

# “Killer Bunnies & Shark Attacks” finally explained

## Brooks Jackson on corporate media

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In an effort to discover why killer bunnies are so enticing to the American public, the esteemed journalist Brooks Jackson gave a lecture in the Blackstone Room on February 3. The lecture, “Killer Bunnies

and Shark Attacks: Why Reporters Travel in Herds” aimed to give one journalist’s view on how why small and inane stories can become national news in almost a split second.

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## “Killer Bunnies and Shark Attacks” exposed by Brooks Jackson, cont’d from page 1

During his extensive career in journalism, Brooks Jackson has served as a senior correspondent for CNN, an investigative reporter for the *Wall Street Journal*, and a White House Correspondent for the *Associated Press*. It was during his stint as a White House Correspondent during the Carter administration, that Jackson broke his biggest story.

While on the *Delta Queen* steamer, traveling up and down the Mississippi River on a publicity tour, Jackson first heard of a “crazed rabbit” that had come after the President. A few weeks later, when Jackson was filling in for a regular columnist and without a specific topic to cover, he wrote about the “killer bunny.” Within days, the story had spread across the world, and



photo by Terry Coey

On February 3, Brooks Jackson related why the media has become a “great national soap opera.”

fact, there were fewer shark attacks that summer than in the year before. Jackson also told about the summer of 2002 when the nation heard nothing except about how children were going missing left and right. Once again, the facts showed that the number of missing children was not extraordinarily high. In Jackson’s words, “Facts are no longer considered essential to news.”

Nowadays, what would normally be a small story on the third or fourth page of the paper is blown into major headline news.

Jackson ended the lecture by posing a brief question and answer period where he stated that the news has turned into a “gripping national soap opera,” and warned watchers to be wary of all that is broadcast in the

The event that caused these news channels to catch on when Jessica McClure (Baby Jessica) fell down a well and was trapped for two days. CNN brought the story to the general public by going live to cover the rescue operations. This one event became a benchmark of how news is covered.

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