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CASE STUDY ANALYSIS: Catching the media red-handed in subterfuge (Danielle Braff, Jan Parr, & Crain's Chicago Business)

November 11, 2014 at 5:00am



[Pictured: Danielle Braff (freelancer who worked for Crain's Chicago Business in 2014), holding reptile]

This Case Study is a look at how the "news media" or "local media" (depending on the term you use) was caught red-handed trying to engage in public relations assistance for the Orland Park Public Library. Whenever anyone conservative asks "Why doesn't the local media help with this story?" or "Why doesn't the news media report on what is going on in that library?" we will refer

people in the future to this Case Study to show you exactly how the "news media" and "local media" operate these days...even at a once-respected publication like Crain's Chicago Business.

We've argued from the beginning of this investigation into the child porn and other sex crimes that were committed (and covered up!) at the OPPL that the people who work in the "local media" are ideologically driven and have an innate tendency to want to help the Library and ignore the dangers to children that have been found there. What's happening is this: on either a personal/emotional level or a political one, the men and women who work at newspapers, in TV, or in other medium under the "local media" umbrella have actively tried to assist the Orland Park Public Library with damage control...and this has involved these reporters most often leaving out the fact that the Library's own internal incident reports show that child porn was accessed there on 3/8/11 and that police were not called (and were never, in fact, notified of this fact until we discovered the incident report in a FOIA investigation and we took it to the police ourselves in October 2013).

It took until 8/18/14 for Orland Park Public Library Trustee Diane Jennings to finally admit that child porn had been accessed, the police were not called, and the incident had been improperly covered

up: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bNhrQ2LPWc&list=UU9XP_Ax4_vTi1IqSSRD9ORQ

Despite this admission from Jennings (caught on film and posted to YouTube!), the "news media" to this day continues to ignore the fact that child porn was accessed at the Orland Park Public Library on 3/8/11 and its Director Mary Weimar chose purposefully not to call the police and for two years (until we uncovered the report in October 2013) this fact was covered up and secreted away. You'd think that reporters would be falling all over themselves to write about a scandal like this...but reporters today don't aspire to be Woodward & Bernstein and don't have any interest in exposing the wrongdoing in government.

This story is one of whistleblowers and watchdogs uncovering serious wrongdoing in an Illinois public library...but the reporters keep wanting to write the story as if it is "religious homeschooling mom doesn't like people looking at boobies and heroic local library tries to stop her". All the reporters want the whistleblower/watchdog to be the villain in their articles while ignoring the fact that a public body has been engaged in a year-long campaign to defame, discredit, damage, and destroy its critics.



ORLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

A Dangerous Place for Children

No reporter would approach this story with the intent to report on the fact that Orland Park Public Library Director Mary Weimar (a highly paid public employee who currently costs taxpayers \$187,000/year in compensation package) has repeatedly failed to call the police in multiple instances through the years when incidents like child porn being accessed, men openly masturbating in the library, men sexually accosting children and women in the library, and employees complaining about the continued sexually charged atmosphere in the Library were brought to her attention. Instead of doing something about these problems, Weimar covered them up and in the case of the employees told women they had to quit their jobs if they did not like what was going on in that building and they didn't feel comfortable or safe in their work environments. Weimar's conduct violates the Equal Employment Opportunity Act and is especially troublesome in the fact that someone in her position was required to actually report to federal authorities the accessing of child porn that was documented by library staff on 3/8/11. Weimar covered all of this up, crushed staff that complained about these ongoing problems, and then purposefully engaged in a pattern of "attack the messenger" on whistleblowers and

watchdogs who confronted the OPPL with these incident reports and Weimar's failings as Director. Instead of ever coming clean and admitting mistakes and taking remedial actions to make the Library a safe place for children, Weimar chose to engage in a "crisis management strategy" that very often involved dispatching the Library's highly-paid Public Relations spokesman, Bridget Bittman, to lie to the media in an effort to discredit the Library's critics and deflect attention from the long history of management failures in Weimar's directorship.

