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the smartest and one of the most plugged-in people. He was laid off last December from *Av Week*, which decided *Aviation Week & Space Technology* didn't really need a space reporter, at least not one based in Cape Canaveral.

Luckily, Craig has now joined on to *Spaceflight Now* so if you're looking, he's got good stories there.

Next to go, this is *The Seattle-Post Intelligencer*. There's a joint operating agreement between the *PI* and *The Seattle Times*. It's sort of a game of chicken on which one will die. Maybe both, but I tend to doubt that. The interesting things about Seattle and environment and science coverage, is in most major cities you're lucky if you have one reporter covering environment. *Seattle-Post Intelligencer* you have a team of two very able environment reporters, and at *The Seattle Times*, you have a whole team. Both papers also have science reporters, which is unusual these days. Some of them will not be there.

So what happens when you lose people like Peter Dykstra or Bruce Ritchie? This is from "The Observatory" at *Columbia Journalism Review*, which is one of a couple places that does a good job tracking (along with Knight Science Journals) science journals. December 15th from Paul Raeburn, who is a former AP:

I switched to CNN, and found this about this new source of power made from water, a form of salt and other common materials. Poppy Harlow --

-- you've got to love that name --

-- a business correspondent for CNN cheerily recounted the good news. She quoted the inventor saying "the mixture produces a chemical reaction 200 times more powerful than gasoline," and that the discovery is "on the scale of fire."

The caveat? "Many scientists say the technology violates the basic laws of quantum physics." Harlow said these words but they didn't seem to register with her. She might as well have said the only problem, it leaves a little lint in your pockets.

Surely the timing of the story had nothing to do with CNN's recent announcement that it is eliminating its entire science and technology unit and laying off, among others, science correspondent Miles O'Brien. A Google search would have shown

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Harlow that the technology in question produced by BlackLight Power of Cranbury, New Jersey, has been strenuously debunked by, among others, Robert Park of the University of Maryland.

If you ever want to check the physics of something, Robert Park is a professional debunker, and according to Park, BlackLight was unable to get a U.S. patent for its research, and earlier this year was denied four patents in the United Kingdom. Lacking patents and independent confirmation of its finding, the company "is therefore dependent on investors with deep pockets and shallow brains."

But if you don't know science, you don't know who to turn to. So there really is a big difference in what's happened in the past year. Curtis Brainard of the Columbia Journalism Review was working on a cover story for the

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