





# Mayhem to Magic

One editorial team's journey  
from conflict to collaboration

BY ADRIENNE FRANK

**I** don't remember how  
the argument started —  
but I'll never forget  
how it ended.

**S**ix years ago, our magazine team, united only in name, gathered to discuss the upcoming issue of *American*. One of the designers made a snide comment and an editor, a woman who was as polished as the pearls she sometimes wore to work, snapped. She smacked the table, shouted an expletive, and stormed out of the building.

It was like a scene out of *Real Housewives*.

She eventually returned to the office — and thank goodness, as she was a very skilled editor — but we never addressed that conflict as a group. It became a dark cloud that hovered over the editorial staff's already stormy relationship with the designers. A proverbial wall split our magazine team in two and after years of miscommunication and bruised egos, she wasn't the only one employing the occasional four-letter word.

**Before** I tell you if we turned things around (spoiler alert, we did), I want you to think about your own teams for a moment. Do any of the following toxic dynamics sound familiar?

Roles, expectations, and processes are ambiguous. The team avoids conflict entirely — or revels in drama and crises. Decisions are revisited after they've been made. There's no common purpose or excitement around the work. The same two people do all the talking — and they don't really know what they're talking about. The team is constantly putting out fires; there's no time to plan ahead, experiment, or play. Meetings, which are soul-crushing in number, are used primarily for information sharing. Good, productive workers flee. Interactions are tense and aggressive, resulting in: mistrust, tears, and absolute misery for eight hours per day.

I've been there. And I know you have, too. (Otherwise you wouldn't be reading this story.)

The good news: It can get better. With a few small tweaks, some of which you can make today, you can begin to build stronger, more agile, more creative teams.

I firmly believe that as editors, writers, designers, and art directors, we have the best job in the world: making a magazine. Since I started my own rag (*Frankly Speaking*) at the tender age of 8, this is all I've ever wanted to do. And now that I'm six years removed from that reality TV-esque blowup, I can tell you that I'm happy 90 percent of the time in my job. (The remaining 10 percent is spent complaining about the mailing list.)

Our daily misery should be limited to 30 minutes, tops. And by adopting the five mantras detailed in this story, it can be.

**By now**, you're probably wondering who, exactly, I am (answer: not a therapist) — and thus, what qualifies me to dole out the advice that follows.

As managing editor of *American* magazine, I'm one-third of the small but mighty

We redesigned the magazine internally in 2012 — a year after table smack heard 'round northwest Washington. The redesign came amidst a division-wide reorganization that saw our team shrink from six to three. It marked not only a change in the look and feel of the magazine, but also in the way we produced it.

Lots of good stuff came out of the redesign: a couple of awards, a reinvigorated staff, a streamlined editorial calendar, and more than a dozen anchor pages. Wait, *anchor pages*?

Whenever I explain the concept of anchor pages to someone (which I do a lot — I'm really passionate about them), I cite *Babybug*, a magazine for kids 3 and under. When he was younger, my son Owen received the magazine every other month. He especially enjoyed "Kim and Carrots," a six-page story about a little girl and her stuffed rabbit that always ran in the front of the magazine.

When the third issued appeared in our mailbox, Owen squealed, "Kim and Carrots!"

## Do any of the following toxic dynamics sound familiar?

team that produces American University's flagship publication. Writer Mike Unger and designer Maria Jackson round out the staff.

We publish three times a year for 130,000 alumni — 42 percent of whom live in the Washington, DC, area. We're editorially independent, for the most part. Like any alumni magazine, we have to cover some institutional news (campus construction, donor profiles), but we're able to determine the way in which we tell those stories.

That's an anchor page. It's something that readers anticipate and that leaves them satisfied, even if it's the only thing they read. Anchor pages, which appear in the same place and maintain the same look from issue-to-issue, set expectations for your readers. They're memorable; they resonate.

And from an editorial planning perspective, they can make your job a lot easier, as you're not reinventing the wheel with each issue. Pre-redesign, *American* was a mess, and that

dynamic bled into how we functioned as a team. We needed to be more thoughtful, consistent, strategic, and creative. That's the beauty of anchor pages: They provide structure and consistency, but they also give you flexibility, as they offer a place for every kind of story. Anchor pages also enable you to subtly incorporate branding initiatives and feed your digital presence, whether a website or social media feeds.

(*Whew*, I told you I'm passionate about anchor pages. Keep them in mind, as they're going to come up again as we delve into teambuilding.)