APPENDIX K Incident Report Form

Date: March 9, 2011 Time: 4:30 pm

PIC: [Redacted]

Type of Incident
 Disturbance Vandalism/Damage
 Other (Explain): patron accused of viewing child pornography at public internet station.

Name of Library User (if known): [Redacted]

Address: [Redacted]

Telephone: [Redacted]

Signature of Library User: _____

If not known, please provide a general description of the incident including gender, approximate age, clothing worn, hair, eye color, height, weight, build, etc.

Description of Incident: Patron [Redacted] came to reference desk to report that [Redacted] was viewing child pornography at the public internet station #1. Said another woman and her child also witnessed the same, but they left the but Patron was leary of leaving her personal information with me. She did not want [Redacted] to know she reported him.

CHILD PORN ACCESSED IN THE ORLAND PARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

BUT LIBRARY STAFF DIDN'T CALL THE COPS!

Action taken by staff member: Called computer help desk and spoke to Deb [Redacted] and N [Redacted]. They gave me patron information. I asked them to keep an eye on his screen. [Redacted] and [Redacted] saw nothing but Medicare sites on his screen. They also commented that if one was to look at porn, why would they do so at the most easily seen screen (station #1)? Patron [Redacted] said that he was very quick at switching windows. [Redacted] left in about 7:30 pm.

Was the Police Department notified: YES NO

If yes, the Officer's name: _____

Did the Fire District respond? YES NO

THREE WITNESSES SAW IT HAPPEN!



David L Variotta Registered Sex Offender



David L Variotta Registration Details

Last Known Address: 7805 157 ST Apt. 25, ORLAND PARK, IL 60462

Race: U
 Sex: Male
 Eyes: Not Reported
 Height: 57



David L Variotta registered sex offender

[VIEW CRIMINAL RECORD](#)

Offense or Statute

Offense/Statute: AGGRAVATED CRIMINAL SEX ABUSE/VICTIM 13-16

Offense Date:

Offense/Statute: VIOLATE SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION

Map of Nearby Registered Sex Offenders



Note: The Orland Park Public Library is not able to research patron's history once the computers have been powered down at the end of the evening. The software Drive Shield erases all history so the library could not further investigate the incident and come to a conclusive decision. The staff has been re-reminded that the police are to be called immediately if any allegation of illegal websites is observed.

POLICE SAY THAT MARY WEIMAR KNOWS THIS MAN COMES TO THE OPPL DAILY BUT WEIMAR DOES NOTHING ABOUT IT!



Reporters such as Taylor Anderson (The Tribune), Donna Vickroy (The SouthTownStar), Bill Jones (The Orland Park Prairie), Dennis Sullivan (The Tribune), Lauren Zumbach (The Tribune), and Ben Feldheim (The Orland Park Patch) have all worked hard, to varying degrees, to write this story in a way where the Library would be cast in the best light possible and the dangers to children would be downplayed. Most of them just printed Bittman's talking points without questioning her, which allowed the OPPL to malign and attack its critics and change the story so that instead of reporting on the sex crimes that occurred and were covered up the reporters would instead write in vague, nebulous terms about how "libraries are for the first amendment" and anyone who criticizes a library "wants to censor things". As ridiculous as this sounds, it's a very effective tool that the American Library Association counts on. Both Weimar and Bittman were the featured speakers at a training event hosted by the ALA on 12/17/13 at the RAILS Burr Ridge videoconference center where they taught about 100 other public library employees that they should always count on the media to instinctively want to help a library and side with it against critics, no matter what bad thing happened at the library.

The ALA maintains that because people had good experiences in libraries as children and have fond memories of nice librarians in the past that people are programmed socially to want to side with a library and believe without question anything the library says to the media. The ALA counts on this and actively encourages libraries to lie to the media in an effort to defame, discredit, damage, and destroy anyone who, in particular, shines a spotlight on the fact that sexual activity is a big problem in ALA-controlled libraries. Library staff do not call the police as they should when men masturbate or are otherwise sexually arousing themselves in the library, most usually at the computers. This is deliberate on the part of the library staff, because if they called the police then officers would respond, arrests would be made, and the local police blotter would report to the community that sex crimes were happening with regularity at the local library (where parents are told by library staff that it is safe to drop off their children for various events and programs).



