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# The New York Times

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Opinion

## Rescuing Newspapers

NOV. 20, 2007

To the Editor:

Re “The Daily Show,” by Kevin J. Martin, the F.C.C. chairman (Op-Ed, Nov. 13):

Mr. Martin’s solution for saving newspapers, “an endangered species” — permitting them to cross-own radio or television stations — requires ignoring some inconvenient truths.

They include the finding of one of the F.C.C.’s own research studies that television stations with distant owners (for example, newspaper chain headquarters) do worse at localism than locally owned stations. Or the finding of another F.C.C. study that radio-newspaper cross-ownership “is associated with significantly less news coverage” on the radio station.

Or an analysis of the F.C.C.’s own data that show that cross-ownership leads to less total newsgathering in a market, because the other stations realize that they can’t compete on news, so they focus on sports, weather or something else, like freeway chases. Or even the underlying economic reality that (in the words of the independent Project on Excellence in Journalism) “as businesses, newspapers are strong, highly profitable and resilient.”

Martin Kaplan

Los Angeles, Nov. 13, 2007

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