There's no question that the redesign was a turning point for our team. In the five years since, we've developed five mantras that inform both the work itself and how we work with one another. I explain these mantras on the following pages and hope you find them useful.

**Comedian** Amy Poehler once said: "As you navigate through the rest of your life, be open to collaboration. Other people's ideas are often better than your own. Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life."

My life has been changed by the wonderful creative team we've built — through blood, sweat, and more than a few tears — at *American* magazine. And I wish for you the same professional happiness. At least 90 percent of the time.

**Adrienne Frank** is editor of *American* magazine, *American University's* award-winning flagship publication. Before that, the last winning team she was a part of was her ninth grade club soccer squad. She definitely prefers scrambling to press over running suicides. Connect at [tinyurl.com/linkedin-afrank](http://tinyurl.com/linkedin-afrank).



## Mantra No. 1: Check your ego and trust your teammates

As a team, our guiding principle is “no idea is a bad idea.” (And, in fact, the best idea might not be *your* idea.) Pre-redesign, ideas were shut down quickly in brainstorming meetings, and we were often told, “We tried that before, and it didn’t work.” Or, simply, “It won’t work.” In the five years since then, we’ve nurtured a culture of respect and collaboration. We want everyone to feel safe to share even the craziest of ideas, which often snowball into something special.

Trust is at the heart of our team; that’s why we’re also comfortable enough with each other to be honest when something isn’t working. But even if we disagree — about the direction of a story or a design element — that never devolves into someone cursing, slamming, or doing laps around the building to cool off.

Another hallmark of our team, post-redesign: There are no walls between editorial and design. Previously, designers weren’t brought into the process until the stories were written. There was no collaboration, no brainstorming — an absolute missed opportunity, since on more than one occasion, Maria’s come up with a winning headline or Mike’s had a great idea for an image. The three of us are involved with most aspects of production from the beginning — we even attend all photo shoots together. Thus, everyone is equally invested in the work.



## Mantra No. 2: Challenge yourself

Creativity is vital to our profession. Often we have to tell the same stories over and over (think: commencement). It's easy to fall into the rut of "good enough." But our team thrives on pushing the limits of our creativity and telling stories in a

way we've never done before.

It's important to nurture your creativity, and we do that by looking at lots of other magazines — both commercial and alumni publications — and tearing out the stories, headlines, infographics, designs, photos, and type treatments that inspire us. Maria and I have several notebooks we look to when we're stuck and searching for the spark of an idea. We also

use the notebooks as a repository for things we want to try in the magazine.

If you've got the money in your budget, I recommend going to the bookstore as a group and spending \$100 on magazines, then gathering back at the office to talk about what you like. You can begin to seed your inspiration books — and brainstorm ideas for anchor pages — with those magazines.

I'm old-school: I will never describe myself as "a creative." ("Creative" is an adjective, dammit.) But as a writer and editor, creativity is my lifeblood. I'm a ravenous reader and am immensely curious about the world, as are Maria and Mike. Fascinating ideas abound — you just have to challenge yourself to unearth them.

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# AU'S STAKE IN... BOSTON

**FOUNDED IN 1630, BOSTON IS A CITY OF FIRSTS.** From the country's inaugural subway system (1897) to its first public library (1854), the City on the Hill has always been a hub of innovation, education, and culture.

New England's largest city—and the 24th largest in the United States—Boston is steeped in history and tradition. Home to the world's most famous tea party and America's most well-known patriots (Paul Revere and Tom Brady), Beantown has spawned both political dynasties and sports empires, with the city's four major teams boasting 36 championships between them.

More than 18 million visitors invade Boston each year, taking in such iconic sites as Boston Common, Beacon Hill, Fenway Park, and Faneuil Hall Marketplace, the seventh most popular tourist destination in the United States. The Boston Marathon, the country's oldest 26.2-mile race, is also a big draw, attracting more than 30,000 runners and 500,000 spectators each year.

What besides a taste for clam chowder and a wicked cool accent do Bostonians share? The insider's knowledge of DC, gained while studying at AU. So *Cherish* our 1,875 Boston transplants, a few of whom are profiled here.



**MATTHEW BELKIN, KOGOD/BSBA '03**  
VICE PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, LIVE NATION

For those who love to rock, Matthew Belkin salutes you. Live Nation is the largest live entertainment company in the world, and Belkin has worked for it since he was an undergraduate at AU.