This has been a growing and consistent problem since the 1990s when computers were first introduced into libraries and since a woman named Judith Krug at the ALA began instructing libraries that it was not their duty to protect children. Krug is dead now, but her ghost haunts American libraries to this day. She insisted that instead of making the safety of children the

number one priority in libraries that they should make it their mission to interfere on the side of the masturbators and actively work to thwart the police when they try to investigate or arrest men who engage in sexual activity in public libraries. Krug's mindset seemed to be locked into the Baby Boomers' twisted belief that society needs to keep pushing the envelop sexually and that no sexual conduct is ever inappropriate, even when done in public and even when children are exposed to sexual activity by strangers in public at young ages.

In short, what's happening here is that there exists in library management an entire generation of radicals with the mindset of Judith Krug/Mary Weimar who believe that it is their sworn duty to hide sex crimes that occur in the library and that they never call the police when lewd behavior occurs in their buildings (because they see calling the police when child porn is being accessed or men are masturbating or sexually accosting women in a library as a betrayal of their ideological mission to be some kind of barrier between the laws of the outside world and what's happening inside the library). The library staff see themselves and their libraries as "transformation agents" with a goal of separating children from their parents and changing America by changing the children in their local communities.

There has evolved this strange belief on the part of library directors like Mary Weimar that the laws of the outside world (including those barring lewd behavior and illegal things like child pornography) stop at the library's doors and instead the library can create its own laws and "patron behavior policies" as if the library was a Vatican-like sovereign state and the library director is its supreme ruler. Library directors of Weimar's Baby Boomer generation see their libraries as little embassies of the ideological Left, where they feel they can decide to not call the police when sexual activity is happening in the library because doing that would be bad public relations for the library and would also undermine the Left's goal of sexualizing children early and normalizing all forms of sexual activity out in the open and in public (as part of the Left's bigger goals for the transformation and degradation of American culture and familial values).

It should come as no surprise to you that the main funder of the American Library Association is none other than George Soros, whose stated goal is the destruction of the United States as we know it.

Reporters are almost all ideologically driven and work in an office culture where peer pressure and editorial mandate direct them to take an angle in everything they write that is beneficial to the Left's larger aims and story arcs. A big part of that is never opposing any of the goals that Soros has on his agenda or interfering in any way with the work that any of the Soros tentacles (like the ALA) are engaged in.

Most reporters, however, have strong enough preservation instincts to attempt to hide their bias as much as possible from the public at large...so they can plausibly claim they are trying to be as "fair" as possible while subtly skewing everything they write to benefit the Left. They are never fair or accurate, however, and what they write is all skewed by agendas. These reporters do not want to be seen as blatant propagandists for the Left (even though that is what they are), so a lot of what they do is not always easy for a layman to immediately detect. It's rare to find a reporter so inept that his or her bias is on full unapologetic display and the reporter gets caught openly acting in an unprofessional and disreputable way that proves just how complicit the "local media" is with the Left's ideological aims.

That, however, is exactly what happened in October 2014 when Danielle Braff (a reporter for Crain's Chicago Business) and Jan Parr (an Editor for Crain's) were caught engaging in subterfuge and deceit in an attempt to write a hit piece attacking Megan Fox for exposing the ongoing wrongdoing at the Orland Park Public Library. What happened with this failed hit piece is now a classic case study of media bias and subterfuge. It should also be a cautionary tale for other reporters in how Braff and Parr were exposed, how Crain Communications was humiliated by their behavior, and why this is such an important expose (because of the light it sheds on the operations and machinations of the media in general).

