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Editorial

A Report Card On Our Reporting

the Editor

School is out and students everywhere are trying to explain their grades to mom and dad. Figuring reporters should be obliged to report on themselves now and again, we decided to issue a Report Card. It may not come as a surprise that, on the whole, we fared well. What schoolgirl wouldn't love to toot her own horn and take home a report card of her own making?

Computer Sciences: We lucubrated with our technical manuals to install a blazing-fast PowerMac 8100/80 with CD-ROM and 20" multisync second monitor. Then we mastered a dozen quirky Quark XPress extensions, worked out an ethernet network with three PowerBooks so editors can work simultaneously on the same document on different screens and installed an 800-DPI Apple 810f tabloid printer, which also sends and receives faxes. We want an A. We deserve an A. We gave ourselves an A.

Investigative Reporting: We got a C- because we haven't had an honest to badness scandal since Rajneesh left the planet. Hard-nosed readers think we've gone soft, no longer pursuing the antics of evangelists and errant ashrams. Not true. They are behaving themselves better these days. Really. Our staff knows that Hinduism is great enough, possessed of sufficient strength, that it can sustain and benefit from critical, undestructive self-examination.

Printing Crafts: We bought our A- in this course by hiring Howard Quinn Company in San Francisco to print the paper for us on their giant web presses. We

get the A for working smarter, not harder, but they get to cash our checks. Our franchisees in London and Pretoria produce the best presswork each month, using glossy stock, while the rest of us make do with newsprint. They get an A without the minus.

Global Networking: B-. A central goal of our journal is to articulate the ancient tradition in contemporary ways, then reach all Hindus, including the 60 million Hindus outside of India. We do this through electronic mail, fax and phone. Each month our paper, assembled in Hawaii from correspondents around the world, leaves our island in digital form, on optical discs. Completed pages go by air courier to our editors in 8 countries (India, England, South Africa, USA, Malaysia, Mauritius, Singapore and the Netherlands). They print the same paper locally-7 editions in English and one each in Hindi, Malay and Dutch. Slowly we are connecting Hindus globally, slowly we are becoming the CNN and the BBC of Sanatana Dharma.

Features and Sections: A+, our highest grade. Many hours go into the color poster in the center of the paper each month. It is always educational, always graphically interesting (and challenging), always the most popular part of the paper, readers tell us. It is here we work to inform and educate young Hindus, and to share with them in non-technical ways the beauty and significance of their heritage.

Languages: B+.Our staff loves language-and that's the problem. They love it over much and get mired in meticulous metaphores, lost in labyrinthine loquacity, flummoxed by phonetically fluent phraseology. We now publish in four languages, a task that took five years to accomplish. We want to publish in many more. Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Gujarati, Marathi, Telugu, Oriya, Bengali, Russian and others are on the horizon (we are still looking for talented people to collaborate with us on these translated editions).

Advertising: B-, because our ad prices are too low and most ads are black and white. No longer. Starting this month, market-minded mystics have a color option. Our advertising is strong, since there's no better or cheaper way to reach 200,000 Hindu movers and shakers in over 100 nations than through our International MarketPlace. To provide readers more news and advertisers more muscle, starting next month we will have fewer pages of ads, more editorial pages and some other surprises for everyone.

Report Card For Hinduism Today:

Computer Science: A-; Investigative Reporting: C-; Printing Craftsmanship: A-; Global; Networking 108: B-; Languages One Oh One: B+; Features and Sections: A+; Advertising 1A: B-.