"If you think of the NFL or the NBA, I would equate us almost to a league of music," he says. The company is headquartered in Beverly Hills, but Belkin has lived and worked in Boston for six years. Local music lovers know Live Nation operates the area's House of Blues, Jimmy Center, and Blue Hills Bank Pavilion venues.

As Live Nation's vice president of business development, he's charged with creating new sellable assets across the company's amphitheatres, clubs and theatres, and festivals, which include Bonaroo, Lollapalooza, and Belkin's favorite, the Electronic Daisy Carnival, a three-day event that brings the world's top DJs to Las Vegas.

When he came to AU from the Chicago suburbs, Belkin thought he wanted to be a lawyer. But after landing an internship with what is now Live Nation, he never left. He worked in Washington and New York before moving to the Boston area,

which is where his wife, Lynn, is from. (They met during a high school trip to AU, although she wound up going to, ahem, George Washington.) They now live in nearby Brookline.

"I grew up landlocked," he says. "Lake Michigan is great, but the whole idea that you can drive an hour and be on a beautiful beach and feel like you're on vacation is kind of cool."

As is working for a company that entertains millions of music fans around the world. "I love the spectacle and energy of live events and seeing how it excites people,"

### Alyssa Cohen, CAS/BA '13 OWNER, DOTTIE'S DELIGHTS

As a child, Alyssa Cohen treasured visits to her grandparents' Newton, Massachusetts, bakery. It wasn't until years later that she learned that Dorothy and Harvey Cohen doubled the chocolate and vanilla icing on their granddaughter's favorite treat—the delectable black and white cookie.

"I grew up thinking that desserts should be overwhelmingly luxurious. Sweets aren't just about taste—they're about love, memories, and an experience."

An experience of the Willy Wonka variety is exactly what Cohen strives to give visitors to her North Andover sweets shop, Dottie's Delights. Named for her beloved grandmother, the store—located about 30 miles north of Boston—features more than 1,000 sugary treats from around the globe, from artisan marshmallows (roasted on the spot) to gourmet cotton candy to Japanese konpeito sugar candy.

Sourcing the latest "it" treat, whether an organic dark chocolate quinoa bar or white chocolate mango licorice, is among Cohen's favorite duties as owner and head baker. "We're seeing a surge in artisan goods, and I love the stories behind the products. As a small business owner myself, it's important for me to support other entrepreneurs."

Cohen also serves up her own line of small-batch caramels (vanilla chai, sea salt, maple, pumpkin spice, and other scrumptious varieties) and fudge, made from grandma Dottie's famous recipe.

"Making her recipes was a way to connect with her," Cohen says of her late grandmother. "You never left her house hungry or without a bag. She wasn't part of the family—she was the family."



### BOSTON BY FOOT

"Boston is magical in the summertime," says Melissa Abrahams, Kogod/BSBA '06, a realist with *BEHOLD* leading edge. After a long, hard winter, Abrahams likes to soak up the sun by hiking the Middlesex Fells Reservation and biking the MinuteMan trail (stopping for ice cream at Bedford Farms). She also enjoys exploring new neighborhoods on foot. "Although it's a major city, it's not a large one. Boston's like a big town."

### TRAVERSING HISTORY

No trip to Beantown is complete without a stroll down the two-and-a-half-mile Freedom Trail. A lot about three hours to take in all its sites, including the USS Constitution, Paul Revere House, and the Old North Church, where the famous "one if by land, two if by sea" signal was sent. And be sure to stop for a "be-ah" at the country's oldest bar, the Bell in Hand Tavern, which poured its first brew in 1795.

## MORE LOCAL INFO

### THE GREAT ART-DOORS

While the city is known for its iconic statues, Ashley Beimes, SOC-CAS/BA '07, PR manager at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, says the Rose Kennedy Greenway "is doing great things with contemporary public art." This summer, Ai Weiwei's *Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads* joins such large-scale installations as Lawrence Weiner's 70'x76' textural mural, which greets visitors to South Station.

### SOMETHING FISHY

Bostonians love their clam chowder, fish and chips, and clams (steamed or fried). All of that and more is on the menu at the fifth annual Boston Seafood Festival, August 7, at the historic Boston Fish Pier. Events include lobster and clam bakes, fish cutting and oyster shucking contests, food demonstrations, and a blessing of the fleet.