Here is what happened and how we uncovered it using FOIA requests and old-fashioned amateur detective work:

* On 11/10/14, Maria Meachum (the Director of the Wilmington Public Library) produced via email a written statement that blew this investigation into Braff and Parr's behavior wide open. This was the smoking gun we had been waiting for. In response to a FOIA request submitted to her library, Meachum admitted that she had telephoned the Orland Park Public Library on or about 10/14/14 and left a cryptic message for the OPPL staff in which she told the OPPL that she had someone who could help them but she didn't want to leave too much information in the voicemail, for the OPPL's "protection". We obtained this voicemail left by Meachum to the OPPL in documents we were given by the OPPL responsive to a FOIA request. The voicemail that Meachum left is

here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mCufDiCfFdE&list=UU9XP_Ax4_vTi1IqSSRD9ORQ It was her bizarre, cloak-and-dagger insistence that she was saying very little in the voicemail for "their own protection" that made us curious as to what Meachum was up to and who she was.

* There is no way possible to overstate the importance of FOIA-ing public bodies for their voicemails. Many public employees think they can evade FOIA production by doing everything over voicemail; they do not realize that the Freedom of Information Act requires them to turn over their voicemail recordings. Thus, we were able to catch a lot of duplicity, deceit, and

subterfuge in this Danielle Braff Case Study using the power of FOIA to compel voicemail production to the public. As you'll see, reporters do not like being caught or having their voicemails turned over via FOIA.

* In her statement of 11/10/14, Meachum has now owned up to leaving the message and revealed that the mystery person she was referring to in the voicemail was none other than Danielle Braff from Crain's Chicago Business, whom Meachum was encouraging the OPPL to speak with because she believed that Braff would write a good damage control story for the OPPL that would attack Megan Fox for shining a spotlight on this library. Meachum, it must be noted, is the Director of the Wilmington Public Library and held that position back in 2010 when Board President Michael Niles was convicted of child porn possession and was sentenced to 18 months in prison in Canada. Because he would be missing more than 12 consecutive Board Meetings due to his incarceration, Meachum asked for his resignation from the Board. Under Illinois law, the only way to remove a Library Board member is if the person misses 12 consecutive Board Meetings over 12 months. The fact that he was convicted of child porn possession was not enough to remove him from the Board...and he could have even refused to resign and instead just kept his seat on the Board vacant until 12 months went by and the Library would have declared a vacancy. Maria Meachum is clearly someone who has had experience dealing with child porn related damage control and she decided to insert herself into the issues with the Orland Park Public Library by facilitating a relationship between the OPPL and Danielle Braff/Jan Parr, who sought to do similar damage control for the child porn afflicted OPPL.

* See the statement that Maria Meachum produced on 11/10/14 in response to FOIA requests and questions posed about her cryptic and mysterious message to the OPPL on or about 10/14/14:

Responsive to your e-mail of 11/6/14:

1. No such correspondence exists.
2. No such voicemails exist.
3. No such correspondence exists.
4. No such voicemails exist.
5. So such voicemails exist|

Responsive to questions raised in your email about my relationship with Danielle Braff and Jan Parr:

In late September/early October, 2014, I was approached by Jan Parr for a story about my husband's Halloween display (homemade pirate ship). With my permission, Jan gave my contact information to Danielle Braff, a writer for Crain's Chicago Business.

During my discussion with Danielle about the Halloween display, she inquired about what were mine and my husband's professions. I told Danielle I was a Library Director. Danielle asked about the issues with the Orland Park Public Library (OPPL).

Danielle called again several days later asking for a photo of our Halloween display. Since the Halloween display was posted online, I offered to friend Danielle on Facebook so she could see and use the photo for her article.

On or about 10/14/14, Danielle called and asked if I knew who she could speak with at OPPL about FOIA issues. I told Danielle I did not know the OPPL Director but would make an inquiry. I left a voice mail for the OPPL Director. Danielle was the unnamed person I was referring to on my voicemail. Within a day or two, the OPPL Director returned my call and advised that she was not at liberty to speak with reporters.

I do not have any email records or voicemail records of my discussions with Jan or Danielle.

The article written by Danielle regarding our Halloween display was published in Crain's Chicago business on 10/23/2014.

