

RISEN MAKES EDITORS SIGN A NON- DISCLOSURE AGREEMENT

The increasingly indispensable NY Observer Off the Record reports this week that James Risen required his NYT editors to sign a non-disclosure agreement before they could see the manuscript for his book. And they didn't see the manuscript until **after** they decided to run the wiretap story.

When they decided to send the long-gestating N.S.A. piece to press in December, *Times* editors couldn't confirm whether Mr. Risen's manuscript contained the wiretapping story or not. In the end, they didn't see the book until a week before it was in bookstores. Through several months in late 2005, Mr. Risen and bureau chief Phil Taubman had clashed over whether *Times* editors would get a preview of the book's closely guarded contents, sources said. It was not until Dec. 27—11 days after the wiretapping story had run—that Mr. Risen relented and allowed Mr. Taubman to see the manuscript. Mr. Risen insisted that senior editors who viewed the pre-publication copy sign non-disclosure agreements and agree not to discuss the book's contents.

This news adds an intriguing wrinkle to speculation surrounding the publication of the NYT scoop. Was Risen withholding his manuscript in order to force the NYT into publishing the story? Did he violate NYT's ethical guidelines in order to ensure the stories he tells in *State of War* got to print?