

*Hyde*  
TELEVISION  
& RADIO  
ANNOUNCING  
EIGHTH EDITION



# Television and Radio Announcing

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**EIGHTH EDITION**

Stuart Hyde

*San Francisco State University*

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY    Boston    New York

*Once again,  
to my wife, Allie, and to our children,  
Stuart Jr.,  
John Christian, and  
Allison Elizabeth Ann*

*Sponsoring Editor: George T. Hoffman  
Senior Production/Design Coordinator: Jennifer Waddell  
Senior Manufacturing Coordinator: Priscilla Bailey  
Marketing Manager: Pamela Laskey*

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## Preface

In 1891, George Bernard Shaw wrote *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, a lengthy commentary on the dramas of the great Norwegian playwright, Henrik Ibsen. A second edition was published twenty-two years later and, in his preface to that edition, Shaw wrote:

In the pages that follow I have made no attempt to tamper with the work of the bygone man of thirty-five who wrote them. I have never admitted the right of an elderly author to alter the work of a younger author, even when the younger author happens to be his former self.

As I look back at the thirty-five-year-old “former self” who wrote the first edition of *Television and Radio Announcing*, I find myself *eager* to “tamper” with what I wrote then—and in all the editions that followed!

I’m an admirer of George Bernard Shaw, but I can’t adopt his logic in the case of this textbook. Ibsen had written all of his major plays when Shaw published his evaluation in 1891, so at the time of his new edition he found it acceptable to merely add commentary on the few plays written after that date. So, while I’ve long suspected that Shaw’s reluctance to “tamper” with his earlier writing was actually due to laziness, there was at least some justification for leaving his earlier effort intact.

Mine is a much different reality. When I wrote the first edition of this text, television was in its infancy, and radio was the most pervasive medium of communication in the world. One feature of the first edition was a description of how baseball games were “re-created” by taking the scanty information sent by Western Union (“FOUL LINER TO LEFT FIELD, S1. FB IN NET, S2. B1 low wide”)<sup>1</sup> and turning it into a full-scale audio production, complete with recorded crowd sounds, the crack of a mallet on a suspended bat or catcher’s mitt, and the narration of an imaginative sports announcer.

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<sup>1</sup>Announcer: “The pitch to Kaline. He swings, (CRACK OF BAT, CROWD SOUNDS UP) he rips it to left field . . . just a few feet foul. (NOISE OF CROWD) The pitch. (CRACK OF BAT ON BALL) Another foul, this time into the net. It’s O and two on Kaline. Donovan into the wind up. Ball one, outside.”

To mention a few other outdated items, in 1959 nearly all announcers needed to earn a first-class radiotelephone operator license—a “first phone.” A public-service announcement promoted the Ground Observer Corps, asking for volunteers to become “sky-watchers,” to help thwart an enemy bomber attack. A section of the chapter on interviewing gave tips on interviewing “for the women’s audience,” and the text often used the masculine gender to mean everyone, as in “*Who is your listener? Can you visualize him?*” A commercial by a national advertiser presented a “humorous” stereotype of an Asian infant in an insensitive manner that wouldn’t be tolerated today.

Following the publication of each edition, I found myself eager to begin working on the next—change had already occurred between the writing of the manuscript and its printing! The electronic media will always be in the process of evolution, and new technology, production methods, economics, and audience preferences will sooner or later make any text on media performance obsolete in many ways. The very title of this text is, in a literal sense, obsolete. A more accurate name would be “Communicating Through the Electronic Media,” and I’d make that change were the present title not so firmly established.

In this edition, as in previous ones, I’ve attempted to satisfy two major criteria: to provide information on the most recent developments in technology and practices in the broad field of electronic communication; and to present material that is, in a sense that Shaw would appreciate, timeless and forever relevant.

The fourteen chapters and five appendixes of this text divide into two categories: those that present material that’s unchanging (or nearly so), such as voice and articulation improvement, interpretation skills, interviewing techniques, American English usage, foreign pronunciation, and phonetic transcription; and those that address that which undergoes rapid and sometimes drastic change, such as descriptions of equipment, production practices, distribution methods, and styles in news, narration, music, and sports performance.

Some parts of this text will serve you well for many years, while others will not. But, that’s the nature of this fascinating field we both love—certain change but unchanging relevance. Those who use the public airwaves are expected to entertain, challenge, and enlighten, and this has always been so. While this text may be described accurately as a guidebook for success in announcing, its real focus is on

you—its overriding goal is to help you become an effective and responsible communicator; that's what this text is really all about.

## New to this Edition

Changes to the eighth edition are of many kinds. Previous editions were reviewed to verify, update, eliminate, and add information. Most noticeable are changes in equipment, production procedures, and rules and regulations, and these are discussed wherever appropriate.

New Spotlights include “Voice Lessons,” a concise article on speech improvement by noted author Barbara Lazear Ascher. Her focus is on *unlearning bad attitudes toward oneself* that prevent the development of a pleasing and expressive voice. Ascher cites a voice coach who says, “Our voice conveys who we *are*. The problem is that too often it still carries inflections of who we *were*.” In this Spotlight, students are given a number of exercises to help develop a more self-confident and authoritative delivery.

In “Learning to Sound Local,” *Radio & Records* writer Dan O'Day stresses the importance of quickly learning local preferences in usage and pronunciation when relocating to a new town. He tells us, for example, that “in the North, ‘people go to movies.’ In the Deep South, ‘folks go to the show,’” and he asks, “do locals pronounce the word *route* as ‘root’ or ‘rowt’?” O'Day correctly states that listeners will “turn off” if you mispronounce local place names, or call such things as activities or foods by names not used by locals.

Samantha Paris, whose Spotlight “Tips from a Voice-over Pro” was a source of valuable information in the last edition, has rewritten and updated this feature. Samantha remains at the top of her field as a voice-over actress and coach, and her article tells readers about the determination, hard work, and perseverance that got her where she is today.

The Spotlight, “The Art of Interviewing,” by professor Arthur Hough focuses on specific techniques of interviewing, including how to prepare, how to listen, and how to break a guest's “tape”—his expression for memorized responses that many guests develop after being interviewed a number of times: “Many guests are obviously well prepared on some topics; they've been interviewed before and have developed an inner tape that they play for you. You must get the guest to *think* rather than *recite*; break in with the pertinent but unexpected question. Break the tape.”

Dave Morey, one of San Francisco's most successful DJs, is the subject of a Spotlight, "On Being a DJ." In this piece, we follow the roundabout path of his career, from DJ on a ten-watt high school radio station in Detroit, to his success on a top station in a major market. The Spotlight takes us through a typical workday and gives us several of Morey's "thoughts" about being in radio—among them attitude, mentors, college, skills, and performance.

In "Talking Sports With the Babe," *New York Times* author Mike Wise entertains us with the fabulous success of Nanci Donnell, the "Sports Babe." Through this spot—as well as in a brilliant essay on sports by Joan Ryan in Appendix A—we're made aware of the growing importance of women in sports reporting, analysis, and commentary.

Appendix A, "Scripts to Develop Performance Skills," includes many new award-winning commercials and PSAs, but it also has been expanded to include practice copy of several other kinds: essays, commentaries, sports analysis, and a type of essay I call an "impression." Most of the commercials and PSAs are new to this edition. Suggestions are offered on using the Internet to find, select, and print fresh copy.

One of the most useful additions may be found in Appendix E, "Suggested Resources." Once limited to the listing of books, it now includes information on using the Internet. Resources never before available are accessible to anyone with a computer, a modem, and a service provider. Available are daily news scripts, scripts of sitcoms and comedy sketches, analyses and commentaries on sports, movies, politics, and business, and advice from top DJs on building audiences. Moving from printed to spoken words, voiced material, including audition tapes made by professional voice-over announcers, may be heard and recorded through a program such as Real-Audio.<sup>2</sup>

Aside from changes in content, I've also worked to make this edition more "readable" than ever. It's always been my goal to write in a straightforward, easily understood manner, and I believe I've been successful in that. I'm excited about our field—electronic

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<sup>2</sup>You don't need to be a computer whiz to find valuable information on the Internet. You need basic computer skills and a computer, a modem, and a service provider to find information on the Internet, a world-wide network that links computers. The information is found on web sites or web pages that collectively contain an enormous amount of information.

human communication—and believe that words written about it should be direct, spirited, fresh in outlook, and convey honest enthusiasm. I hope I’ve succeeded in achieving this goal.

So, in this eighth edition, *Television and Radio Announcing* has been “tampered with” to use Shaw’s words, but altered with justification. Shaw ended his 1913 preface with these words: “I therefore, without further apology, launch my old torpedo with the old charge in it.” It’s *my* hope that the “torpedo” represented by this text carries in it a new and more potent charge, one that you’ll find both useful and readable. I wish you a great, productive, and constructive career as a communicator!

## Instructional Features

*Television and Radio Announcing* combines the theory and practice of announcing to serve as a valuable tool and reference for both new and experienced announcers. The following features help readers connect broadcast theory with practical skills to enhance their understanding and performance of all types of broadcast material.

**Spotlights** In each chapter, *Spotlights* offer readers information on current personalities and issues in the field of broadcasting. Each reading is designed to illustrate and highlight chapter principles at work in the field.

**Assessment** Throughout the text, *Checklists* provide readers an at-a-glance review of the practical broadcasting skills discussed in the chapters. *Checklists* can also help students evaluate their understanding of concepts or mastery of skills.

**Practice Exercises** *Practice* exercises help students improve their broadcast performance by allowing them to apply and practice chapter principles. Other performance exercises are provided in the *Instructor’s Resource Manual*.

**Appendixes** The most helpful reference material from the chapters is organized into accessible guides and lists at the end of the text for easy reference during and *after* the course. Appendixes also include information on phonetic transcription and foreign pronunciation.

**Glossary** Following the appendixes, readers will find a useful glossary that includes key words, phrases, and technical terms used in the textbook.

**Instructor's Resource Manual** An updated *Instructor's Resource Manual* is available to instructors adopting the eighth edition. The manual features suggestions from the author about how to structure an announcing course, a sample syllabus, advice for teaching each chapter, quizzes (with answers included), and tips for using the Internet as an instructional resource.

## Acknowledgments

Revising a textbook in the field of electronic communication is a formidable challenge. Topics covered include such diverse specializations as voice analysis and improvement, equipment use, interviewing, voice-over announcing, radio and television news, sports, DJ announcing, English usage, job seeking, and much more. No one person can be an authority on every detail of this increasingly complex field.

In preparing the eighth edition of *Television and Radio Announcing*, I consulted with professional broadcasters, colleagues, instructors, career guidance experts, equipment manufacturers, and advertising agency personnel. A great many people contributed information to this text, and it's important that their contributions be acknowledged.

Among my colleagues who provided special help are Dr. Stanley T. Donner, professor emeritus of the University of Texas at Austin, and Ernie Kreiling, professor of telecommunications and syndicated television columnist. Herbert L. Zettl helped me update television production techniques, and Rick Houlberg once again gave permission for the inclusion of his study on audience rapport. I am grateful to my colleague, the late Professor Paul C. Smith, long-time audio coordinator for the Broadcast Communication Arts Department at San Francisco State University. Paul is responsible for much of what I know about audio. Professor Emeritus Arthur S. Hough, Jr., granted permission for the inclusion of his insightful article, "The Art of Interviewing."

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Hal Ramey, sports reporter and director, also of KCBS, explained and demonstrated how he obtains, edits, and produces actualities for his daily sports reports. Other professionals in sports broadcasting who were helpful include Steve Bitker, sports reporter for KCBS, and Fred Inglis, sports reporter for KTVU-TV, Oakland. San Francisco Giants play-by-play announcers Ted Robinson and Lon Simmons were generous with their time and patience, as I observed their coverage of Giants baseball games. Lee Jones, San Francisco Giants radio producer/engineer, demonstrated for me his recording, editing, and playback techniques using a tapeless Short/Cut unit produced by 360 Systems.

Sports reporter Joan Ryan contributed the essay, “Our Weird Fascination With Colossal Failure,” and is reprinted through permission of the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

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Afternoon drive-time radio news anchors Rosie Allen and Ed Baxter, and traffic reporter Stan Burford of KGO-AM, San Francisco, shared information about their daily preparation and performance, while allowing me to photograph them at work. I thank Kristi Orcutt, Community Relations Director, for making those arrangements.

Robert Unmacht of *M Street* and Ron Rodrigues of *Radio and Records (R&R)* provided information that helped update the data on popular-music broadcasting. The Spotlight, "Learning to Sound Local," by Dan O'Day, is reprinted here through the courtesy of Erica Farber, publisher and CEO of *Radio and Records (R&R)*.