* This is the article that Danielle Braff wrote for Crain's Chicago Business on 10/23/14 about wealthy people spending a fortune on Halloween decorations; Maria Meachum and her husband "Woody" were featured in the article for a homemade pirate ship that they install every year in their small yard: <http://www.chicagobusiness.com/article/20141023/NEWS07/141029880/would-you-pay-8000-for-halloween-decorations>





Woody Meachum changed his profile picture.

November 1 at 3:18pm · 🌐



* Ideologically, Meachum wanted to help the Orland Park Public Library, which continues to be criticized under director Mary Weimar for allowing child porn to be accessed (and then covered up!) and for refusing to call the police in other instances where sex crimes were being committed in the library. The Orland Park Public Library Board has refused to discipline Mary Weimar for these safety and security failings and has instead given her a pay raise for 2015. Remember that the American Library Association teaches library employees that the "local media" wants to help them and will always take their side and can be a useful tool for a library in silencing critics. Meachum, thus, seems to have felt that Danielle Braff would do the OPPL a huge favor by attacking Megan Fox in an article for Crain's. In a larger sense, every time a whistleblower or watchdog is attacked in the "news media" for criticizing any government entity, all government bodies benefit because the net effect is a heckler's veto and chilling effect on future whistleblowers. Library directors such as Meachum -- who claims to not even know anyone at the OPPL -- want to help the media attack Megan Fox and other whistleblowers because

discouraging scrutiny of libraries benefits all library directors. These people have a vested interest in, as a group, encouraging the media to discredit, defame, damage, and destroy all critics of library mismanagement such as Megan Fox.

* Meachum's statement shows that in October 2014 two employees of Crain's Chicago Business were preparing to write a hit piece on Megan Fox, with Jan Parr signing off on this endeavor to be written by Danielle Braff. What's bizarre about all of this is that the stories Braff has filed for Crain's in the past are lifestyle pieces about Halloween pirate ship displays, new exercise trends, recipes, and other such fluff. Similarly, Parr depicts herself as a fun-loving "office clown" in postings she makes to Facebook, which regularly show her partying, enjoying alcohol, and engaging in immature behavior unexpected from someone who is an Editor at Crain's. This hit piece on Megan Fox was an unusual departure for Braff; for her to be assigned by Parr to a story where she would attempt to malign Megan Fox as "crazy" and discredit her as a critic of the OPPL's handling of sex crimes in their facility over the years was just such a stupid idea from the start. It's amazing that a Crain's Editor behaved with such poor judgment here.

* On or about 10/14/14, after speaking with Meachum about Fox and the OPPL, Danielle Braff left a voicemail message for Robin Wagner at the OPPL wanting to speak to her about the hit piece she was writing on Fox. This voicemail was obtained via FOIA production and can be found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y1cvevWndEI&list=PLILXCDHJg4yL-AlrgRxCYIIFANM-uSzIz> Braff is pretty transparent when telling the OPPL that she wants to ask them questions for her story, which clearly will be a negative one for Fox and a positive one for the OPPL.

Danielle Braff, as of this writing, is attempting to petition YouTube to remove the video of her voicemail to the OPPL. This is remarkable, considering we have now caught a reporter for Crain's Chicago Business attempting to censor an audio file that is embarrassing to her. Remember that Braff left this voicemail for a public body and that the audio file was given to us by the Orland Park Public Library in a FOIA request...but Braff petitioned YouTube on 11/06/14 to have it removed because Braff claims this somehow invades her privacy. Remember that Braff left this voicemail for the OPPL (a public body) while attempting to write a hit piece where she planned to attack Megan Fox and discredit/damage her for being a critic of this very public body. The hubris on the part of Braff is staggering here, but this is what she wrote to YouTube when asking them to remove the voicemail she left for the OPPL:

Dear Megan Fox,

This is to notify you that we have received a privacy complaint from an individual regarding your content:

Video URLs: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=y1cvevWngE>

The information reported as violating privacy is at My legal name is in the title. She took my image from my Facebook profile page without my permission and used it in the video at .04 seconds. She also did a recording of my voice without my permission and put it in the video.

