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## New Travel Magazine Targets Young Adults

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**T**WENTYSOMETHING consumers live in a world that can't stop offering them new soft drinks, athletic shoes, and even television sitcoms.

Now they've got their own travel magazine. Launched in July, Blue is an action-adventure magazine for young travelers, a cross between National Geographic and Spin. Its premiere issue takes readers surfing in Bali, snowboarding in Alaska, and on a reindeer safari in Norway with New York author Tama Janowitz.

The magazine's young founder, Amy Schrier, published the first issue from her fourth-story walk-up in Manhattan's Greenwich Village.

Ms. Schrier says she founded Blue because readers in their twenties find existing travel magazines "distant and academic."

"Blue is not about taking a five-day Club Med cruise with meals at assigned times. Our aim is to translate the excitement of the globe to the printed page, whether it's mountain biking across Vietnam or white-water rafting in West Virginia," she says.

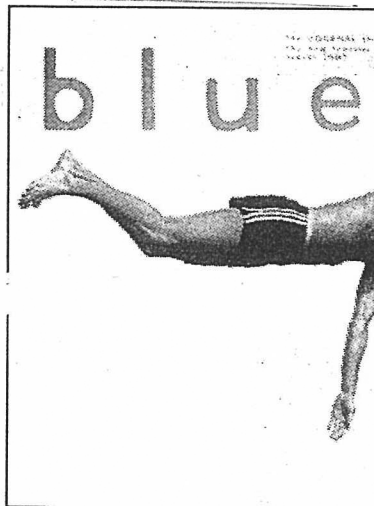
Part of Blue's identity is its social agenda. Its first issue chronicles development threats to Hawaiian beaches. Another article profiles a group whose aims include freeing Tibet from Chinese repression and challenging unfair labor practices.

One of Blue's standing features is "Urban Access," a compendium of one-, three-, and five-hour adventures in American cities such as Los Angeles, New York, Seattle, and Chicago. See Brooklyn by horseback or ride the waves breaking on a secluded beach along Lake Michigan.

The transcendent cover of the

bimonthly's first issue - a faceless youth diving into the unknown - hints at the nonlinear flow of its contents. No two pages look alike, thanks to designer David Carson, an ex-professional surfer and former designer of Raygun magazine. While striking, the magazine's zero-gravity, Mondrian layout makes its narrative tricky to follow.

Attempting to clinch a share of the outdoor/adventure market will be a leap into the unknown. The success of the two market leaders, Men's Journal and Outside, was built on a nearly all-male readership. What's bold about Blue is that it's targeting both male and female readers.



**ZANY DESIGN:** Blue is an adventure magazine for twentysomethings with its own social agenda.

"I don't have too much hope for it," says Martin Walker, president of Walker Communications, a New York-based magazine consulting firm. "Dual-audience magazines don't make it for the simple reason that there are no dual-audience advertisers."

And the competition, especially for male readers, is fierce, says Mr. Walker. Hot on the trail of male readers in their 20s are magazines like Esquire, Details, Rolling Stone, Spin, Swing, Icon, and Maxim.

Schrier rejects such concerns, countering that newsstand sales of Blue have been brisk. Besides, she argues, enjoying the great outdoors is anything but gender-specific.

"Women want to travel and go to exotic destinations just as much as men," says Schrier. True, an adventure magazine has never scored a runaway success with female readers, she agrees. But Schrier believes Blue will appeal to the bohemian adventurer within both men and women.

If Schrier is sanguine about Blue's future, it's in keeping with the youthful optimism of the magazine's 10 employees. Not one of Blue's staffers is over 30, and none of the magazine's handful of investors are over 40.

Schrier declined to disclose Blue's start-up costs, but an industry analyst estimated them at between \$5 million and \$10 million. Schrier says Blue will be profitable by its third year of publishing.

With a cover price of \$3.95 and an ambitious first printing of 100,000, Blue is available in most major US cities, at local newsstands, and at chain stores like Barnes & Noble, Tower Records, and Waldenbooks.

The premiere issue, at 133 pages, carries ads from Microsoft, Nike, BMW, Crunch Actionwear, and Timex sport watches. Blue accepts no tobacco ads and limits alcohol advertising to a maximum five pages per issue.