# EAGLE TALES

**1931**

Scores of Eagles can trace their love stories to AU, but George Sixbey '30 and Helen Hope '31 were the first AU lovebirds to marry upon completion of their undergraduate degrees. The couple wed in the Women's Residence Hall on the eve of commencement. George Sixbey, who settled in the Maryland suburbs, were married for 47 years before George died in 1978.

**1943**

Two years after the United States' entry into World War II, a squad of seven would-be graduates—Ozzy, Phil, Herby, Darb, Tex, Burke, and Tommy—spent commencement in the service of Uncle Sam. According to the Eagle, the Army was going to make welders out of three of them, while "lucky Herby was chosen for a specialized course in war administration... in Fresno, California, where it is as hot as Hades."

**1963**

President John F. Kennedy delivered one of the finest orations of his short term, "A Strategy of Peace," during AU's 49th commencement, June 10. For 27 minutes, Kennedy spoke eloquently of peace—"not merely peace in our time but peace for all time"—and called for a nuclear test ban treaty. A plaque marks the spot on Reeves Field where Kennedy delivered his speech before 991 AU grads.

**1969**

For the first time, AU held separate ceremonies for all seven of its schools (including the defunct Lucy Webb Hayes School of Nursing and the College of Continuing Education). The aim, said AU president George Williams, was to "concentrate on a more personal ceremony in which the graduate is most important." Elizabeth Duncan Kooz—AU's first African American female to lead the Women's Bureau of the US Department of Labor—spoke at the all-university convocation, which kicked off the weekend festivities.

**1979**

The debut of the now-beloved bagpipers at commencement came as a complete surprise to grads. The plaid-clad pipers replaced the seemingly endless loop of "Pomp and Circumstance," which was deemed "too reminiscent of high school graduation." The Scottish tradition is now one of AU's most cherished, bagpipers lead freshmen into the convocation ceremony every August, bookending the AU student experience.

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LET'S TALK bylines and headlines. Share your Eagle stories; email [magazine@american.edu](mailto:magazine@american.edu).

# EAGLE TALES

**1925**

The student-run *American Eagle* (it would be another 40 years before the paper shortened its masthead), published its inaugural newspaper on November 20. "Getting out a first issue is no 'cinch,' as all the staff can tell you," read a front-page notice, soliciting both readers and writers. The four-page broadsheet featured hard-hitting pieces about the University Choral Society and the student body elections, and a humor column called "The Eagle Eye," which advised female dorm dwellers that "despite fits of homesickness, copious weeping may not be indulged in."

**1963**

One day after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the *Eagle* published a special edition commemorating his life and impact. Under a bold, front-page headline that read, simply, "SILENCE," the paper reported that "On campus everything halts. Cars were surrounded by tense clusters of students listening to staccato news flashes. Students were still and stunned." *Eagle* staffers delivered the paper and a condolence letter wrapped in a black ribbon to a White House guard, who gave it to Kennedy press secretary Pierre Salinger.

**1964**

The paper published the first of what would become an annual tradition: the *Bald Eagle*, an April Fools' issue packed with fabulously fabricated features about campus happenings and world affairs. In 1964, staffers wrote about a tuition cut, a new beer-friendly policy, and AU's second-place finish in a surfing tournament. Over the years, April 1 issues have been published under such pun-dertful names as the *Ego*, *Bagle*, and *Bapel* and in 1986, normally neurotic editors took the joke a step further, listing the dateline as March 32.

**1975**

The *Eagle* commemorated its 50th anniversary with a four-page special section showcasing all 24 incarnations of its masthead, a sampling of its most colorful headlines ("Permits outnumber sparking spaces," and "Trustees: They came, they saw, they left") and a roundup of the most outlandish classified ads. Twenty-six years later, the *Eagle*—boasting yet another nameplate—celebrated its diamond anniversary (albeit belatedly) by launching an online edition. Today, all 91 years of *Eagle* issues have been digitized and are available on the library website.

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## Mantra No. 3: Communicate

It sounds simple. I assure you, it's not.

It seems counterintuitive, but one of the first things we did to improve our communication as a team was to slowly and steadily do away with meetings. Pre-redesign, we had three or four meetings a week — often more if whatever we were supposed to accomplish in the course of the meeting didn't get accomplished. No one likes a meeting, especially one without a clear purpose — or a meeting where everyone's mandated to bring a story idea. (I staunchly believe that the best ideas are born organically.)

