

Vidal keen on news H'wood mainstay chats with 200 of closest friends

By SHARON SWART

It was a tight squeeze inside agent Paul Alan Smith's BevHills high-rise Monday for "An Evening With Gore Vidal." Some 200 guests, including Mace Neufeld, Roger Corman, Haskell Wexler and George Schlatter, crammed in to hear Vidal talk about what ails the world and how a few Canadians could make a difference.

Vidal was referring to Canuck documaker and TV producer Paul Jay, who's behind upstart indie news network IWT, which was raising funds that evening.

An admitted CSPAN junkie and avid historian, Vidal reminded that on the eve of American independence in 1776, the first thing the new government did was invade Canada. "I'm happy to apologize to Canada," he said, "and I welcome the counter-invasion. You may save us from ourselves."

Jay said he'd like to "change the economics of journalism" by creating a news org that doesn't rely on funding from corporations or commercial advertising. The venture, likely to go out via the Web (IWTnews.com) and VOD initially, already has the support of respected journalists and powerful political advocates.



Nearly 200 guests joined Gore Vidal to raise coin for indie news network IWTV.



Paul Jay at 'An evening with Gore Vidal.'



Greg Germann and Camryn Manheim were all ears for Gore Vidal.



George Schlatter and Mace Neufeld at Paul Alan Smith's party for Vidal.