the Internet do better or worse than broadcast journalism?

PJ: I don't think it's necessarily better or worse. First of all, it's very democratic. It's still pretty much uncharted territory in some respects, in that journalism on the Internet can be freelance, and often is. Broadcast networks, for the most part, continue to do what we've always done. Though clearly we're supplemented by the fact that we use the Internet a great deal for information and, in some cases, to reach another audience.

bLink: Is the Internet *supplementing* or replacing news broadcasts?

PJ: I think it certainly does supplement our nightly broadcast in that very often we do things on the evening news where we can then turn people towards *ABCNews.com*, or *Beliefnet.com* (www.beliefnet.com) on matters religious. To enhance knowledge, understanding, context—all those things. *ABCNews.com* contributes knowledge to the larger ABC News organization.



bLink: Has the Internet changed the way broadcast news is reported?

PJ: It's broadened the way it's reported. ABC News reporters, editors, anchors, the whole shebang, are all required, and eager to make an additional contribution to *ABCNews.com*. And *ABCNews.com* is an additional reporting resource for us. But it hasn't made any difference to the way we do our basic jobs.

bLink: What's the goal of your daily email at *ABCNews.com*?

PJ: What we accomplish is, we tell a small, but growing audience what we're doing on the news that night. Second, how, why, and what we're doing on the news that

night. And third, and very important for me, it gives me a measure of interactivity with either the television or the Internet audience on subjects we're reporting on.

bLink: You're both anchor *and* managing editor. Any concerns over becoming too personally biased on certain stories?

PJ: I'm less concerned about objectivity than I am about fairness. Because to suggest that journalists can be truly objective is a real challenge—because we're all very different human beings. We all bring different experiences to the broadcast. And no matter how objective or fair we think we're being on a given subject, there's always someone out

continued on page 47 ►



Weird Web

BOB'S WORLD OF LIBERACE

www.bobsliberace.com

He's been gone for over a decade now, but Liberace's spirit lives on at *Bob's World of Liberace*. *Bob's* is packed with glittery gems like this—Did you know that the two *Batman* episodes in which Liberace appeared in the 1960s were the highest-rated episodes of all time? Revisit Lee's illustrious four-decade career. Just click on the decade of interest for detailed highlights. You can even take an online tour of one of his seven "fabulous" homes.

USELESSKNOWLEDGE.COM

www.uselessknowledge.com

Uselessknowledge.com boasts over 25,000 trivia facts, quotes, quizzes, and other ephemera to keep you amused. Bone up on information such as how a booger is formed, or what to call a baby kangaroo.

BUNNY SURVIVAL TESTS

www.keypad.org/bunnies/index.html

The name is scary, but don't worry, these bunnies are marshmallow. The purpose here is to determine specific weaknesses and/or strengths possessed by marshmallow bunnies. Bunnies of all colors are subjected to a variety of torturous tests such as exposure to laser beams, intense heat, even open flames.

FIND A GRAVE

www.findagrave.com

So, you're having dinner with your know-it-all friend and you get to talking about where Jim Morrison is buried. You say Paris, he says L.A. Where do you go to put the controversy to rest? *Find a Grave*, that's where. Just punch in Jim's name and serve your overbearing friend a healthy dose of crow for dessert. Search by name, location, date of birth, and more. And the subject of your search doesn't have to be famous. This site has over 2.5 million non-famous grave records at your disposal, too. ☺

Liberace: Bob's World

PETER JENNINGS

continued from page 29

there who has an utterly different opinion, and therefore thinks you are biased...You can see by what goes on in the broadcast what my biases are. I'm very biased towards international news, for example.

bLink: Is that a result of being Canadian?

PJ: I think having grown up somewhere else, I clearly have a different perspective on power than had I grown up in the States. It also clearly comes from having been a foreign correspondent. But it doesn't take a genius, when you think about it, to realize that America is as interconnected in an increasingly borderless world as in any time in history.

bLink: What makes a story newsworthy?

PJ: First of all, it has to be something that's going to surprise the audience a little bit. My wife and I—my wife's a journalist, as well—always talk about trying to give the audience something they didn't think they wanted to know or needed to know. You can get the conventional news of the day in a variety of different places. So I think what we try to do here on occasion is to get outside the box—somewhat off the beaten track.

bLink: When you finally hang it up, how will you spend your time?

PJ: Is that a suggestion or a question?

bLink: Question.

PJ: I don't think you necessarily ever hang it up. I may not do the evening news forever—because it's a very tough job. I think people don't realize it's a tough job. In some ways, the toughest one I've ever had.

bLink: Since it is such a tough job, do you share a sense of camaraderie with Dan Rather and Tom Brokaw?

PJ: Oh sure. I see them off and on all the time. Dan's got a new book out—I'm going to a party for him tonight.

bLink: Ever taunt them when you nail a story they missed?

PJ: No, but we all know when we beat each other. (Laughs) ☺

WHEN YOU NEED EMAIL LIKE YOU NEED OXYGEN.



STAY IN TOUCH WITH EARTHLINK WIRELESS EMAIL

If access to email has come to mean survival for you, look no further than EarthLink Wireless Email featuring BlackBerry. EarthLink Wireless Email allows you to send and receive an unlimited amount of email when you're on the go. Set it up to access either your work or home email address. It's always on. Always connected. The BlackBerry Handhelds are also equipped with organizational tools, such as a calendar, address book and task list, that sync with your computer. All for the flat rate of \$39.95 per month. Call 1-888-304-2773 or visit earthlink.net/blackberry for details, if you can hold your breath and ignore your email long enough to do so, that is.

GET LINKED™

 EarthLink®

©2001 EarthLink, Inc. All rights reserved.