Now, instead of status meetings, we just stop by each other's desks several times a day to check in and ask for feedback or help. Our communication conveys much more

information, but it's also more to-the-point and less time-consuming than a meeting. We also do a lot of things on email or by text. In the past, we might've had an hour-long meeting to come up with a single headline. Now we hash it out across our desks, or by text if inspiration strikes outside the office.

A few other quick notes on communication: Criticism is constructive, and if we have something negative to say, we'll always start with what worked. That's just the kind thing to do. If conflict does arise — and I'd be lying if I said it didn't — it's squashed quickly. In the past, we had people on the team who would argue and swear never to work with or even speak to each other again. If there's some tension on our team, it's addressed quickly and forgotten. It never interferes with the work.



The recurring anchor page AU's Stake In highlights alumni living and working in cities other than Washington, DC. Eagle Tales features throwback photos and news tidbits from American University's long-running student newspaper, the *Eagle*.

## MY FAVORITES

A budding bibliophile at the age of 5, **Annie Lyon, CAS/MA '05**, always had her sights set on a career in the stacks.

"I knew I wanted to be a librarian since I was a little girl. I loved reading and talking about books—and scanning things was a huge draw," she laughs.

Now as a children's librarian at **DC's Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library**—the city's central branch—Lyon hosts story time for toddlers and book clubs for teens, helps middle schoolers with research reports, and leads craft projects for preschoolers to commemorate

such literary holidays as Beverly Cleary's 100th birthday (April 12) and the 90th anniversary of A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* (October 14).

Perhaps the best part of Lyon's job, however, is introducing

young readers to some of her **childhood favorites**: *Cats for Sale*, *Madeline*, and *Curious George*.

"I'll always recommend the classics to kids. From **Charlotte's Web** to **Maurice Sendak's** *Where the Wild Things Are*, children's literature is full of characters who make indelible impressions on readers."

### LYON'S FAVORITE CHILDREN'S LITERATURE CHARACTERS:

**1. ANNE SHIRLEY**  
As a kid, I had a secret wish to be like Anne Shirley, the red-headed orphan in *Anne of Green Gables*. L.M. Montgomery's Anne and gets to see married life through the eyes of a young girl who has the puffed sleeves I wear that dress with the puffed sleeves I love Anne for her grating tongue, her ability to get into and out of scrapes, and her imagination.

**2. PETE THE CAT**  
The misadventures of Pete the Cat—"It's all about the beat!"—resonates with me and my little girl. Pete is a cool, laid-back, blue cat who isn't sure how to come out until he meets a girl named George. A performance of *Charlotte's Web* sets everything in motion. George reminds readers that books are both windows and mirrors.

**3. MELISSA**  
Melissa is a girl who the world sees as a boy named George. Her story is sweet, moving, and inspiring. It's a story of a transgender child who isn't sure how to come out until she meets a girl named George. A performance of *Charlotte's Web* sets everything in motion. George reminds readers that books are both windows and mirrors.

**4. FRANCIS**  
Francis is a boy who the world sees as a girl named George. Her story is sweet, moving, and inspiring. It's a story of a transgender child who isn't sure how to come out until she meets a girl named George. A performance of *Charlotte's Web* sets everything in motion. George reminds readers that books are both windows and mirrors.

**5. DICKY TILLEMANN**  
Dickie is the oldest daughter of a poor farmer in *Anna Karenina*. She faces their mentally disabled mother. She faces one roadblock after another but refuses to give up.

### top picks | YOUR AMERICAN

**6. THE LOGAN FAMILY**  
The strength of the Logan family, shrewdness in depression-era Mississippi, the Midwest's heart, together. *Sarah Connor* by Laroché.

**7. AUGUST FULLMAN**  
R. J. Palacio's *Wonder* lives up to its name as a charming, heartwarming, and acceptance. August is the real wonder, though, bravely facing a pack of middle schoolers who aren't always kind.

**8. FRANCIS**  
Francis is a boy who the world sees as a girl named George. Her story is sweet, moving, and inspiring. It's a story of a transgender child who isn't sure how to come out until she meets a girl named George. A performance of *Charlotte's Web* sets everything in motion. George reminds readers that books are both windows and mirrors.

**9. ELOISE**  
Much of Kay Thompson's *Eloise* went over my head as a child, but the adventures of the Plaza Hotel's naughtiest resident never fail to delight. Whenever I'm in New York I stop in the hotel lobby to pay homage to Hilary Knight's painting of the perennial six-year-old.