Al Covaia, producer/host for classical-music station KKHI-AM/FM, discussed his methods in preparing a weekly music program, and permitted me to photograph him as he performed.

Cosmo Rose, popular morning drive-time DJ in Erie, Pennsylvania, shared his thoughts on "personality intensive" popular-music performance, and made available to me his weekly newsletter "Almostradio," from which I've gathered much inside knowledge of his field.

Barbara Lazear Ascher, author of the Chapter 3 Spotlight, "Voice Lessons," gave her permission to include this valuable article. Two former students, Ayrien Houchin and Midei Toriyama, contributed the essays "Trash Television" and "About the Rooms," both of which are included in Appendix A as material for student practice.

Sandy Close, executive editor of Pacific News Service, granted permission to reprint the essay, "TV Restores Our Medieval Faith in the Eye," by Richard Rodriguez. Jackie Kerwin, managing editor of the *Marin Independent Journal*, granted permission to use the Spotlight on DJ Dave Morey. Chester Ransom, managing editor of the Associated Press, provided detailed information about that organization's services, and was very helpful in supplying me with in-house publications for use by AP subscribers, sports reporters, and writers.

Award-winning commercials were provided by their creators, Eric Poole, head of Splash Radio, and Donn Resnick, of Donn

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Photos of broadcast equipment were supplied by AKG Acoustics, Inc.; Beyer Dynamic, Inc.; Electro-Voice; Fidelipac; 360 Systems; Neumann; Sennheiser Electronic Corporation; and Shure Brothers, Inc.

*Stuart Hyde  
Corte Madera  
1998*



# 1



## Announcing for the Electronic Media

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- The Announcer for the Electronic Media
- Employment as an Announcer
- Education and Training
  - Coursework Considerations
- The Announcer's Responsibility
- SPOTLIGHT: Broadcast Ethics and the Announcer's Responsibility

This book is about human communication, with a focus on the electronic media. Its purpose is to help you improve your communication skills, which can be of lasting benefit, whether or not you intend to become a performer on radio or television. Confident, effective expression has always been an invaluable tool. The ever-increasing significance of electronic media means that competent communication skills may become nearly as important as literacy was a century ago.

In one sense, then, this book is about television and radio announcing. It discusses announcing as a profession, treats both the technical and the performance aspects of the field, covers correct usage of American and Canadian English, describes major areas of specialization within the field, provides copy for practicing performance skills, and offers job-seeking information and suggestions.

In a broader sense this book is about *communication*. If you apply yourself, you can look forward to noticeable improvement in your ability to (1) make pleasant speech sounds, (2) clearly articulate the

**Figure 1.1**

Afternoon drive time news anchors Ed Baxter and Rosie Allen are a popular and exceedingly compatible announcing team. They combine straight news delivery with human interest sidelights. (Courtesy of KGO NewsTalk Radio)



sounds of the English language, (3) vary pitch and volume effectively, (4) pronounce words according to accepted standards, (5) select and use words, phrases, similes, and metaphors effectively, (6) express yourself confidently, (7) interpret copy, (8) speak ad lib or impromptu, and (9) communicate ideas clearly, both orally and nonverbally.

## The Announcer for the Electronic Media

Media performers, including announcers, are essentially products of the electronic age, but several related professions preceded them by centuries. Preliterate storytellers, troubadours, the singers of psalms, town criers, and early newspaper journalists were all forerunners of modern announcers. Each provided a service to a public. With some, the emphasis was on the delivery of information; with others it was on entertainment. Announcers are like storytellers in that they speak directly to their audiences. Radio announcers also resemble writers for the print media in that they often describe events their audiences can't see. Television reporters and news anchors frequently describe events as audiences view them.

**Figure 1.2**

Sports director and reporter Hal Ramey reviews and edits audiotaped interviews. Ramey attends numerous sporting events and tapes brief interviews with athletes, coaches, managers, and front-office personnel for later inclusion as actualities on his twice-hourly sports reports. Hal received his B.A. degree in telecommunications from San Jose State University. (Courtesy of Hal Ramey and KCBS, San Francisco)



Imagine some major event—a hurricane, the Superbowl, election returns, even war—and then try to imagine coverage of these events without the comments and explanations of on-the-scene reporters. In the mid-1990s, television kept millions of viewers informed of events in the Balkans as civil war raged between citizens of the former Yugoslavia. For **live coverage** of significant occurrences, earlier times offer no model to parallel the television announcer commenting on events as they happen.

Despite the similarities between announcing and earlier professions, some important differences also exist. Radio and television instantaneously reach vast audiences scattered over thousands of miles. Radio allowed announcers for the first time in history to describe to millions of people events as they were occurring. Because radio presented instantaneous communication over great distances and because radio is a “blind” medium, announcers became indispensable. Radio couldn’t function without those who provided direct oral communication by describing events, introducing entertainers, and reporting the news.

The radio announcer is the clarifying link between listeners and what would otherwise be a jumble of sound, noise, or silence. The television announcer is the presenter, the communicator, and the interpreter. Without such performers neither radio nor television as we know them would be possible. Announcers are important to many types of programs and through many electronic distribution

systems. Their responsibility is substantial and, because announcers usually make direct presentations to their audiences, they also are efficient and economical. No other means of disseminating information is so direct and swift as the word spoken directly to the listener. Small wonder, then, that radio and television announcers must possess native talent, acquire a broad educational background, and then undergo intensive training and consistent practice as they develop professional competencies.

Some broadcast performers don't like to be called "announcers," preferring instead to be known by their area of specialization: *anchor, talent, DJ, program host, commentator, sportscaster, voice-over artist, or narrator*.<sup>1</sup> Precise terminology is used in this text when appropriate, but the term *announcer* is used for simplicity whenever the profession is discussed in general terms.

As used in this book, an **announcer** is *anyone who communicates over the public airwaves, as on radio or television broadcasts; through cable channels into homes, schools, offices, and such; or over closed-circuit audio or video distribution by electronic amplification, as in an auditorium, stadium, arena, or theater*. Singers, actors, and actresses are considered announcers only when they perform that specific function—in commercial presentations, for example. The field of announcing includes many areas of specialization:

### ***Broadcast Journalism***

Anchors or news readers

Field reporters—special assignment or general assignment

Feature reporters (often taking a humorous or satiric view of a current event)

Analysts

Commentators

Weather reporters

Consumer affairs reporters

Environmental reporters

Science reporters

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<sup>1</sup>The term *disc jockey* was coined many years ago and was a slangy but useful term until recent times. Popular music announcers once selected, cued, introduced on the air, and played phonograph records, so they did "jockey" the records in the sense of *manipulating* them. Now that most announcers work with music stored on hard drives, the term has lost its literal meaning. A survey of a number of successful announcers who perform this function found that nearly all prefer the term *DJ*, or *DeeJay* because it parallels music television's *VJ*.

Entertainment reporters  
Farm news reporters  
Business news reporters  
Medical reporters (frequently doctors)  
Traffic reporters

***Sports Coverage on Radio and Television***

Play-by-play announcers  
Play and game analysts  
Sports reporters

***Music***

Announcers on popular music stations (variously referred to as  
DJs, deejays, or “on-air talent”)  
Music video jockeys (VJs or veejays)  
Classical music announcers (for both live and recorded performances)

***Public Affairs***

Interviewers  
Panel moderators

***Commercials***

Voice-over announcers (radio and television)  
Demonstration and commercial announcers (television)  
“Infomercial” announcers (television)—those who present lengthy  
commercials that involve displaying and demonstrating products  
Salespersons on shopping channels such as Home Shopping Net-  
work or QVC

***Narration***

Narrators of documentaries such as *National Geographic* specials,  
and A&E’s *Biography* and *Mysteries of the Bible*  
Readers of scripts for industrial or corporate presentations  
Readers of essays, editorials, feature reports, and “impressions”  
for both radio and television. Such readers almost always write  
the pieces they deliver on the air.

***Hosting Special Programs***

Talk shows  
Interview and phone-in shows (television and radio)  
Remote live shows (radio)

**Figure 1.3**

Like most music announcers on radio, veteran jazz announcer Bob Parlocha operates his audio console and all other units of broadcast equipment. He ad-libs comments based on album notes and his own encyclopedic knowledge of jazz music. (Courtesy of Bob Parlocha)



Magazine shows such as *Entertainment Tonight*, *Hard Copy*, and *Frontline*, (television)

Food, gardening, home repair, and similar specialty shows

Dance and popular music shows (television)

Children's programs

Game shows

Introducers of feature films on television

Single-subject specialists also appear regularly on talk shows or newscasts on topics such as gardening, cooking, exercise, consumerism, science, art, and health. These specialists sometimes perform "solo" on brief segments of one to five minutes; others work with station staff announcers who serve as hosts. During televised parades (Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, the Rose Parade), announcing teams identify participants, explain float construction, and provide *color*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>*Color* was coined for radio to mean the description of things of interest that couldn't be seen by the listeners; today, in both television and radio usage, color announcers are those who provide stories of human interest as well as anecdotes of an informative, amusing, or offbeat nature.

**Figure 1.4**

As the media industries expand, more jobs are created for announcers and narrators in cable and industrial production, local news programs, and specialized formats that address environmental, political, and consumer issues. (Ken Robert Buck, *The Picture Cube*)



## Employment as an Announcer

According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, published by the U.S. Department of Labor, approximately fifty thousand men and women are currently employed as announcers.<sup>3</sup> Most are full-time employees of radio and television stations, cable operations, and broadcast networks. Some are full- or part-time freelance announcers who perform as DJs under contract. Other freelance announcers narrate documentaries and instructional tapes or perform both on-camera and off-camera voice-overs for commercials.

The rapid expansion of cable television services has created additional openings for announcers. In 1975, most citizens of the United States and Canada could receive between seven and fifteen television channels. These included network affiliates, public broadcasting and other noncommercial stations, and independent commercial stations. As cable began its rapid growth, options for viewers multiplied. Predictions are that by the year 2000, home subscribers will have access to hundreds of cable channels. With this dramatic expansion of cable channels will come new opportunities for announcers.

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<sup>3</sup>*Occupational Outlook Handbook*, U.S. Department of Labor, January, 1996. *The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance*, ninth edition, estimates the number of announcers and newscasters at "about fifty-seven thousand."

Cable television began as *community antenna services* (CATV), originally devised to collect broadcast signals and feed them by wire to homes where television reception was poor. By the mid-1960s, enterprising CATV operators saw opportunities beyond the distribution of signals from existing stations. They developed and installed equipment to receive transmissions from far-off stations and to add those programs to local offerings. By the early 1970s cable capacity had increased to more than one hundred channels. So-called “superstations” began sending their programming to all parts of the country.<sup>4</sup> Companies devoted to creating or bringing back programs of the past soon followed. Cable television as we now know it was born.

Today, cable companies continue to offer programming from both local and distant on-air stations, but they also offer such non-broadcast services as the *Discovery Channel*, *Comedy Central*, *Cable News Network* (CNN), *Entertainment and Sports Programming Network* (ESPN), *American Movie Classics* (AMC), *Lifetime*, *Nickelodeon*, *Arts and Entertainment* (A&E), *Black Entertainment Television*, *MTV*, and “shopping channels.” So-called premium channels—channels for which subscribers pay fees beyond the basic rate for cable service—include *Home Box Office* (HBO), *Showtime*, *The Movie Channel*, *Bravo*, and the *Disney Channel*, as well as regional sports channels. Most cable systems also offer **pay-per-view** programming, which usually features recent motion pictures and prime sports events.

With the impending availability of dozens of new channels through “digitally compressed” cable and satellite downlinks, cable companies are planning even more comprehensive **narrowcasting** or **microcasting** than now exists. Under discussion (or already available in some areas) are channels devoted to such narrowly focused interests as golf, tennis, gymnastics, health, war movies and documentaries, western movies and television dramas, detective dramas, cooking shows, game shows, specialized music channels, and daytime serials. Some foresee television channels for all major political parties, for seniors, automobile enthusiasts, small-business owners, pet owners, and so on. And—one hopes—all this in addition

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<sup>4</sup>In 1976, WTBS, the Atlanta station owned by Turner Broadcasting, was the first to go “national” by way of cable TV.

**Figure 1.5**

Stan Burford reports from a helicopter to inform television viewers of traffic conditions during morning commutes, 5:30 to 7:00 A.M. each weekday. During afternoon drive time, he works in a radio newsroom with a bank of audio monitors to keep drivers informed of traffic problems and alternate routes they may take. (Courtesy of Stan Burford and KGO-TV and KGO NewsTalk Radio)



to a considerable growth in self-improvement and instructional programs.