Note in the above how she lies and claims she was recorded without her permission. In actuality, Braff left a voicemail for a public body that the public body then produced pursuant to FOIA request and Braff is just embarrassed that she was caught in the voicemail revealing the true intent of her story. Keep in mind that whenever operatives of the ideological Left are caught in bad or embarrassing behavior they howl like vampires doused in holy water and scratch and claw at those who cornered them. Braff has been staked by her own media tactics (which she would have loved using against Fox if the roles were reversed) and is now whining about it.

* The voicemail from Braff to the OPPL is important because on 10/14/14 (the same day that Meachum left her voicemail for the OPPL sending Braff their way and Braff left her voicemail for the OPPL saying she wanted to interview them), Braff also emailed Megan Fox and told her she wanted to write a story about Fox's "important work" that indicated to Fox that Braff intended to write a positive story about Fox's efforts to cleanup the Orland Park Public Library and make it a safe place for children again. Here's Braff's first email to Fox asking for an interview:



Note that Braff was all at once telling Fox she would be writing a proper story about her "important work" while openly discussing with the OPPL a story that would be negative towards Fox. Braff clearly misrepresented herself to Fox and violated the journalistic ethics that Crain Communications claims to espouse, where Crain's insists it does not use deceit or subterfuge to obtain stories. The Crain Family have a lot of explaining to do here.

* Fox learned long ago not to trust reporters like this and insisted that Braff ask all questions via email. Fox then responded to Braff's queries about all of the incident reports involving child porn, lewd conduct, public masturbation, and other sex crimes that have occurred at the OPPL but were largely covered up by Mary Weimar (with police not being called as they should have been). Fox also detailed to Braff the various "crisis management strategy" efforts aimed at Fox in the last year in attempts by the library to chase her away as a critic and deflect blame for the sex

crimes that Fox uncovered. This has included the Library using the Orland Park Police as a weapon and intimidation tool against Fox, which Fox explained in detail to Braff while answering several emails' worth of questions about this pattern of behavior from the Library in their "kill the messenger/crisis management mode". Braff maintained to Fox that she was interested in getting all of this "important information" out in her story and represented herself and Crains in a way that would make Fox believe that Braff had the intention of writing a fair story about these troubling issues and the OPPL's horrible behavior over the last year that now involves many attorneys and several matters of litigation (including civil rights violations related to First, Fourth, and Fourteenth Amendment infringements by the Library and the Village of Orland Park in their efforts to silence critics). This interest in the issues was proven to be a ruse on the part of Braff and is evidence of her using subterfuge to get an interview subject to speak with her when her intent was to write an entirely different kind of story on Fox. Braff in bad faith wasted Fox's time, all the while gathering information she intended to use in a negative light in her hit piece on Fox.

* Contrast the email that Braff wrote to Fox on 10/14/14 with the one that she sent to Dan Kleinman of SafeLibraries.org on 10/15/14; here, she very clearly reveals her bias and intent in writing the hit piece on Fox:

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Danielle Braff Karpinos** <danielle_braff@hotmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, October 15, 2014
Subject: Media question - Crain's Chicago Business
To: "SafeLibraries@gmail.com" <safelibraries@gmail.com>

Hi Dan,

I'm writing an article for Crain's Chicago Business about Megan Fox's ordeal with the Orland Park library, and I was hoping you could answer a few questions as soon as possible for my story:

- I understand that she's cost the library more than \$100,000 in bills. What can other libraries do to protect themselves from people like her?
- I understand that some of Orland Park's library personnel have quit their jobs because they feel that they were being terrorized by her. Is there anything that can be done to protect library personnel from the public?
- What's your full name and title?

