

the suburbs the police would patrol my house more often. I've been threatened by drug dealers, and I did a lot of stories on the mob...I just never thought they'd come after you.

CWM You really play that down, but for the normal person...

PK Well, the reality of it is we're not in Iraq. That would be more devastating like Woodward [from ABC] and Dave [Bloom], from NBC who died in the tank. With those kinds of things, if you stopped and put a lot of thought into what you did, you'd stop doing it and I never did.

CWM What about criminal profiles – is there any difference for example that the mob is a better criminal to deal with than a gang member?

PK The amount of money involved in gangs and drugs today makes what the mob did miniscule in terms of bootlegging and prostitution, not that they didn't make a lot of money. But the one thing about the mob is they just don't go by and shoot innocent kids. If they had a score to settle they did their own thing – not that I condone that, and they didn't have the weapons they have today. The amount of money involved in drugs in this city is incomprehensible. One corner knocks off millions of dollars a year in drug sales. Just one corner and that's why there's turf wars for this stuff because of the money involved today, it's what drives them. This is what makes it sad for young kids because they see the money and the cars but not that they're dead when they're 25 or in prison. They see the few years of glory instead of reading Shakespeare. It's a whole different world.

CWM What was your favorite story, if you can think of it that way, you did as an investigative reporter?

PK One of my first, "T's and Blues" was an incredible story. It started on a phone call a couple of days before Christmas in 1977 and I did 137 stories on it and a documentary. Ultimately the Coroner's Office changed the cause of death on 37 people to overdose. 'T's and Blues' had to do with drugs that were being handed out in medical clinics. We closed 6 medical clinics and the licenses of thirty some doctors were pulled.

CWM What exactly are 'T's and Blues'?

PK Talwin, is a pain killer and the other one was an antihistamine, Pyribenzamine. And what people would do is mix them together and shoot them like heroine and it would crystallize their veins and slowly cut off all the blood flow in their arms and legs. The lady who called me, I never met her, was in a hospital bed dying, and she told me where these clinics were. We went to the clinics and started shooting video and saw what she said was true.

CWM So the clinics were handing this stuff out, well knowing?

PK Sure. Let me ask you a question: is it 'sex, ego or greed'? You're in a medical clinic and everybody that walks in that door has the same ailment: a back ache and a runny nose and they want 'T's and Blues', and that's what the doctors prescribed, every one of them. We saved the government tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars in Medicaid fraud, by busting that thing wide open.

CWM So it was prescription drugs – but wouldn't the volume being handed out have tipped off the pharmacists at some of the local stores?

PK The pharmacies were right in the Medicaid offices – they'd write the prescriptions and they'd walk across the hall and pick it right up.

CWM So if it wasn't for this woman who called you...

PK It probably would have broken, but not the way it did. We made big splashes on TV with it. It was a major story and the police started



"The truth is always greater than fiction."

making raids and when the money came up to be millions of dollars in fraud for just two pill prescriptions...

CWM Is it safe to say that you got far more gratification out of doing something like that as opposed to something like a crooked politician story?

PK When you give a voice to the voiceless, that's a wonderful thing. And you do get more gratification. A crooked politician is just greedy and egotistical. But I do have to say, that in the business we're in now, I get a tremendous amount of satisfaction out of knowing that what we do, helps train people to become better at their jobs and better in their neighborhoods. It's a different kind of satisfaction that I draw from in that we believe in what we do and contribute to and educate society.

CWM Is there any one case you wish you had covered but didn't?

PK Pedophile Priests. I was doing that when I decided to leave reporting, for other reasons. I had boxes and boxes of information on pedophile priests from around the country if not, the world. That is the only regret that I have about leaving reporting, that I didn't do that story. Because, as I told reporters after I left, 'you mark my words, the thing that is going to destroy the Catholic Church is going to be sex scandals in the church and most of them are going to be pedophiles'.