Although much of the programming no doubt will be recycled movies, syndicated television packages, classic sports events, and television miniseries, it's safe to predict an increased demand for on-camera and voice-over announcers who are prepared to communicate effectively.

Your best preparation for this revolution in television is to develop the skills discussed in this text and plan an educational program that will help you become an expert on at least some of the categories of programming now in use or on the horizon. Regardless of the number of job openings, competition for them will continue to be keen.

A growing number of men and women work, not in broadcast stations or cable, but in **industrials**—also called **corporate media**. Audiotapes, videocassettes, and CD-ROM presentations serve many purposes including employee training, new-product introductions, dissemination of information to distant branches, and in-house communication. The term *industrial media* is a loose one because it applies to media operations of hospitals, government agencies, schools, prisons, and the military, as well as businesses.

Few training or media departments can afford the services of a full-time announcer or narrator; if this sort of work appeals to you, you should prepare for media writing and producing as well as announcing. One or more courses in message design and testing would serve you well. (Chapter 14, "Starting Your Announcing Career," provides specific information on job seeking.)

The chapters that follow this introductory overview describe working conditions and the kinds of abilities you'll need to succeed in each of the major announcing specializations. You should work on every facet of announcing while emphasizing the area in which you hope to specialize.

Local television stations provide multiprogram service, but aside from daily newscasts and interview talk shows they offer relatively few openings for announcers. Far more television employees work in sales, traffic, and engineering than in announcing. On the other hand, local television stations *do* produce commercials, and they also run commercials produced by local and regional production companies. Therefore, even the smallest community with a commercial television station may offer some work for announcers. If this field interests you, call a station's sales or promotion department production unit for specific information about how they hire announcers. To scout for talent agencies working with local productions, look under "Agencies, Theatrical" in the classified section of telephone directories for medium to large cities in your area. A call to a theatrical agency may provide you with information about how to present yourself for possible employment.

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## Education and Training

Radio and television stations devote their hours of operation not to talking about radio and television, but to news, weather, music, sports, and drama. Your studies in a broadcasting department will teach you much about this broad field, but you *must* be able to offer more to an employer and the public than knowledge about broadcasting. Assuming that you're majoring in "electronic communication," or whatever term is used at your school, you also should consider enrolling in one or more minor programs in such content areas as history, political science, urban studies, literature, sociol-

ogy, economics, or geography. Consider also career-oriented courses, such as journalism, sports history, and meteorology.

Informational media are reaching millions of people with more and more messages of critical importance to their future, and they have little room for narrowly educated announcers. For one thing, the influence—for good or ill—of radio and television performers is immense and mustn't be underestimated. Announcers are addressing and being evaluated by increasingly sophisticated listeners. Americans are better informed today than ever before, and they are quick to spot shallowness or ignorance.

The dramatic explosion of knowledge in the past several years requires announcers to grow with the times. Dictionaries are adding new entries at an unprecedented pace. To an announcer each addition represents not only a new word to pronounce but a new concept, a new technological breakthrough, a newly perceived human condition, or a new phenomenon to understand.

Finally, both radio and television have significantly increased the number of program hours they devote to unscripted presentations. Television program hosts, DJs, interviewers, announcers covering sports and special events, and talk-show personalities only occasionally use written material; most of the time they're on their own. Radio and television field reporters covering breaking stories never work from scripts; they ad-lib their reports from hastily scribbled notes that are limited to basic information. The opportunity to frame your personal thoughts in words of your own choosing carries with it the responsibility to have much information at hand to share with your audience.

## Coursework Considerations

Your career goals should determine your choice among courses of study. Also, employers have their own ideas about the best preparation for the position of announcer. Above all, they look for well-educated men and women who possess certain basic skills: good writing ability and outstanding proficiency in spoken communication, computational skills (basic math), and critical thinking. They also look for people who are hardworking, self-motivated, and pleasant to be around.

In studying to be a broadcast announcer, pursue *subjects that prepare you for your first announcing job*. You also should select

**Figure 1.6**

Announcers of the 1990s must be trained not only in a wide range of writing, editing, and performing duties but also in operating broadcast equipment. Work at college stations and in local internships will help you prepare for success in a first job. Here TV reporter Caroline Chang edits her stories and then transmits them from a bureau to her station in Wilmington, North Carolina. (1989 Michael Edrington/The Image Works)



*courses that qualify you for one or more specializations beyond straight announcing. If you're serious about an announcing career, your education must have breadth, which is best supplied by a broad background in the liberal arts and sciences. You probably will not be able to study all the areas suggested in the following checklist, but you should at least discuss them with an adviser.*

A few notes: Courses in control-room operations should include practice in manipulating audio consoles, tape cartridge machines, compact disc (CD) players, digital audiotape (DAT) players, reel-to-reel tape recorders, and turntables. Because many television stations expect field reporters to tape and edit their own news stories you'll also need courses in video production and editing. News anchors and reporters alike must learn to write news copy. Most stations in medium to small markets expect announcers to write commercial copy and station promotional pieces as well.

Expand your ability to pronounce names and words in the most commonly used languages. Many departments of music offer a course in lyric diction, which teaches principles of pronunciation of



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Courses to Build Your Career**

#### **Basic Preparation for Announcing**

Take courses that focus on the following subjects:

- Interpretation
- Articulation
- Phonation
- Phonetic transcription
- Microphone use
- Camera presence
- Ad-libbing
- Script reading
- Adapting one's personality to the broadcast media
- Foreign language pronunciation
- Control room operations
- Small-format video production and editing
- Writing for radio and television

#### **Specialized Courses to Prepare You for Specific Duties**

- **Broadcast journalism**—courses in journalism, international relations, political science, economics, history, and geography
- **Broadcast sales and advertising**—courses in business, marketing, accounting, sales techniques, sales promotion, and audience research
- **Sports, including play-by-play announcing**—courses in the history of sports, sports officiating, and the sociology of sport
- **Weather reporting**—courses in meteorology, weather analysis, weather forecasting, and geography

### Courses to Further Your General Education

- Social, ethical, aesthetic, and historical perspectives on electronic communication
- **The arts**—music, theater, literature, or the graphic and plastic arts
- **Social and behavioral sciences**—psychology, sociology, urban studies, and ethnic studies
- **Quantitative reasoning**—essentially mathematics and computational methods
- **Critical thinking**—the study of skills crucial to clear and constructive thought
- **Media law and regulation**
- **Writing, writing, writing**

French, German, and Italian. Some also offer Russian or Spanish pronunciation.

Most departments of broadcasting require a course in writing for the electronic media; note, however, that it isn't sufficient to study writing within your major department. Aside from fundamental composition courses, departments of English offer courses in expository writing, essay writing, creative writing, and dramatic writing; and journalism departments offer courses in news writing. It's impossible to get too much writing experience!

One area of preparation is important enough to warrant separate mention. Broadcast stations rely heavily on the use of **computerized information systems**.<sup>5</sup> Computers are central to most video editing systems, character generators, word processors, graphics systems, scheduling and billing systems, and data-retrieval systems. Newsrooms rely almost exclusively on computers for writing and editing news copy. Familiarity with information systems is highly desirable, and the ability to type well is mandatory. Courses in "information science" may or may not be appropri-

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<sup>5</sup>Preparation for work at a highly sophisticated radio station is the subject of a detailed discussion in Chapter 6, Broadcast Equipment.

**Figure 1.7**

Sports reporter Steve Bitker delivers his reports ad-lib, working from notes jotted down just prior to air time. Steve studied journalism at San Diego State University and later received a degree in sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. (Courtesy of Steve Bitker and KCBS, San Francisco)



ate. For most students of announcing, basic courses in the use of both Macintosh and IBM-compatible computers may be sufficient.

Evaluate these suggestions in light of your own aptitudes, interests, and career plans. Any college counselor can help you determine the appropriateness of the courses available to you. The important point is that only you can apply your growing knowledge to your announcing practice.

Most community colleges require sixty semester-hours for an associate in arts or associate in science degree. Four-year colleges or universities require about 125 semester-hours for a bachelor's degree. Whether you're enrolled in a two- or four-year program, it's unlikely that you'll be offered more than six semester-hours of performance courses. You should, therefore, look for performance opportunities wherever they present themselves—on a campus radio station, in television directing and producing classes, or on public access cable stations. Remember, though, that you'll spend most of your broadcasting class hours in nonperformance courses, all of which are important to your development as a well-rounded broadcaster.

Clearly, announcing encompasses a wide range of activities, and no one type of course will completely educate you as an announcer. Most modern liberal arts colleges and their broadcasting departments are well equipped to help you begin the process of becoming

a competent and versatile communicator—which is what you must become if you’re to manage challenges such as these:

- You’re a staff announcer. You are to read a commercial for a local restaurant featuring international cuisine and must pronounce correctly *vichyssoise*, *coq au vin*, *paella*, *saltimbocca alla Romana*, and *hasenpfeffer*.
- You’re a staff announcer and must read news headlines that contain the place names *Sault Sainte Marie*, *Schleswig-Holstein*, *Mogadishu*, *Bosnia-Herzegovina*, *Santa Rosa de Copán*, *São Paulo*, and *Leicester*.
- As the announcer on a classical music program, you need to know the meaning and correct pronunciation of *scherzo*, *andante cantabile*, *Götterdämmerung*, and *L’Après-midi d’un faune*.
- You’re a commercial announcer. The copy for a pharmaceutical company demands that you correctly pronounce *hexachlorophene*, *prophylactics*, *gingivitis*, *fungicide*, and *ketoconazole*.
- You’re a play analyst on a sports broadcast. You need to obtain extensive historical and statistical information on football in order to fill the inevitable moments of inactivity.
- You’re the play-by-play announcer for a semipro baseball team and must pronounce such “American” names as Martineau, Buchignani, Yturri, Ulloa, Sockolow, Watanabe, Engebrecht, and MacLeod.
- You’ve been assigned to interview a Nobel Prize winner in astrophysics. You must obtain basic information about the field as well as biographical data on the winner—and do so under extreme time limitations.
- You’re narrating a documentary, which requires you to analyze the intent and content of the program to determine the mood, rhythm, structure, and interrelationship of sound, picture, and script.
- You’re covering a crowd scene that could deteriorate into a riot. You’re expected to assess responsibly the human dynamics of the scene while carefully avoiding comments or activities that could precipitate violence in this already dangerous situation.
- You’re a radio DJ, and you’re on duty when word is received of the unexpected death of a great American (a politician, an entertainer, or a scientist). Until the news department can take over, you must ad-lib appropriately.

It's obvious that no single course of study will adequately prepare you for an announcing career.

## The Announcer's Responsibility

Before committing yourself to a career as an announcer, you should recognize that, along with the undeniable privileges and rewards that come to people working in this field, come responsibilities. First is the obligation all performers owe their audiences: to be informative, objective, fair, accurate, and entertaining. Announcers who are sloppy, unprepared, given to poor usage, or just plain boring may get what they deserve—two weeks' notice.

Some announcers who work hard and possess outstanding skill nevertheless pollute the public air, chiefly on radio and television talk and interview shows.<sup>6</sup> They are willing to say almost anything, however outrageous or hurtful to others, in order to attract and hold an audience. In our free society such announcers are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution; the only protection the audience has resides in the integrity of each announcer. Most college broadcasting departments offer courses in ethics and social responsibility. A grounding in this subject, together with serious consideration of the effects of mass communication, is vitally important to your development as a public communicator.

Social responsibility goes beyond the normal responsibility of performer to audience. Nearly all announcers gain influence through their visibility and prestige. Years ago, Paul F. Lazarsfeld and Robert K. Merton perceived and described what they called the **status-conferral function of the mass media**. In essence, they said the general public attaches prestige to people who appear in the mass media, and the average person is more readily influenced by prestigious people than by equals. The public's reasoning is circular: "If you really matter, you will be at the focus of attention; and, if you are at the focus of mass attention, then you must really matter." A newscaster, then, is not simply an efficient conveyer of information; as a radio or television star, the newscaster is trusted

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<sup>6</sup>For additional discussion of irresponsible behavior, see the opening section of Chapter 9, Interview and Talk Programs.

and believed as a qualified authority. Even an entertainment show announcer or a DJ has automatic—though sometimes unwarranted—authority. As an announcer for any of the electronic media, you should be aware of your status and measure up to it.