**10. RAMONA QUINCY**  
Evening. Ramona's Ramona has irresistible charm and energy that makes it hard to read just 75 minutes after reading. She faces big months and worries about parent-teacher conferences. We would've been best friends.



### YOUR AMERICAN | must-haves



## JEFF YERXA, SIS/BA '14, AND NICOLAS CABRERA, CAS/BA '14: UNPACKED

\*Founders, Lost Sock Roasters (lostsockroasters.com)

- We saw a creative community taking shape in DC, and recognized the need for a local roaster. We took love coffee and in 2016, we launched Lost Sock out of a warehouse in Brightwood Park.
- We have an eclectic collection of music. Friends bring us mugs from their travels. Each one tells a story.
- Coffee roasts 60 percent of its aroma just 75 minutes after grinding. We grind our beans immediately.
- Precision is key in brewing and roasting coffee. We use the Hario Four Seasons for each cup to achieve the desired coffee-to-water ratio.
- The Aeropress is a great brewing tool for portability and convenience. It makes a quick and clean cup of coffee.
- We're never without coffee of a certain variety. We're a start-up and we've realized how important it is to have a good coffee.

- The filter—a small tool that's part of the roaster—represents the "art" of roasting. It helps us make beans based on what the coffee looks and smells like.
- Our roaster is equipped with thermocouples that send four different temperature readings to the laptop. We carry around the pocket planners to help organize our days and to let them

## Mantra No. 4: Embrace flexibility – and structure

Anchor pages have transformed the way we work. Even though our staff shrunk, we're doing more with less. The structure that the anchor pages provide — remember, they appear in the same place and maintain the same look and word count from issue to issue — has made us more efficient and creative, but also more agile when we need to be.

For the first time ever, we're not in firefighter mode. We're planning two issues ahead, which gives us plenty of backup options if a story falls through or we need to switch things around to achieve a better balance in the magazine. The editorial process is marked by structure and strategy — not chaos. Additionally, we have a place for every kind of story in the magazine. Previously, a piece about the two alumni who started DC's first local coffee roasting company would've ended up in the feature well. Now, thanks to anchor pages, we can ask them to "unpack" the tools of their trade or challenge them to pick their 10 favorite Washington coffee shops.

We also maintain consistent word counts for every story in the redesigned magazine, which helps writer and designer alike. (Although the writers among us — myself included — always hope to squeeze in a few more words here and there.)

## 3 MINUTES ON... Drones

**Bill Carey, SPA/MA '91**  
Senior editor, *American International News*  
Author: *Enter the Drones: The FAA and UAVs in America*

Unmanned aircraft have been around since the early 1900s, mainly for military purposes. Not long after the Wright brothers flew at Kill Devil Hills, the British and American aircraft industries became interested in unmanned aviation as a weapon of war.

**Drone** is a military term that dates back to the early 1930s, when a naval officer used it to refer to an unmanned aerial-targeting vehicle. The military later disowned it, as did the industry that builds (drones) today. But the **media love the term**. We first applied the term *Predator drone* in the *Bosnian war* in 1995, but it really came to the forefront after **September 11**. Only in the last few years have small drones become a commercial phenomenon.

A lot of it has to do with the miniaturization of electronics and battery chemistry. All of these consumer and smaller commercial drones operate on lithium polymer batteries. The advancement and evolution of GPS, software, and flight controls resulted in very **sophisticated machines** that you can even get at Best Buy.

The signature small drone that we think of these days is the **DJI Phantom**, a quadcopter manufactured by a Chinese company. Recreational small drones are good for **aerial photography**. They now have "follow me" and selfie functions, so you can set the drone to trail you as you walk. On the commercial side, they're very **big in the movie industry**. They're also used for construction, power line inspection, and by law enforcement.

**Privacy** is a big issue that hasn't been settled. There are various state laws, but no national regulation that speaks to privacy. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) does not allow you to shoot down a drone, even if it's over your property. That is a violation of federal law.

