

John Stackhouse, BCom'85

The Globe and Mail's Report on Business Editor,
in conversation

profile

John Stackhouse doesn't remember much of his third-year Commerce class on Thursdays at 8:30 a.m.

"I don't think I stayed awake during a single class the whole year," he says, chuckling. He apologized to his professor, attributing his drowsiness to the fact that as Editor-in-Chief of *The Queen's Journal*, he often didn't leave the paper's office until 7 a.m.

The all-nighters he pulled to produce the newspaper are among his most vivid memories of his time at *Queen's*. During his time as editor, the work of putting together the paper had yet to be computerized, so stories were done on typewriter and layout was done manually.

That antiquated production process is far from what the Report on Business Editor for *The Globe and Mail* is used to today.

John's career at *The Globe* began in 1992, when he was based in India as a development issues reporter. Since returning to Canada in 1999, he has held several editorial positions and managed to write two books, *Out of Poverty* and *Timbit Nation*, the latter a national bestseller.

Not bad for someone who says he had no idea journalism was in the cards for him.

"I had always liked writing in high school, and when I started Commerce, I was a little frustrated at the lack of writing in the program," he recalls.

He wrote for the Commerce newspaper in his first year before joining *The Journal* as a sportswriter in his second year. After graduation, he put his business education to use at a summer job at Proctor and Gamble, but opted not to turn it into a full-time career.

"I realized I didn't want to lead a corporate life," he says.



A season of working on Parliament Hill brought him to the realization that politics and government weren't for him either, but a job at the *Toronto Star* hooked him on journalism, and he hasn't looked back. The five-time National Newspaper Award winner credits his Commerce education for helping to build his journalistic abilities.

"The Commerce program was wonderful at developing and refining analytical skills," he explains. "While the content wasn't always useful to what I was doing as a journalist, the skills that you develop in stats or finance or marketing or case studies in management all turn out to be excellent training for journalism, because that's what we try to do every day: we try to figure out complex situations."

According to John, self-motivation and resourcefulness were skills he acquired at *The Journal*.

"You have to make it happen, from start to finish," he recalls. "It's quite amazing and outstanding that we were able to put together the paper without a word of advice from anyone; there were no professors or professionals guiding us. I found I had to do a lot of self-teaching. I had to get books out of the library on how to be a journalist."

Does John have any advice for new graduates?

"Chase your passion."

This is an edited excerpt from an article entitled "Post-Queen's: The future is friendly" that appeared in the April 1, 2005 issue of The Journal.