Announcers must demonstrate a sense of social commitment. Be aware of opportunities you may have to either enlighten or confuse the public. As a nation we've been slow to perceive and attack the serious problems of urban deterioration, increasing crime, environmental pollution, racial inequities, world hunger, poverty, homelessness, AIDS, the rise of antidemocratic action groups, and increased drug use. If you're committed to using the mass media to help build a better society, you're already socially responsible and potentially important as the kind of communicator demanded by our times.

Announcers also share in the responsibility of emergency notification. When floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and other disasters occur, broadcast announcers are in a position to save lives through early warnings and post-disaster information. The federal government has established the **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** to replace the long-established Emergency Broadcast System (EBS). The alert system requires broadcast licensees to disseminate disaster information. It's imperative that all broadcast announcers study the disaster manual (found at all stations) and be prepared to act swiftly and appropriately in emergencies.<sup>7</sup>



## SPOTLIGHT

### **Broadcast Ethics and the Announcer's Responsibility**

Ethics comprises a broad range of decisions you'll have to make on your job. Here are some hypothetical situations in which you could find yourself as a radio or television announcer:

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<sup>7</sup>Automated stations classified as "unattended operations" must opt out of the EAS system; during emergencies. Their programming is terminated, and other stations take over their emergency broadcast duties.

- You're a music director on a radio station where you select all songs to be played on the air. A friend offers you one thousand dollars to play a song he's produced. Because you think the music is quite good, you accept the one thousand dollars and schedule the record at least once during each of the daily air shifts. You justify your action on the grounds that you would have programmed the piece even without the gift of money.
- You're a television reporter, and you've been told by a reliable witness that some children at the scene of a disturbance threw rocks at a police car before you arrived. You pay the children five dollars each to throw rocks again while you make a videotape of the action. Your position is that you taped an event that actually occurred and you brought back to the station some high-impact footage for the nightly news.
- You're a talk show host on an early evening radio show. Your guest is an outspoken advocate of free speech on radio who argues against any language restrictions whatever. During your interview you speak a number of words that are generally considered indecent. You maintain that only by saying the words on the air can you test her conviction.
- Your morning drive-time partner takes a two-week vacation. In order to stir up a little audience interest, you announce that he's been kidnapped. For most of the two-week period, you broadcast regular "flashes" on the status of the "event." Audience ratings skyrocket as you report on phony ransom notes, police chases, and so on. You believe that your reputation as an on-air jokester justifies this hoax.
- You host a television talk show, and you feel insulted and angered by the behavior of a hostile guest. The next day you launch an attack on that person by questioning his integrity, honesty, and character. Viewer reactions strongly support your attack. You decide that, having had your revenge, you can let the matter drop.
- As the business reporter for a talk radio station, you decide to mention with favor a company in which you own stock. The interest you generate causes listeners to invest in the company, and the value of its stock rises. You feel justified in the favorable comments you made, because you didn't receive payment from the company in return.
- As a television reporter, you receive some highly sensitive information about the misdeeds of an important local politician. You report the details as accurately as you can, but in order to protect the person who gave you the information, you invent a fictitious informant.

*These scenarios share a common problem: each violates a law, a regulation, or a provision of a professional code of ethics. As an announcer, your words reach and influence vast numbers of people; because of the potential for wrongdoing,*

your freedoms to speak and act are restricted. Freedom of speech, as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the Constitution, doesn't always apply to those using the public airwaves. Areas of restriction are obscenity, fraud, defamation (making libelous statements), plagiarism, inciting insurrection, and invasion of privacy.

Generally speaking, laws regarding obscenity, indecency, and profanity are governed by the United States Criminal Code. *Obscenity* may be defined as "offensive to accepted standards of decency or modesty." *Indecency* is defined as that which is "offensive to public moral values." *Profanity* is defined as "abusive, vulgar, or irreverent language."<sup>8</sup>

**Payola** and **drugola** refer to the acceptance of money, drugs, or other inducements in return for playing specific recordings on the air; **plugola** refers to favorable mentions of a product, company, or service in which the announcer has a financial interest. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the chief regulatory agency for broadcasters, prohibits acceptance of any sort of bribe in return for favors.

*The Code of Broadcast News Ethics of the Radio and Television News Directors Association* (RTNDA) specifically labels as irresponsible and unethical such practices as staging news events, misrepresenting the source of a news story, sensationalizing the news, and invading the privacy of those with whom the news deals.

The FCC's *personal attack rule* requires that persons who are attacked on the air be furnished with a transcript of the attack within a specified period of time and that provision be made for the attacked person to reply on the air.

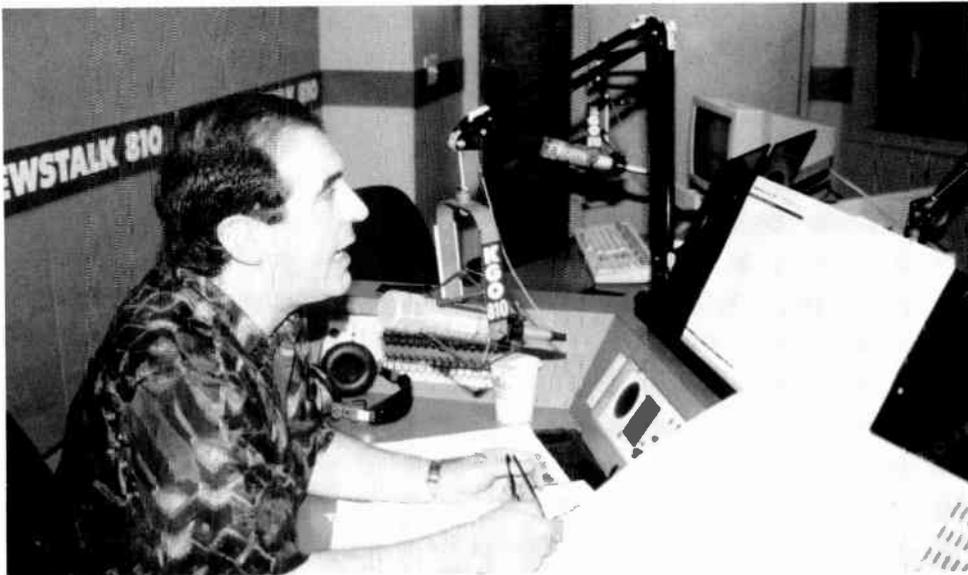
The radio and television codes of the National Association of Broadcasters were invalidated by a 1980s court decision, but many broadcasters continue to use the ethics portions of those codes as models for professional and ethical behavior. Among the provisions still widely honored are those that prohibit broadcast of any matter that is deemed fraudulent and the provision that requires clear identification of sponsored or paid-for material.

Most libelous statements are civil, not *criminal*, offenses. The person offended can sue another person—such as an announcer—and the government acts as arbiter. Laws regarding libel vary from state to state, but in no state is an announcer given total freedom to make accusations against others.

As an announcer, you must be thoroughly aware of the realities of broadcast law and ethics; only through in-depth knowledge of the applicable laws and codes can you routinely avoid violating them in your behavior or words.

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<sup>8</sup>*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd ed., s.v. "profanity" and "indecency."



Talk-show host Ronn Owens possesses a master's degree in sociology and adds to his store of information by regularly reading newspapers, magazines, and books, and tuning to information programs on radio and television. His wealth of knowledge enables him to perform an important service not true of many talk-show hosts: that of correcting misinformation from some callers and challenging unsupported accusations or assertions. (Courtesy of Ronn Owens and KGO NewsTalk Radio)



## **PRACTICE**

### **Practicing with Equipment**

Regular practice in using audio and video recorders can be of immense help in your development as a broadcast performer. After hearing and seeing yourself perform over a period of several weeks, you should begin to note and correct annoying mannerisms, faulty speech habits, and voice deficiencies that displease you. Ask others to comment on your performances, because you may fail to detect some of your shortcomings. As you make adjustments and improve, you'll gain confidence; this, in turn, should guarantee further improvement.

The price of a small video recorder is now within the reach of many students. If you buy or rent a camera with a built-in microphone, try to find one that will accept an external microphone; the built-in mic is adequate for some uses, but it's incapable of giving you the voice reproduction quality you need because your voice, when picked up by the internal mic from ten or more feet away, will be weak and distorted.

If the cost of a camcorder is beyond your reach, you may have to rely on a department of communication arts, mass communication, or broadcasting for regular practice with a video recorder; you can, however, obtain an audio recorder of adequate quality at a reasonable cost, and you can use it to help improve articulation, pronunciation, and communication skills. Choose your recorder carefully, testing it before purchase under the conditions of intended use. For real improvement to take place, you must work with a recorder that doesn't mislead you. A poor-quality machine can distort your voice or exaggerate problems of sibilance and popping. It may cause you to waste time working on nonexistent problems, while failing to alert you to problems that do exist. Microcassette recorders, which are useful in many applications, lack sufficient fidelity to help you improve your speech.

Nearly all audio recorders have built-in microphones, but you should make sure that the one you buy has a jack to receive an external mic. Built-in mics, even in good quality tape machines, are in most cases "afterthoughts," included to give salespersons one more selling point, and will produce unsatisfactory results.

You can also work on speech improvement without equipment of any kind. You speak with others for a considerable amount of time each day. Without sounding affected you can practice speaking clearly in ordinary conversations. Many college students tend to slur words as they speak. Make note of the number of times each day someone asks you to repeat what you've just said,

often by uttering a monosyllabic “Huh?” Frequent requests of this kind are an indication that you’re not speaking clearly enough for broadcast work.

For improvement of nonverbal communication skills, you can practice in front of a mirror. Note the degree—too pronounced, just right, or too weak—of your facial expressions and head movements. Watch for physical mannerisms that may be annoying or that interfere with clear communication. Through practice you can improve your performance abilities significantly, even without the use of recording equipment.

Closely related to performance ability is **ear training**. It’s doubtful that anyone who doesn’t hear well can speak well. Develop a critical ear as you listen to television and radio performers. Listen for vowel variations, mispronunciations, poor interpretation, and other qualities of spoken English that may interfere with good communication. Listen, as well, for those who articulate clearly, who have a pleasant voice quality, and who are effective in communicating thoughts and ideas. Decide who impresses you as an outstanding user of spoken language. Identify speakers who make you pay attention, as well as those who cause you to tune out. Try to determine the positive and negative characteristics and qualities of speakers, and apply what you learn to your own work. (Speech diagnosis, speech problems, and suggestions for improvement are covered in Chapters 3 and 4, “Voice Analysis and Improvement” and “Pronunciation and Articulation.”)



## **PRACTICE**

### **Establishing Ethical Guidelines**

Find copies of various codes that pertain to announcers, such as the Radio and Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) code and the ethics code of the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE). Prepare a list of the most important canons of professional ethics.

### **Backgrounds of Successful Announcers**

Using such resources as *Current Biography* and computerized searches for articles about outstanding announcers, compile information about several announcers whose work you admire. Where did they grow up? Where did they attend school? What were their major and minor subjects? Where did they begin their announcing careers? What steps did they take to reach the heights of their profession? What advice do they offer to those who want to succeed in the announcing profession?

# 2



## The Announcer as Communicator

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Principles of Effective Communication
- Interpreting Copy
  - Identifying the General Meaning
  - Stating the Specific Purpose
  - Identifying the General Mood
  - Determining Changes in Mood
  - Determining Parts and Structure
- Analyzing Punctuation Marks Used in Scripts
- Marking Copy
- Verifying Meaning and Pronunciation
- Reading Aloud
  - Reading Ahead
- Conveying Interest in Your Material
- Talking to the Listener
- SPOTLIGHT: Learning to Sound Local
- Researching Background about Authors and Copy
- Employing Characterization
  - Dramatized Commercials

Radio and television announcers have one overriding purpose: *to effectively communicate ideas and feelings to others*. This apparently simple statement is the key to success in announcing. Some lucky announcers have learned to be effective—and even engaging—as they communicate with others. They readily adapt their ability to

**Figure 2.1**

Cooperation is vital between on-air personnel and production staff. News co-anchors Don Sanchez and Cheryl Jennings wait for the cue that tells them to resume the newscast after a commercial break. Don graduated from the University of Southern California, majoring in Telecommunication, Cheryl from San Francisco State University with a major in Broadcast Communication Arts. (Courtesy of KGO-TV, San Francisco)



communicate to radio or television performing. Others, however, must continue to work at the difficult task of being effective, economical, and accurate in daily conversation. This chapter discusses the communicative process and offers specific advice on interpreting copy.

Unfortunately, some students of announcing believe they've become successful announcers when they develop the ability to "sound like an announcer."<sup>1</sup> They suffer from the most common shortcoming of ineffective announcers: they've put aside their individual personalities and developed the ability to act the part of an announcer. They become only capable imitators.