Thanks,
Danielle

Danielle Braff
Freelance writer & editor
www.DanielleBraff.com
708.657.4343 (office)
312.969.8555 (cell)

* Dan Kleinman was interviewed by Braff on 10/15/14 and he recorded that interview. In that video on YouTube, you can clearly hear Danielle Braff announcing to Kleinman that her intent is to paint Megan Fox as "crazy" and write a negative story about Fox where she attacks her for "bringing down a library". This happens right at the beginning of the interview and also shows just how inept Braff really is as a reporter, because Dan Kleinman is a colleague of Fox's and has been a supporter of hers (so it was strange that Braff was saying negative things about Fox to someone who would certainly tell Fox what Braff was up to): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5yc16MvQKA&list=PLILXCDHJg4yL-AlrgRxCYIIFANM-uSzIz>

On 11/06/14, Braff petitioned YouTube to try to have this video removed as well, accusing Dan Kleinman of recording their interview illegally. Braff lied to YouTube, because as a reporter who was probably recording Kleinman during the interview (as is common), she would know that in neither New Jersey nor Illinois is it illegal to record a phone conversation you are engaged in

with a member of the media.

Dear Megan Fox,

This is to notify you that we have received a privacy complaint from an individual regarding your content:

Video URLs: <http://youtube.com/watch?v=V5yc16MyQKA>

The information reported as violating privacy is at .38 is the photo. My name is in the description. My voice is in the entire video, as she illegally recorded my phone conversation and put it on YouTube.

* We also obtained from the Orland Park Public Library, via FOIA request, an email that Braff sent to Library Assistant Director Robin Wagner on 10/16/14 in which she further makes it clear that her intent is to write a hit piece on Fox. Notice that Braff also confirms in this email that she spoke to Wagner sometime between 10/14/14 and 10/16/14 about Fox and the OPPL (as she thanks Wagner for speaking to her):

From: Danielle Braff Karpinos <danielle_braff@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 16, 2014 10:35 AM
To: rwagner@orlandparklibrary.org
Subject: Media question - Crain's Chicago Business

Hi Robin,

Thanks for speaking with me this morning! If you could answer the following questions as soon as possible, that would be great.

- How much money has the library spent dealing with this issue, and how much more are you expecting to spend?
- What are your next legal steps?
- What would the three people be doing at the library if they weren't spending 75 percent of their day answering FOIA requests?
- Can you tell me what a few of the FOIA requests have been?
- How much of a problem is pornography at the Orland Park library - and is it legal for people to view it there?
- What, if anything, can the library do to stop Megan Fox - and other people like in the future - from taking its funds and personnel?
- Has anything to this degree ever happened at the library before?

Thanks so much,
Danielle

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* On or about 10/21/14, we confronted Crain's Chicago Business Managing Editor Michael

Arndt about what Braff had done and he agreed that her behavior constituted unprofessionalism and subterfuge and he informed us that he was killing the story. He would not, however, discuss the fact that Jan Parr (a high ranking Editor at Crain's) was involved extensively in all this. Braff had insisted to Fox that the story was assigned to her by Parr. When a freelance reporter is assigned a story, it's done so by an editor who gives the reporter the angle and parameters of the story. There's no way that Braff would be working on a hit piece on Megan Fox for Crain's Chicago Business without Jan Parr being behind that hit piece. The statement provided by Maria Meachum on 11/10/14 further confirmed Parr's involvement. Michael Arndt became very brittle and prickly when confronted by all this. At one point he said, "You are not my interrogators. It is none of your business how we run our newsroom." Shortly thereafter he hung up the phone in an embarrassed huff.

*Jan Parr is an interesting character in all this because a quick review of her Facebook profile revealed some very questionable decisions on her part in how she chooses to present herself to the world. Parr is a highly paid member of the Crain's Chicago editorial team, yet she posts pictures of herself on Facebook talking about how she recently wiggled around on the floor in the bathroom at a baseball game, how she celebrates having large boxes full of alcohol arrive at her desk in the Crain's offices, and how she is known around Crains as "the office clown". There were also photos of Parr drinking alcohol and otherwise behaving like someone 30 years younger than her actual age (and light years below the expected maturity of her professional standing). Jan Parr's Facebook postings were consistent with that of an unprofessional person (who announces herself as a big fan of alcohol!) who clowns around and doesn't seem to take her job very seriously. It's no surprise that in such an environment that Parr creates (where wiggling on a bathroom floor is celebrated) that Danielle Braff would believe behaving the way she did towards Fox and this story would be condoned by Crain's.