CWM So, you knew.

PK That's the only regret – the only regret – and I'm a Catholic and am deeply bothered by that issue. You asked this question and you didn't think I'd have an answer, did you?

CWM No, you blew us away. Thank you for being so honest. Did anybody listen to you when you left? Take what you said to heart?

PK This was years ago, when it was almost taboo to talk about stuff like this.

CWM What year was it?

PK '91.

CWM '91 is not that long ago.

PK No, it's not. The pedophile

stuff has broken only in the last few years. There were other people working on it too. For me, I had heard rumbles about that sort of stuff for a long time.

CWM What proof, if you could call it proof, did you have back then?

PK I had contact with a lot of people in Boston who were victimized. I knew that there was a data base starting, and I knew that if it could happen in Boston, it certainly happened in Chicago.

CWM Could that have been perhaps the one and only story that you would have had personal conflict with?

PK I would have no personal conflict with it – I have no use for garbage that would take advantage of children. I have absolutely no feeling for a pedophile priest that took advantage of an alter boy or a little girl. I have no sympathy for that kind of person. I would relish the fact that I could expose it and perhaps stop them from molesting another child. That's my regret.

CWM Had you not left the business at that time to start your production company, do you think you could have broken that story then years earlier?

PK Without a doubt. And if I would have done that I probably would still be a reporter today. I was just tired out, and I had the perfect partner and that combination doesn't come along very often.

CWM Did you hand those files over to any body?

PK I told a number of people about the issue – it just went in one ear and out the other. It's kind of like you get wrapped up in your own stories. And another very dear friend who probably would have taken up the investigation died, Paul Hogan. That kind of brought a lot of stuff to an end with me to even think of reporting. Paul was a very, very dear friend, an incredible reporter, a good man. And when he died, a lot of life went out of some reporters, like me.

CWM That's quite a tribute.

PK He was quite a guy. I have his picture on my wall to this day.

CWM Do you think there is any other subject matter that the press still holds back on today?

PK I don't know. To me, somebody's sex life, whether they're married, having an affair, are gay or whatever their sexual preference is – is nobody's business until, if they're a politician for example, they use state or government money to finance their romances, then it becomes our business. Then it becomes the business that the public has a right to know. There are sacred things that aren't reportable in certain instances, but again, it's not because I'm so smart, it's because they're so stupid and they do things to set off a series of events that cause people to look at them.

CWM In general, what are your feelings about the news media today, especially the television news media, in such a crunch to compete?

PK The pendulum has swung. You look at the stations back when I was in television and there were hundreds and hundreds of people working and the numbers are like a third of that today. Part of it is technology with robotics and other things, but there are very few reporters left today that have the freedom to do what I did. I was able to go anywhere at any time and basically do anything that we wanted to do as the investigative unit. You don't see a lot of that today, you don't see a lot of long term investigations. Not that there aren't any, but you don't see a lot – you see these hit and miss stories that come and go, that are easy to produce because you can get them in and get them out. The amount of story count that we did at Channel 5 as an investigative unit was absolutely stunning. When I asked for some video to put together for winning that Silver Circle award, the number of stories we did was unbelievable.

CWM And how many was that?

PK Oh, I don't know...thousands. And that included long term things. Our philosophy was that you had to be on the air to get the big tips and then you worked the stories and that's why you had teams of people who did things. There were stories where someone would do all the leg work and I'd do the interviews and stories where we'd all do the work, come together hash it out and then write it, while other stories were being worked.

CWM We know the one thing you regret, what is the one thing you would still love to do?

PK Like I said, this is like a family run business and I just want to be able to take care of my family. It's very important to me that we continue the work we want to do and move in a positive direction and build more clients and keep people happy.

CWM Do you think you'll ever retire?

PK Oh...when my hair falls out and my teeth fall out, I guess. As so many people have said to me, 'Karl, you know you have to be in the action.'

■CWM

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