Good announcing isn't *imitation*—it's *communication*. Top announcers retain their individuality as they concentrate on getting their messages across. True communication as an announcer begins when you *learn who you are, reflect yourself in your delivery, and realize that you're speaking to individuals, not to a crowd*. It's important for you to improve your voice quality, further develop articulation and pronunciation, and expand your vocabulary, but these alone won't guarantee that you'll become an effective com-

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<sup>1</sup>See the Spotlight "The Debate over Standard American Speech" in Chapter 4. The discussion, which focuses mainly on pronunciation, includes a brief history of radio announcing styles.

municator. You also must constantly employ two other aspects of successful oral communication: reflecting your personality and sharing with your audience the ideas and feelings inherent in the words you speak.

Announcers must be skilled in several kinds of performance: ad-libbing, ad-libbing from notes, impromptu speaking, script reading with preparation, and script reading from **cold copy**—material not seen until the moment of delivery. Typical ad-lib announcers—those who have thought through what they’re going to say but have no script to work from—are radio and television field reporters, weather and traffic reporters, and popular music personalities. Impromptu announcers—those who have no opportunity to plan their comments in advance—include television talk show hosts, radio and television phone-in hosts, and sports play-by-play announcers. News anchors often see some of their copy for the first time when it appears on a prompter. At the other extreme are documentary narrators and readers of recorded commercials; they work for hours—and sometimes days—to deliver the performance demanded by a producer. You should practice these modes until you’re comfortable with them all.

One of your toughest challenges as an announcer is to be effective when reading copy written by someone else. You’re the middle link in a chain that begins with a writer and ends with a listener or viewer. It’s your responsibility to ensure that the writer’s ideas are faithfully transmitted to the minds of your listeners.

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## Principles of Effective Communication

Copy begins not as a *script* but as *ideas* in the mind of a writer—an ad agency copywriter, a newswriter, a documentary scriptwriter, a station sales representative, or some other specialist in broadcast writing. Having conceived the idea, the writer next casts it into words—in words and pictures for television—that will best communicate the thoughts. The ability to select fresh, meaningful words and arrange them well is the art of broadcast writing; the ability to communicate these words effectively is the art of announcing.

Radio communicates by spoken and sung language, instrumental music, and sound effects. Television has a vital visual compo-

ment, yet the sound aspects of television are also important in getting messages across. As a professional announcer, you can make spoken messages more effective than they would be if communicated in writing. Beyond the basic level of accurate reading and pronunciation, you can convey an emotion appropriate to your copy—enthusiasm, seriousness, or humor—and in doing so provide variety and meaning to your listeners. You can clarify its meaning by communicating the relative importance of various parts of the message. In short, you'll present the material in its most persuasive and readily understandable form.

Oral communication, however, loses its effect when announcers fail to present their material clearly and with conviction. Too many professional announcers merely read the scripts before them and consider themselves successful if they don't stumble over any words. A word is a symbol of an idea; if the announcer can't grasp the idea or read it compellingly, the chance of transmitting the idea to listeners is slight. Although even poorly delivered words have some effect, this isn't good announcing. Announcers are paid to be effective, and to do this they must develop oral reading skills that are far more than adequate.

Make it a point to listen to as many music station radio personalities, newscasters, and documentary narrators as you can and study their deliveries. Decide for yourself who among them are true communicators. Few people think consciously about the communicative ability of announcers, but we are all certainly affected by it. We listen more to those who are best able to help us receive and assimilate ideas.

Radio announcers who believe that only their voices matter may attempt to project vitality without using body motion. Such playacting isn't likely to be convincing. Learn to announce for radio and television as though your listener were sitting nearby. Use your face, hands, and body just as you do in ordinary conversation. Integrating all tools of communication—verbal and nonverbal—will help you clarify and intensify your message, despite the fact that radio listeners can't see you. Appropriate gesturing for both radio and television is marked by two considerations: honest motivation and harmony with the importance and the mood of the ideas being expressed. Energy is easy to simulate, but unless a speaker is genuinely motivated by the content and purpose of a message, it usually comes across as phony. Uncalled-for enthusiasm hinders communication. Oversized grins, frowns, and grimaces and sweep-

**Figure 2.2**

Classical music announcer Al Covaia uses gestures as he ad-libs the introduction to a favorite work. Good oral communication requires that announcers give tone and interpretation to the words they speak. Al Covaia speaks not just with his voice but with his entire body; the result is an animated, conversational style that sounds like one person talking with another. (Courtesy of Al Covaia, producer/host KKHI-AM/FM, Corte Madera, CA)



ing arm movements are seldom appropriate to these intimate media. Good communication occurs when the listener or viewer receives an undistorted and meaningful impression of the ideas of the writer with appropriate emphasis given to each part of the message.

## Interpreting Copy

Superior interpretation demands a thorough understanding of the material to be presented. An announcer's top priority is understanding the intention of the writer. Announcers who speak words written by others are *interpretive artists*; even news anchors who write their own material must interpret copy. However beautiful your voice may be and however rapidly and unfalteringly you read copy, you're not truly a good announcer until you can communicate the ideas and values as the writer originally conceived them.

News anchors read some stories without preparation, as when they receive new or changed stories after they've gone on the air. They can work effectively with new or revised copy because at some earlier time in their careers they engaged in copy analysis and in deliberate and methodical practice. The best time to estab-

**Figure 2.3**

No news announcer should go on the air without studying the script to establish the pace, tone, and mood of each item. Bessie Moses, the radio announcer shown here, must do more than analyze the news—she also translates it into the Inupiaq Eskimo language. (Courtesy of KICY, Nome, Alaska)



lish a solid foundation in copy analysis is before your career depends on it.

Stanley T. Donner, professor emeritus of the University of Texas at Austin, has prepared an excellent approach to analyzing copy. He suggests using the checklist “Analyzing Broadcast Copy” to approach new copy. If you use this checklist for serious analysis of many different types of copy, you should develop the ability to size up new copy almost unconsciously.<sup>2</sup>



## CHECKLIST

### Analyzing Broadcast Copy

- 1. Read the copy as often as necessary to get the general meaning. If the message is brief and clearly written, perhaps one reading is enough; a longer or more complex script may require two or more readings to ferret out its meaning.

<sup>2</sup>Source: handout by Stanley Donner for a course in media performance.

- 2. Determine the objective of the message: state the specific purpose of the copy in one brief sentence.
- 3. Identify the general mood of the copy. Most short messages have one overriding mood; longer scripts often have shifts in mood.
- 4. After determining the general mood, locate any places where the mood changes.
5. Determine the copy's structure and its parts and mark the beginning and the end of each part. Longer scripts are composed of several parts.
6. Analyze punctuation to see what help it provides.
- 7. Note any words you don't fully understand or can't pronounce. It's good practice to underline for later research any words that are unclear or new to you.
- 8. Read the copy aloud.
- 9. Think about how you can convey interest in the copy's subject matter.
- 10. Visualize your listener. Establish a mental rapport and imagine you're actually talking to that person.
11. Find out any pertinent information about the origin and background of the copy.<sup>3</sup>
- 12. Decide if the copy calls for "straight" delivery or is written for a specific character type.

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<sup>3</sup>As noted elsewhere, news scripts are written with little time for preparation by news anchors, so careful analysis just isn't possible. However, the questions in this list *are* important for anyone preparing for a career as a news anchor. At a later date, when you're asked to read news stories handed to you just before air time, the hours of practice you now commit to reading and analyzing news copy will pay off.

Let's take a closer look at each of Donner's points.

### Identifying the General Meaning

Too much concentration on pronunciation or timing may obscure a script's overall meaning and purpose. Form an impression of the whole piece by silently reading through it at least twice—more

times, if necessary—before undertaking any of the more detailed work of preparation. Remember, though, that after these silent readings to determine meaning and purpose *all subsequent readings should be performed aloud*.

## Stating the Specific Purpose

Stating the specific purpose is the most important point on Donner's checklist. Just as it's pointless to begin a trip without deciding where you're going, it's foolish to begin interpreting copy without first knowing its goal. Sentences can be read in different ways depending on their context or purpose. Raising questions about the purpose of the copy will help you determine the most appropriate delivery.

Here's a recent example of an announcer failing to communicate the intent of a writer: In reading "Most of us want to succeed, not just get by" the announcer stressed *want* whereas the writer wanted to contrast two outlooks on life—*getting by* and *succeeding*. The sentence, as performed, was "Most of us *want* to succeed, not just get by" rather than "Most of us want to *succeed*, not just *get by*." This may seem a small point, but announcers who earn their living delivering messages risk their careers by such carelessness. Read this fifteen-second commercial and decide on its specific purpose:

ANNCR: See the all-new Jupiter, on display at Berger's Motorcar Center, 16th and Grand. You'll love its all-leather interior, high-tech styling, and out-of-this-world performance. If you want luxury in an automobile, come meet the Jupiter. America's answer to imports!

If you decided that the purpose of this copy is to awaken curiosity and interest in the new Jupiter, you analyzed it correctly. If you decided that its purpose is to promote the name and address of the sponsor, you were incorrect. The phrase *at Berger's Motorcar Center, 16th and Grand* is subordinate to the idea of *the all-new Jupiter*. Although it's unusual to subordinate the sponsor's name and ad-

dress, this copy clearly indicates that it should be done. Perhaps other commercials have built up sponsor identification over time. The moral here is that it's unsafe to assume that the name and address of the sponsor is to be stressed in all commercial copy. Now read this commercial for the same sponsor:

ANNCR: See the all-new Jupiter at Berger's Motorcar Center. Serving you since 1933, we offer total service and complete repair and parts departments. Credit cards gladly accepted. No appointment necessary. That's Berger's Motorcar Center, 16th and Grand.

This version uses phrases from the first commercial, but it's obvious that in the second version the name of the automobile is subordinate to the name of the sponsor. If, in analyzing this copy, you decided that its chief purpose is to impress on the audience the dealer's name, address, and reliability, you were correct.

## Identifying the General Mood

Having determined the purpose of the copy you next identify its **mood**, which will influence your **attitude as you read it**. The number of words in the copy will somewhat limit your control of mood, especially with commercial copy. Many commercials, particularly those written to send a fast-paced, high-energy message, may require you to read at your top rate of speed, and this will automatically lock you into the mood desired by the sponsor. In contrast, the commercials for Berger's Motorcar Center require you to read 44 words in about 15 seconds—or 176 words per minute—a comfortable rate for oral delivery that allows an opportunity to communicate a mood of interest as well as enthusiasm.

The commercial for Dairyland Longhorn Cheese (see Chapter 3, page 86) uses only seventy-eight words for a thirty-second spot. You should be able to “milk” this commercial as you gently evoke warm feelings about the product, nostalgia for the “good old days,” and (perhaps) hunger for Longhorn Cheese.

Excluding commercial announcements, which are written within rigid time limits, radio and television copy may be shortened

or lengthened to match the rate of delivery to a particular mood. For still other kinds of announcements—introductions of musical compositions, for example—mood more frequently relies on split-second timing than on length of time taken (as pointed out in Chapter 12, which discusses popular-music announcing). In sports-casting, the mood is set by the action of the game.

Because the mood of a piece of copy determines your attitude, you may find it helpful to attach an adjective to your script. Attitudes are described as *ironic*, *jocular*, *serious*, *somber*, *urgent*, *sad*, *light*, *gloomy*, and *sarcastic*. Read the following items aloud and communicate the indicated attitude of each. Convey the mood of each item, except the tornado reports, with only a hint of the suggested emotion.

### *Urgent*

(CHICAGO) THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HAS ISSUED TORNADO WARNINGS FOR THE ENTIRE UPPER MIDWEST. SMALL-CRAFT WARNINGS HAVE BEEN RAISED FOR LAKE MICHIGAN, AND BOAT OWNERS ARE URGED TO SECURE THEIR CRAFT AGAINST THE EXPECTED HEAVY WEATHER.

### *Somewhat Angry*

(MIAMI) A CIVILIAN PILOT HAS REPORTED SIGHTING TWO MORE OIL SLICKS OFF THE COAST OF FLORIDA NEAR FORT LAUDERDALE AND WEST PALM BEACH. CLEAN-UP CREWS ARE STILL AT WORK ON A MASSIVE OIL SLICK THAT SPREAD ONE WEEK AGO.

### *Slight Note of Victory—Winning One for the People*

(WASHINGTON) THE FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION HAS VOTED TO HALT SECRET CONGRESSIONAL "SLUSH FUNDS," A PRACTICE IN WHICH LAWMAKERS USE PRIVATE DONATIONS TO PAY PERSONAL AND OFFICE EXPENSES.