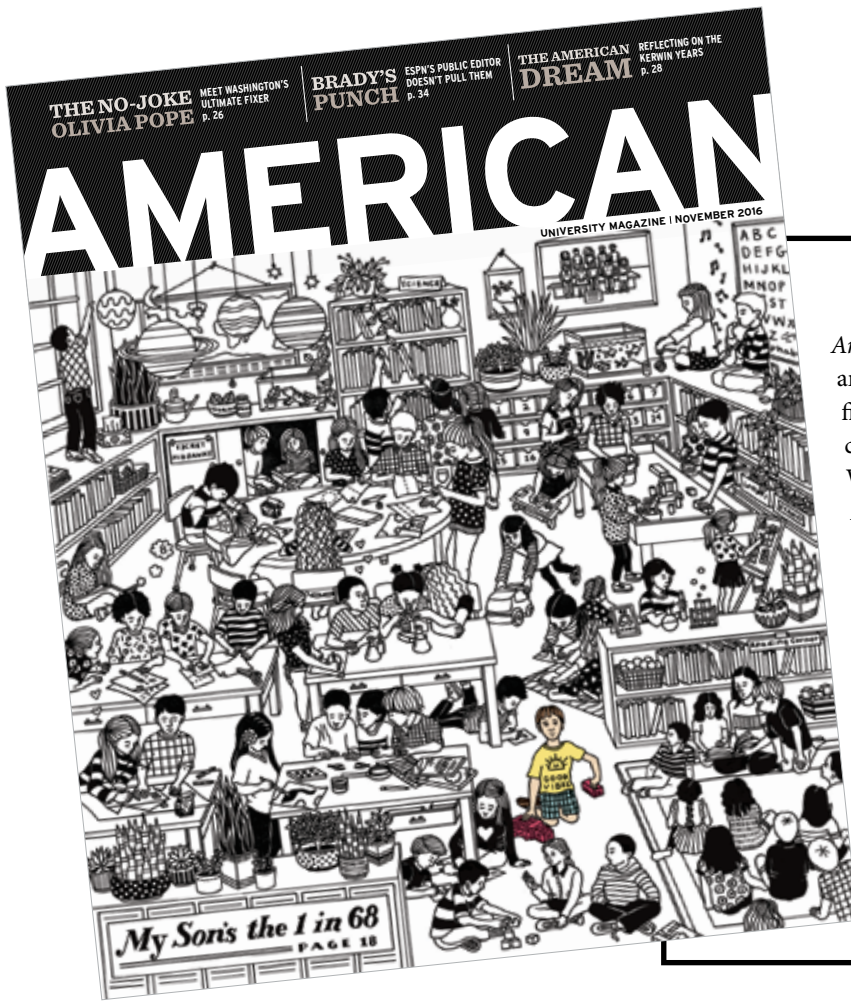
Right now, recreational drones are **not regulated** by the FAA, although you do have to register as an owner for any drone weighing over half a pound. The FAA reported in March that 770,000 drone hobbyists had signed up. It projects the small-model hobbyist UAS (unmanned aircraft system) fleet will **triple**, from an estimated 1.1 million to more than **3.5 million**, by 2021.

Last August, the FAA's **Part 107 regulation**, which pertains to the commercial operation of drones weighing from a half pound to 55 pounds, went into effect. It permits drones to fly up to **400 feet aboveground** and requires the drone to remain within your line of sight. You're not supposed to operate over people, and you're not supposed to operate at night, although waivers are available.

There's a lot of buzz around Amazon and **drone "package" delivery**. I think that's 5 to 10 years away at best, because there are so many issues associated with it. One is collision avoidance. These things have to be able to avoid midair collisions with other aircraft and avoid hitting people on the ground. That's a technology problem that's being addressed. But in terms of having packages delivered to your home, it's a ways off.

expert | 4400 MASS AVE

Above: When smartly conceived and designed, anchor pages offer unique perspectives on alumni and faculty members. Right: For Metrocentered, we gather AU alumni, faculty, and students who work and play near a stop on Washington DC's Metro system.



## Mantra No. 5: Have fun

*American* doesn't focus on the usual suspects. We've featured an interesting, eclectic mix of people in the magazine: a fighter pilot, a mystery writer, Olympic hopefuls, a plane crash survivor, cartoonists, an expert on dying languages. We've gone to the White House, the Capitol, the National Aquarium in Baltimore, and the governor's mansion in Annapolis. That keeps us energized about our work, and I truly believe that excitement shines through the pages of our magazine.

A good publication has a strong sense of place — and we take every opportunity to embrace ours. Washington, DC, is an important part of *American* and the AU experience and we relish trying a new lunch spot or going to a local brewery for happy hour, as we do after the magazine goes to press. We like to celebrate our successes and remind ourselves of what we love about our work and the city where we do it.