Jan Parr

September 23 at 7:52am · Forest Park, IL · 🌐



I wish you could have been at Wrigley last night to see me wriggling on the restroom floor to get out of a bathroom stall with a jammed lock. It must have been funny. To someone.

Share

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Jeff Mayhew I got stuck in rr at UW they had to call security !!

September 23 at 9:10pm



Jan Parr Eric Pohlman can you imagine the scene and how long that would have taken???

September 23 at 9:40pm



Sally Schwartz I got stuck in a bathroom at a frat house in college, unfortunately someone had thrown up all over it & it reeked. When I tried to get out immediately after this nasty discovery I found the door completely stuck. Oh I think the doorknob even came off i... [See More](#)

September 23 at 11:21pm · 👍 1



Thomas Jolly I only hope they were playing take me out to the ball game in the back ground. I'm thinking Monte Python.

September 23 at 11:59pm



Jan Parr

September 3 · 🌐

When this is on your chair when you arrive at work, you know it's gonna be a good day.



* Keith and Rance Crain, the Crain Family members that own Crain Communications, have been kept informed about all developments on this story and have been asked for their comment. They have declined the opportunity as of this writing to make a statement or to issue an explanation for the behavior of their employees. We hope they reconsider at some point, because we'd like remarks from them about how this Case Study reflects the mission and focus of Crain's here in the year 2014 and if Danielle Braff, Jan Parr, and Michael Arndt are the future of how Crain's intends to operate or if these three are some sort of anomaly that Crain's intends to correct. We're sure many Crain's subscribers and advertisers are wondering about the same thing.

Our Leadership



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Editor-in-Chief: Automotive News,
Automotive News Europe, Autoweek,
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Plastics News, Tire Business



Rance Crain
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This case story is actually a very sad one because up until this encounter with Danielle Braff, Jan Parr, and Michael Arndt, Crain's was the last paper in Chicago that seemed to be credible. Crain's always was the serious paper, where professionals seemed to work. Business people on the Metra trains into the heart of the Loop read Crain's while uninformed yahoos read the Tribune or the Sun Times on the "E1". But, now Crain's has been revealed to be a place where Editors wiggle around on bathroom floors (proudly!) and act like "office clowns" while reporters under them engage in subterfuge and deceit to get stories and Managing Editors are prickly and brittle when confronted by the inappropriate behavior of their employees. It's a sad day when even Crain's Chicago Business is infected by the sort of ideologically driven ineptitude that clearly permeate all other "news media" publications today. If there was one print entity left that we would have been convinced could still be trusted it would have been Crain's...but this case study shows that Crain's should never be trusted. At least not until the Crain Brothers get in gear and do a housecleaning in the Chicago newsroom.

Apparently, Danielle Braff is now trying to shop this hit piece on Megan Fox to other publications such as Chicago Parent magazine...so this case study will be updated if she rears her head again (and maybe brings her reptile friend with her) and tries to take another bite at Fox. It would be remarkable if another Editor would allow Braff to behave the way that Parr and Arndt allowed her to behave at Crain's, however, so we doubt that Braff will be filing this story any time soon or that any publication will ever again trust her to behave professionally without concerted management and oversight when they review her conduct here towards Megan Fox in October and November of 2014.

Once again, this case study has proved how effective it can be to use FOIA requests to public bodies to uncover what the "news media" is doing. If ever you are involved in a story like this where a public body is lying about you to the "local media", you should FOIA that public body's emails and voicemails to see what you can find. If we had not uncovered the voicemails that Maria Meachum and Danielle Braff left for the OPPL on 10/14/14 we would have probably never discovered the full extent of what Braff was up to and would not have been able to prove the extent of the subterfuge she was engaged in.

So Crain Communications is embarrassed today because FOIA requests caught their reporter engaging in terrible behavior and a little amateur detective work put a major media company to shame, since their own employees refuse to engage in investigative reporting of their own that would uncover things like child porn coverups in public libraries (which are left to the New Media to uncover at an amateur sleuthing level). This is a sad day for journalism in the "local

media" but a great day for the public since FOIA has once again been shown to be such an amazingly useful tool.