### *Very Urgent*

I'VE JUST BEEN GIVEN A BULLETIN THAT SAYS A TORNADO HAS BEEN SPOTTED ABOUT TWENTY MILES FROM DULUTH. THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL DETAILS AT THIS TIME, BUT WE'LL GIVE YOU MORE DETAILS AS WE RECEIVE THEM.

### *Straightforward*

(WASHINGTON) THE GOVERNMENT SAID YESTERDAY THAT PEOPLE ARE TAKING BETTER CARE OF THEMSELVES NOW THAN EVER BEFORE, AND THAT THE PROBLEM NOW IS TO FIND WAYS TO CARE FOR THE LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO LIVE LONGER AS A RESULT. OUR NATION'S SUCCESS IN KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY AND HELPING THEM TO LIVE LONGER IS PLACING GREAT STRESS ON THE NATION'S HEALTH CARE RESOURCES.

### *Light, Slightly Humorous*

(MONTPELIER, VERMONT) IT TOOK EIGHTEEN DAYS, BUT SEARCHERS HAVE FINALLY TRANQUILIZED ONE OF THE BABY ELEPHANTS LOST IN THE WOODS. THE MANAGER OF THE CARSON AND BARNES CIRCUS SAYS THE ELEPHANT WILL BE TIED TO A TREE IN AN EFFORT TO LURE THE OTHER OUT OF HIDING.

## **Determining Changes in Mood**

A long piece of copy may contain several moods even if the dominant mood remains constant. A familiar construction for commercial copy calls for a change from concern to joy as the announcer first describes a common problem and then tells how Product X can solve it. Spot such changes in mood as you give your copy a preliminary reading and note them on your script. Unless the script calls for mock-serious delivery, be careful not to exaggerate the moods.

In a lengthy television documentary or a thirty- or sixty-minute radio or television newscast, changes of mood come more often and should be reflected in your delivery. When you monitor newscasts, notice such changes and how speakers reflect the shifting moods. Effective use of variations in mood add much to the flow, unity, and overall meaning of a presentation. As you practice, try to find transitional words or phrases to shift mood; *meanwhile*, *locally*, *in other news*, or *on a lighter note* are examples of this.

In newscasting, changes in mood usually take place between the end of one story and the opening lines of the next. Many newscasts, however, begin with brief headlines that call for abrupt changes in mood within a short span of time. Read the following headlines and determine the mood of each:

HERE IS THE LATEST NEWS: OVER EIGHT INCHES OF RAIN HAS FALLEN ON EASTERN IOWA IN THE PAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, AND THERE ARE REPORTS OF WIDESPREAD DAMAGE AND SOME DEATHS.

A CHICAGO WOMAN WHO CLAIMED SHE KILLED HER HUSBAND IN SELF-DEFENSE AFTER TEN YEARS OF BEATINGS HAS BEEN ACQUITTED BY AN ALL-MALE JURY.

A FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD MILWAUKEE BOY HAS BEEN AWARDED THE CITY'S HEROISM MEDAL FOR RESCUING AN INFANT FROM A SWIMMING POOL.

A THREATENED STRIKE OF MUSICIANS AND STAGEHANDS AT THE CITY OPERA HAS BEEN AVERTED, AND THE SEASON WILL OPEN AS SCHEDULED.

AND, THERE'S JOY AT THE ZOO TONIGHT BECAUSE OF THE BIRTH OF A LITTER OF LIGERS—OR IS IT TIGONS?—ANYWAY, THE FATHER IS A LION, AND THE MOTHER IS A TIGER.

I'LL HAVE DETAILS ON THESE AND OTHER STORIES AFTER THESE MESSAGES.

The range of emotions inherent in these stories requires rapid changes of mood—a challenge that newscasters face daily.

## Determining Parts and Structure

Almost any example of well-written copy shows clearly defined parts. On the most basic level, copy may be broken down into a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning is the introduction and customarily is used to gain attention. The middle, or body, contains most of the information. In commercials the middle often states the advantages of this product over all others. A news story carries most of the information in the middle. The end generally sums up the most important points. Commercials frequently urge action or repeat the name, address, and telephone number of the sponsor.

In most copy these three parts may be further subdivided. Commercial copy that attempts to give rational reasons for buying a particular product frequently follows this organization:

1. Capture the attention of the listener or viewer.
2. Give some concrete reason for further interest and attention.
3. Explain why this product or service is superior.
4. Mention or imply a price lower than the listener has been led to expect.
5. Repeat some of the selling points.
6. Repeat the sponsor's name and address or phone number.

Here's an example of a commercial written according to this formula that represents a type of commercial often heard on radio. Look for the parts and notice how they conform to the six-part outline. (SFX is an abbreviation for *sound effects*.)

AGENCY: Reist Advertising, Inc.

CLIENT: Mertel's Coffee Mills

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Are you a coffee lover? Most Americans are. Would you like to enter the world of gourmet coffees? Mertel's can help.

SFX: SOUND OF COFFEE BEING POURED INTO CUP

ANNCR: Gourmet coffee begins with whole beans, carefully selected, freshly roasted.

SFX: SOUND OF COFFEE BEANS BEING GROUND

ANNCR: Gourmet coffee is ground at home, just before brewing. Choose your coffee according to your taste and the time of day. A rich but mild mocha java for breakfast. A hearty French roast for that midday pickup. A nutty Arabian with dinner. And a Colombian decaf before bed. Sound inviting? You bet. Sound expensive? Not so. Mertel's Coffee Mills feature forty types of coffee beans from around the world, and some are only pennies more per pound than canned coffees. And there's always a weekly special. This week, it's Celebes Kalossi, at just \$6.99 a pound! Remember—if you want gourmet coffee, begin with whole beans and grind them just before brewing. So, come to Mertel's Coffee Mills, and move into the world of gourmet coffee! We're located at the Eastside Mall, and on Fifth Street in downtown Dickinson. Mertel's Coffee Mills.

Outstanding commercials are both subtle and complex. Chapter 8 provides analyses of superior commercials.

## Analyzing Punctuation Marks Used in Scripts

In addition to the symbols of ideas we call words, writers use punctuation marks to show their intentions regarding mood and meaning. Although you should pay attention to the punctuation in your copy, you needn't be a slave to it. Writers punctuate copy to suit their ideas of how it should be interpreted. When you perform it, you need to make the copy your own—to make it true to your particular personality. Therefore, repunctuate as appropriate.

Punctuation marks such as diacritical marks that indicate pronunciation are so small and differ so subtly that they may cause occasional difficulties for an announcer—especially when copy must be sight read. Announcers working with written material need near-perfect eyesight; some wear reading glasses during their air shifts or recording sessions even though they wear reading glasses at no other time. Whenever possible, review your copy prior to air time and, if you find it helpful or necessary, add to and enlarge punctuation marks. (Some suggestions for adding enlarged punctuation marks are found on pages 43–44.)

You probably already have a good grasp of punctuation, so the review that follows discusses only a few specific punctuation marks and comments only on their uses as they relate to writing and interpreting scripts.

**The Period** The period is used to mark the end of a sentence or to show that a word has been abbreviated. In written copy, abbreviations and acronyms such as *FBI*, *NATO*, and *AFL-CIO* appear without periods. Some news departments ask writers to place hyphens between letters in abbreviations that are not acronyms, for example, *F-B-I*. Abbreviations such as *Ms.* and *Mr.* may appear with or without concluding periods.

Periods at the ends of sentences mark places for the oral reader to take a breath. Use periods for this purpose but let the mood of the copy tell you how long to pause.

**The Comma** The comma usually marks a slight pause in broadcast speech that also gives you an opportunity to breathe. For this reason, good writing for oral delivery uses commas with precision and with frequency. As a student, you may find it appropriate to use many commas when writing copy for broadcasting classes and con-

**Figure 2.4**

Sports play-by-play announcer Ted Robinson calls nearly 200 baseball games a season, starting in spring training and (if successful on the field) through the post-season. It takes a healthy vocal mechanism to sustain such a challenge. (Courtesy of Ted Robinson and San Francisco Giants)



siderably fewer when writing papers and essays for, say, English composition teachers who might favor long, complex sentences.

**The Question Mark** The question mark appears at the end of a sentence that asks a question. In marking copy you may find it helpful to follow the Spanish practice of placing an upside-down question mark (¿) at the beginning of a question so that you'll know it's interrogatory as you begin to read it.

**Quotation Marks** Quotation marks are used in broadcast copy for two purposes: to indicate that words between the marks are a word-for-word quotation and as a substitute for italics. The first use is found extensively in news copy:

. . . HE SAID AN ANONYMOUS MALE CALLER TOLD HIM TO "GET OUT OF THE CASE OR YOU WILL GET BUMPED OFF."

In reading the next sentence you can indicate the presence of a quotation by the inflection of your voice or you can add words of your own to make clear that it's a direct quotation:

. . . HE SAID AN ANONYMOUS MALE CALLER TOLD HIM TO, AND THIS IS A QUOTATION (OR AND I QUOTE), "GET OUT OF THE CASE OR YOU WILL GET BUMPED OFF."

Don't say "unquote" at the end of a quotation; you can't cancel out a quotation you've just given.

Quotation marks sometimes replace italics in news copy, although this practice is disappearing as computers allow writers to easily italicize words:

. . . HIS NEW BOOK, "READING FOR FUN," HAS BEEN ON THE "TIMES" BESTSELLER LIST FOR THREE MONTHS.

**Parentheses** Although parenthetical remarks—remarks that are important but not necessary to the remainder of the sentence and are separated from the rest of the sentence by parentheses—appear occasionally in radio and television copy, the same result is achieved with dashes as in this sentence. Parentheses in radio and television copy set apart instructions to the audio operator, indicate music cues, and contain instructions or interpretations for the announcer or the performer:

(SFX: OFFICE SOUNDS)

(MUSIC UP AND UNDER)

(SLIGHT PAUSE)

(MOVE TO SOFA)

Words and sentences within parentheses are not read aloud by announcers.

Parenthetical remarks sometimes appear in newspaper copy, usually for purposes of clarification:

Senator Johnson said that he called the widow and demanded that she "return my (love) letters immediately."

**Figure 2.5**

Al Hart marks copy prior to air time. Although he's had years of professional experience as a news anchor and voice-over announcer, he takes nothing for granted; he continues to prepare thoroughly for each air shift and commercial assignment. Figure 2.6 is a commercial marked by Al Hart before recording. (Courtesy of Al Hart and KCBS, San Francisco)



A newspaper reader can see that the word *love* has been added by a reporter or editor. If this copy were used on the air, the announcer must indicate that (*love*) had been added by an editor or a writer or risk misrepresenting the senator's statement.

**Ellipses** An ellipsis marks an omission of words in a sentence. This punctuation is a sequence of three or four periods called ellipses. These rarely appear in broadcast copy but may appear in newspaper copy:

Senator Marble stated yesterday, "I do not care what the opposition may think, I . . . want only what is best for my country."

In this example ellipses indicate that one or several words have been omitted from the original quotation. Because there's no way to indicate this on the air, this and similar edited quotations should be avoided.

**Newswriters often use ellipses to mark the ends of sentences and as a substitute for commas, dashes, semicolons, and colons;**

"The mayor was late to his swearing-in ceremony today. . . . He told those who had gathered for the ceremony . . . some two hundred supporters . . . that he had been held up in traffic."

**Figure 2.6**

A commercial marked by Al Hart before being recorded.

GALLO SALAME, INC. Edward J. McElroy, Inc.

60 SECONDS

In this day and age when everybody seems to be in a hurry, maybe you'd like to hear about a food that takes its own sweet time. That food is/Gallo Italian Dry Salame. Gallo is made the fine old Italian way, with no spices or herbs added. It starts with superb beef and pork (mixed together), then slowly and patiently aged/to develop its unique, tantalizing flavor . . . a flavor you simply can't get in a hurry. Maybe that's why Gallo Italian Dry Salame is the choice of people who take the time to appreciate/the finer things in life. Maybe that's why Gallo Italian Dry Salame adds so much pleasure to that "quiet hour" before dinner. Tomorrow night, serve a tray of thin Gallo Italian Dry Salame slices with your favorite beverage. It's a beautiful Italian way to relax/and unwind. Gallo Italian Dry Salame is waiting in the deli case . . . waiting patiently for you . . . very patiently.

This practice is regrettable but so widespread that you can expect to be asked at some time to work from copy so punctuated. Should you become a newswriter, you may be expected to write copy in this style. Such punctuation is workable, but ellipses flatten the shades of meaning conveyed by more specific punctuation marks.

## Marking Copy

Because punctuation marks are quite small, most announcers substitute nonstandard punctuation marks that are much larger and easier to read:

- A slanted line called a virgule (/) is placed between words to approximate the comma.

- BOX ALL WORDS THAT YOU MAY HAVE A PROBLEM WITH.

- Two virgules (//) are placed between sentences or between words to indicate a longer pause.
- Words to be stressed are underlined. Some announcers mark copy with a colored highlighter to indicate words, phrases, and sentences to be stressed. Of course, this practice applies only when working with *printed* scripts—as when recording voice tracks for commercials or documentaries. Copy read from a prompter or a computer screen can't be highlighted.
- Question marks and exclamation marks are enlarged.
- An upside-down question mark (¿) is placed at the beginning of any interrogatory sentence.
- An upside-down exclamation point (¡) is placed at the beginning of any exclamatory sentence.
- Crescendo (Λ) and decrescendo (V) marks indicate that a passage is to receive an increase or a decrease in stress.
- USE A CLOUD AROUND KEY WORDS IN THE ARTICLE.

## Verifying Meaning and Pronunciation

To interpret someone else's copy you must understand the meanings of the words used. Most copy makes use of familiar words, so questions about the meaning or the pronunciation of words in your script are rare. However, some scripts are written for narrow target audiences, and unfamiliar words may cause you problems in interpretation or pronunciation. Cultivate the habit of looking up all unfamiliar words in an authoritative dictionary. Develop a healthy skepticism about your own vocabulary; through years of silent reading you've probably learned to settle for approximate meanings of many words. As a quick test, how many of these words can you define and use correctly?

voilà (French)	fulsome
impassible	rhetoric
burlesque	capricious
ordnance	catholic (uncapitalized)

Check your definitions against those in any standard dictionary. We frequently see and hear some of these words; others only sound or look familiar.

Be equally skeptical of your ability to pronounce words correctly. Correct pronunciation is as important as accurate under-

standing. Check your pronunciation of each word in Table 2.1 against the correct pronunciation, which is shown with three different systems of phonetic transcription.

Appendix B is a pronunciation guide for 303 often-mispronounced words. Use it to enlarge your speaking vocabulary.

In addition to using and pronouncing words correctly, you must understand allusions in your copy. An **allusion** is an indirect but pointed or meaningful reference. Writers sometimes use phrases from the Bible, mythology, Shakespeare, and other sources from past or current literature. Explanations of the following phrases appear in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and collections of well-known myths. These allusions aren't common but might appear in your copy. If you don't know their origins, search them out. (All four may be found in the *American Heritage Dictionary*.)

He was considered a quisling.

She was given to malapropisms.

He added his John Hancock.

He suffered as painfully as Job.

During your career you may read copy written by hundreds of people, each drawing on a separate fund of knowledge. You can't expect to recognize every allusion in every piece. You can, however, cultivate the self-discipline to track down unfamiliar allusions and not assume that the context will clarify an allusion for the audience even if *you* don't understand it.

**TABLE 2.1** Correct Pronunciation of Some Tricky Words

Word	IPA	Diacritics	Wire-Service System
drought	[draʊt]	/drouʔ/	(DROWHT)
forehead	['fɔrɪd]	/fôr'īd/	(FOR'-IHD)
toward	[tɔrd]	/tôrd/	(TAWRD)
diphtheria	[dɪf'θɪriə]	/dīf-thîr' -ē-ə/	(DIFF-THIR' -EE-UH)
accessories	[æk'sesəriz]	/āk-sēs'ər-ēz/	(AK-SESS' -UH-REEZ)
quay	[ki]	/kē/	(KEE)
pestle	['pɛsl]	/pēs'əl/	(PES' -UHL)
worsted	['wɔstɪd]	/woos'tīd/	(WUHSS' -TIHD)

## Reading Aloud

Because you'll perform *aloud*, you should practice *reading aloud*. Copy written for radio or television differs from copy written for newspapers, magazines, and books. Good broadcast copy usually makes poor silent reading. Short, incomplete, or ungrammatical sentences often appear in perfectly acceptable radio and television scripts:

ANNCR: Been extra tired lately? You know, sort of logy and dull? Tired and weary—maybe a little cranky, too? Common enough, this time of year. The time of year when colds are going around. And when we have to be especially careful of what we eat. Vitamin deficiency can be the cause of that “down-and-out” feeling. And Supertabs, the multiple vitamin, can be the answer . . .

This is quite different from copy an agency would write to advertise the same product in a newspaper. Reading it effectively requires skill developed most rapidly by practicing aloud.

## Reading Ahead

A lengthy script requires reading for extended periods of time, reading everything before you, reading it accurately and with appropriate expression, and doing all of this with little opportunity to rest your eyes. You can't afford to make even the minor errors the silent reader may make, such as skipping over words or sentences, passing over difficult material or unfamiliar words, and resting your eyes when they become tired.

One way of giving your eyes the rest they need is by reading ahead. Reading ahead means that your eyes are several words ahead of your voice as you read the copy. When your eyes have

reached the end of the sentence, you can glance away from your script while you finish speaking the words. In this sentence, when your voice is at about *this point*, your eyes should be about *here*. Practice this technique, and you should be able to read even lengthy scripts without excessive eyestrain. But as you practice make certain you don't fall into the irritating habit of reading ahead and then developing a monotonous, decelerating speech pattern at the end of every sentence. Guard against unconsciously relaxing your interpretation as you rest your eyes.

## Conveying Interest in Your Material

Whatever its purpose or nature, you must show interest in the copy you read if you're to communicate it effectively. Most of the time, as when delivering the news or narrating a documentary, you'll have a genuine interest in the subject. At other times, for example when reading a commercial for a product you don't use or perhaps even dislike, you may have difficulty feeling genuine interest. As a professional, you can't afford to show disinterest in or disrespect for the copy you're paid to read. You must put your biases aside and become an intermediary between people who supply information and people who receive it. You act as a magnifying glass: it's your job to enhance perceptions with the least possible distortion.

If you're asked to perform a commercial for a product you know to be shoddy or misrepresented, then your conscience should take over. And, if you are asked to read copy that you find offensive, find out if it's possible to have the copy changed.

Established professionals may occasionally decline an announcing assignment to avoid being associated with a particular product. As a beginner, though, you'll jeopardize future job opportunities if you're seen as being too "choosy." The problem cited here may never arise but, if it does, your response should be based on your personal values; long before such a predicament arises, you should have determined the lengths to which you'll go to advance your career, and the point at which you'll walk away from a job. Only you can make such decisions.

Even when working with good copy for reputable advertisers, it's impossible to develop a belief in every commercial cause. Here are two suggestions that may help you:

1. When you must read commercials for many different products, and you find it impossible to develop honest enthusiasm for all of them, your best option is to read each with as much effectiveness and interpretive skill as possible.
2. When you're in the enviable position of being the exclusive speaker for a product or have had a long personal relationship with a sponsor, gain firsthand knowledge of the product and communicate your honest belief in it.

Assuming that your announcing copy deserves genuine interest, how can you reflect it in your interpretation? Honest enthusiasm is seldom noisy or obtrusive. It manifests itself in inner vitality and quiet conviction. As a radio or television commercial announcer, you won't be dealing with life-or-death matters, and you'll be speaking, in effect, to small groups of people who are only a few feet away. In a sense you're their guest. Your conviction is revealed through a steady focus on your listeners and through your earnestness and your personality. These recommendations don't rule out the possibility of a humorous commercial or introduction. Being sincere doesn't mean being somber!

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## Talking to the Listener

Most of this chapter has emphasized the challenge of *reading* scripts. It might be better to consider your job one of *talking* scripts. Even though you work from a script, and your listeners know it, they appreciate it when you sound as though you're not merely reading aloud. The best way to achieve a conversational style is to visualize the person to whom you're speaking and "talk" your message to that person. Of course, some scripts lend themselves more readily to intimate delivery than others.

When asked to interpret a piece of copy, ask yourself several questions:

Who am I as I read this piece?

To whom am I speaking?

To how many people am I speaking?

How old is the person to whom I'm speaking?  
Where am I as I speak?<sup>4</sup>

See also the section "Achieving a Conversational Style" in Chapter 7, "Performance."



## SPOTLIGHT

### Learning to Sound Local By Dan O'Day

As a transplanted DJ, new to an unfamiliar market, one of your most urgent requirements is to learn about your new community as quickly as possible. Listeners will "turn off" in short order if you mispronounce local place names or call activities or foods by names the locals don't use. To learn how to "sound local," leave the station and enlist the aid of others—friends, landlords, strangers, shopkeepers, taxi drivers—to get answers to basic questions about your new home town. Don't accept one person's answer as correct, though; look for a consensus. Here are some particularly important areas to research.

#### Lingo

In the North, people "go to movies." In the Deep South, folks "go to the show." Similarly, New Englanders have a "cookout," and Westerners have a "barbecue."

What words will brand you as an outsider if you pronounce them the "wrong" way? For instance, do locals pronounce *route* as *root* or *rowt*? Pay special attention to people or places that outsiders are known to mangle. South Florida has a town named Riviera Beach. The first word is pronounced *riv-ee-air-uh*, right? Not if you're a local. Only a tourist enunciates all four syllables. Locals say "Rivera"—as in Geraldo.

I was raised in a big city, but my first radio job was in rural Virginia. When I read a live spot for farm equipment, I pronounced *Deere*—as in *John Deere*—*Deerie*. Local listeners knew right away I was a foreigner. Make a list of twenty difficult-to-pronounce names of streets, parks, or prominent citizens.

<sup>4</sup>This list of questions applies to some kinds of copy, especially to commercials, documentary narratives, essays, and public service announcements (PSAs). The questions don't apply to reading news reports, because time limits restrict opportunities to study news copy.

### **Government**

Does your community have a mayor, city manager, or both? If it has a board, who is in charge—a city council or board of supervisors? Are these officials elected in general or district elections? How long are the terms of office?

Find out which politicians have been on the scene forever. Ask how long the mayor has been in office. Talk to people about current political controversies. What's the best-known political scandal of the past ten years? What about the police department? Does the police chief get along with the mayor? What was the last big police department controversy?

### **Education**

Find out the hottest issue in the public school system. Learn which schools are considered the best academically and which are the worst. How do the schools compare to schools in other regions of the country? Which schools are the best in sports?

### **Sports**

Speaking of sports, what are the local high school dynasties, rivalries, and mascots? Who are the leading coaches? Connecticut has duckpin bowling. Florida has jai-alai. What sports are played in your region but unknown to many others?

### **Food Facts**

In Philadelphia, you order a hoagie. To get the same thing in New York, you ask for a hero. In some places it's a submarine; in others, a grinder.

Local dishes may sound odd to out-of-towners but may be sources of pride to the community. What are they? And what about the bread served in local restaurants? San Francisco's big on sourdough; Los Angeles restaurants often serve multigrain. These little details are important.

Are people health-conscious—or do they think a bran muffin is some sort of Danish roll? What are the most common ethnic restaurants? What are the most expensive, romantic, or famous restaurants? Which restaurants are famous for their bad food?

### **Heroes**

There are bound to be local heroes. Find out who they are and don't make fun of them. Who are the high school, college, and professional sports legends? Which celebrities were born or reared in the community?

**Working World**

Research the top ten industries or biggest employers. Which companies are popular or unpopular? What's the local unemployment rate—and how does it compare to the rest of the region? What is the starting salary of a policeman? Of a teacher?

**Getting Around**

Some places have subways, some have buses, some have both. What's the mass transit system, how much does it cost, and who uses it? What is its reputation for safety, cleanliness, comfort, reliability, and convenience?

What cars dominate the streets and highways? Toyotas and Nissans are ubiquitous in Southern California, but are rare—and sometimes reviled—in Michigan. What models are the most popular—subcompacts, luxury sedans, station wagons, cars with four-wheel drive? Do people have car phones or CB radios?

What are the most dangerous intersections? Where will you be stuck the longest at a red light? Which freeways (or sections of freeway) are most congested at what times?

**Neighborhoods**

Discover the names of various ethnic neighborhoods and where they are located. Is there a gay section? What's the most expensive area? Which neighborhoods are the most crime-ridden?

**Lifestyles**

Investigate the locals' favorite weekend activities. Where are the hot spots for singles? Where do teens, yuppies, seniors, and other groups hang out? Where is the local lovers' lane? When do people eat dinner—5:30, 9:00 p.m.?

One local newspaper is probably read more than the others. Certain movies do better than others. And the community is bound to have particular political and social leanings. Find out what they are. Do any seemingly mundane subjects lead to controversy? What are the worst bugs or pests? What do the locals think of their drinking water? Is there one tragedy in the community's history you should never joke about?

Finally, discover the local tourist attractions and what people think of them.

## Researching Background about Authors and Copy

Unlike reading brief commercials, which tend to be self-explanatory, you'll be better able to interpret longer and more complex pieces of copy if you know something about the author and the author's intentions.

What should you find out before narrating the following pieces?

A miniseries of television packages on the problems of inner cities  
A program on world hunger

A program on the works of a great painter

An instructional tape on the use of a particular personal computer

Each of these topics requires some specialized knowledge and an understanding of the author's intentions. Commercials are designed to sell products or services, but what are the purposes of programs such as those listed? One good way to find out is by talking to writers, producers, and directors. On a basic level, you'll learn whether the program is intended to be objective and factual or a position statement. You may also discover the mood the writer intends to convey. You can question passages that puzzle you, as when there's an allusion that's unfamiliar, and you can suggest changes when, for example, you feel that a specific word might be misunderstood or when a passage contains too many sibilant or plosive sounds.

You also can check on the pronunciation of names or words. Usually you'll ask only about those that are unfamiliar to you *and* where you've had no chance to check on pronunciation before arriving at the studio. When narrating a travel documentary, for example, you may ask, "What's the correct pronunciation of Çatalhöyük?" or, "How do I say *Trondheim*?" At other times, you'll ask about a name that's ambiguous in our culture: "Do you want 'Braun' pronounced BRAWN or BROWN?" or "Is Christiansen 'KRIS-chun-sun' or 'KRIS-ten-sun'?" A mature working relationship prevails when those in charge understand that any instruction that helps you "get it right," ensures a better production.



**Figure 2.7**

For commercials, industrial videos, or feature productions, you may need to employ characterization to convey different sorts of personalities and voices. Here actress Katie Leigh records a child's voice for a television cartoon series.

(Courtesy of Hanna-Barbera Productions)

## Employing Characterization

You may be asked at times to read copy that requires you to use a regional or "foreign" accent, or project a specific "personality," such

as a bully or a wimp. Before starting to practice with such copy, make all of your key decisions about the purpose of the copy, its mood, the person or persons to whom you are speaking, and so on. First get the interpretation down, and then add the character voice. Courses in acting and participation in plays (stage and television plays) will help you learn character development and interpretation.

Make sure that when a reading calls for a regional dialect or foreign accent you don't project an offensive stereotype. Today's world of broadcasting has no room for messages that demean any segment of society. Commercials that offend an ethnic group or people living in a particular region have been taken off the air. See Chapter 8, "Commercials and Public-Service Announcements," for a discussion of accents, dialects, and character voices. The Chapter 8 Spotlight, "Tips from a Voice-over Pro," offers many suggestions on interpreting copy.

## **Dramatized Commercials**

Most of the commercials used so far to illustrate principles of interpretation and delivery have been straight narrative spots. But many commercials are written as brief dramatic sketches, and voice-over announcers must be as versatile and effective when acting a part as when delivering straight commercial messages.

Dramatized spots are likely to require "characterization," briefly defined as the depiction of the personality, mood, and other qualities that make one person—the person portrayed—different from others. Good characterization in a drama (even in a thirty- or sixty-second dramatized commercial) helps an audience quickly identify the nature of the person speaking. Think of Dana Carvey when he adopts the personality of Ross Perot, or of Seinfeld's pal, George, as he whines his way through life, and you immediately recognize key aspects of the personalities of those being portrayed.

The following commercial for Hostess Lights features two performers. Here are some suggestions for individualizing them. First, although the script calls for two male performers, it's equally effective with two women or one actor of each gender. If both actors are of the same gender, it's important that listeners be able to distinguish one voice from the other. This can be achieved in several ways: one voice can be higher in pitch, one can show more energy than the other, one can speak slowly and the other rapidly, one can speak Standard American English and the other a regional dialect,

or one voice can be full and resonant and the other thin and flat. When adopting any of these means of individualizing a character, make sure you avoid cliché-ridden stereotypes.<sup>5</sup>

As you read the commercial, remember that the key to effective performance is timing; be certain to pick up most cues rapidly, but pause slightly when interpretation calls for it.

AGENCY: SPLASH RADIO

CLIENT: HOSTESS

PRODUCT: HOSTESS LIGHTS

"Fat Farm" as produced

*SFX: BIRDS CHIRPING*

MAN: So, let me get this straight. You grow fat?

GUY: Uh-huh, I'm a fat farmer.

MAN: Where do you grow this fat?

GUY: Right here. On my fat farm.

MAN: Mm-hmm.

GUY: See, I plant the little fat globules in the furrows and they grow into these giant, majestic stalks of fat!

MAN: Stalks of fat . . .

GUY: Well, you know all those fatty snack foods you ate as a kid . . .

MAN: Uh-huh . . .

GUY: Well, I grow the fat they put in 'em.

MAN: So, you'll be closing down soon? . . .

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<sup>5</sup>The commercial for Hostess Lights was created by Eric Poole, founder of Splash Radio. Several other commercials by this award-winning writer may be found in Appendix A.

GUY: (GASP) Closing down?

MAN: Now that Hostess has introduced the world's first light snack cakes . . .

GUY: Light snack cakes?

MAN: Hostess Lights. Four different mouthwatering snack cakes, like chocolate cake with raspberry filling.

GUY: Oh, boy . . .

GUY: And they're light?

MAN: Yep. No cholesterol, and 97% fat free.

GUY: Fat free?

MAN: Fat free.

GUY: But this is a fat farm. I grow fat!

MAN: I know you do.

GUY: If Hostess is making fat-free snack cakes, what'll I grow?

MAN: Well, they'll still need all those delicious fillings.

GUY: Well, there you go. I'll plant pudding.

ANNCR: New Hostess Lights snack cakes in four delicious flavors. No cholesterol and 97% fat free. Now you can have your cake and eat it, too.

Two sections of Appendix A, "Commercials" and "PSAs," includes several dramatized commercials. Practicing with them will improve your ability to play a role, sharpen your timing, and enhance your ability to work with other voice-over performers.

You can't, of course, apply every one of the points discussed in this chapter each time you pick up a piece of copy. Use the suggestions to help you spot your weaknesses and measure your progress. In time you'll develop a conditioned reflex that allows you to size up a script and interpret it effectively without relying on a checklist.

***PRACTICE*****Analyzing the Delivery  
of Professional Announcers**

Make an audio recording of a radio or television news-cast or a talk show and listen to it as often as necessary to analyze each of these factors:

- Voice quality of announcers
- Quality of articulation
- Too much or too little vitality
- Avoidance or use of predictable pitch patterns
- Ability to get a point across
- Ability to hold attention
- Ability to communicate appropriate emotions

***PRACTICE*****Effecting Mood Changes**

Make an audiotape of a news anchor delivering three stories, each of which calls for a different mood. Determine the techniques used to change from one mood to another.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Talking a Script**

Use the following two scripts to practice talking scripts. The Blue Cross script should be delivered in a straightforward, matter-of-fact manner. The Six Flags commercial is marvelous for practicing changes in rate of delivery, pitch, and volume, as well as for practicing conversational style. Both commercials defy conventional rules of structure, and both benefit from their originality. Sound effects enhance both.

AGENCY: Allen and Dorward

CLIENT: Blue Cross of Northern California

LENGTH: 60 seconds

MUSIC: LOUD MUSIC

MOM: Annie . . . would you turn that down, please?

MUSIC: MUSIC DOWN AND UNDER

MOM: Thank you, dear. I'm a working mother with two teenage girls. Sometimes, it seems that they're at that difficult age. Sometimes, it seems they've been there for years. I've got my own business and we're all healthy. When I opened my shop, I signed up for Blue Cross protection. I looked at other health plans, but it was obvious that the Blue Cross Concept One Hundred Plan had everything we needed . . . and, I can afford it!

Last spring, Cindy was in the hospital for a few days. Nothing serious . . . but I know how much it would have cost me. Believe me. Plenty!

(START FADE) I just couldn't handle a bill like that alone.

ANNCR: There's no reason for you to handle it alone. Our Blue Cross Concept One Hundred Plan offers a full range of benefits for your growing family. See our ad in this Sunday's magazine section or TV Guide or call eight hundred . . . six, four, eight . . . forty-eight hundred. Blue Cross.

MOM: As a single parent, I've made a lot of decisions. Blue Cross was one of the best.

AGENCY: McDonald & Little Advertising

CLIENT: Six Flags

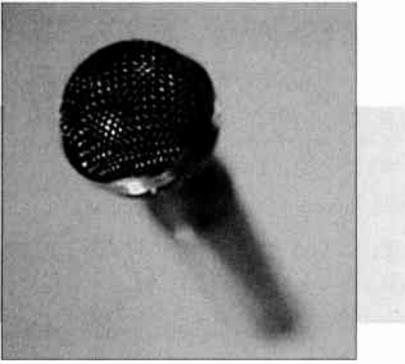
CAMPAIGN: New Season

LENGTH: 60 seconds

TITLE: It Starts Off Slowly

ANNCR: It starts off slowly at first, climbing upward at maybe two miles an hour. Then it hits the crest, picks up speed, and before you know it, it happens. The ground is gone. The world is a blur far below; look down if you dare. And don't think about the fact that you're moving at almost a mile a minute and headed straight down into a lake. Or that you're screaming and laugh-

ing at the same time. It's all in good fun. Here on the biggest, fastest, highest roller coaster in the world. The Great American Scream Machine. Just one of the many, many new experiences now at the new Six Flags Over Georgia. There's a whole lot of new to do this year at Six Flags. Things you'll never forget. Because good times here are not forgotten.



# 3

## Voice Analysis and Improvement

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- The Importance of Voice Improvement
- Speech Personality
- Analyzing Your Speech
- Voice Analysis
  - Pitch
  - Volume
  - Tempo
  - Vitality, Energy
- Voice Quality
  - Resonance versus Thinness
  - Breathing and Breathing Exercises
- SPOTLIGHT: Improving Your Voice Personality
- Common Voice Problems
  - Nasality and Denasality
  - Huskiness
  - Excessive Sibilance

Your voice is the most important instrument of communication you possess. Whether or not you intend to enter the field of announcing, you'll use your voice daily for the rest of your life. You should make every effort to polish your speaking voice, to eliminate harsh or shrill sounds, and to articulate words clearly—in short, to develop the most pleasant and effective speaking voice you're capable of producing.

---

## The Importance of Voice Improvement

It's impossible to overemphasize the importance of voice training for those who intend to spend a career speaking to others through the electronic media of audio and video. Announcers often are *unseen* (as in radio and in television voice-overs), but they always are *heard*. Few of us reach adulthood with voices that are developed to their full potential. The sound—the tonal quality, the resonance, the “music”—of an announcer's voice requires training and practice. This text offers many suggestions for analyzing voice quality and thereby pinpointing what needs work. It also provides many readings designed to help you improve your voice quality. No one but you can improve your voice; teachers and voice coaches can, of course, provide assistance and encouragement, but they have no magic wand to wave. They can't “confer” voice improvement on you. Only by taking seriously the challenge of improving your voice and by practicing regularly can you develop your vocal instrument into one that reaches its full potential. If you want to succeed in a career that is basically the art of talking to others through the electronic media, a serious and thorough analysis and many hours of subsequent practice are mandatory.

This chapter will help you identify problems of voice quality, and provide you with exercises for speech improvement. Chapter 4 is devoted to the analysis and improvement of pronunciation and articulation. Please understand that neither chapter is a substitute for speech therapy where significant problems exist.

In discussing speech sounds of American English, the symbols of wire-service transcription, diacritical marks, and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) are used. However, these chapters (and, indeed, the entire book) can be studied without knowledge of any system of phonetic transcription.

Even if yours is a naturally pleasant voice, you can improve its quality. Just as some people exercise to strengthen their biceps or thigh muscles, you can exercise to strengthen your voice. Most authorities on voice improvement suggest that students read nearly everything—newspapers, magazines, textbooks—aloud. As you exercise your voice in this way, you'll find that you're able to speak without strain for long periods of time (some on-air shifts are four or more hours in duration) and that your pitch range has increased by at least half an octave.

Most professional announcers have excellent voices. Both male and female announcers tend to have moderately low, resonant voices. They speak at an ideal rate of speed for easy comprehension, and they articulate words and phrases with clarity and precision. Some sports announcers and commercial pitch “artists” (announcers of commercials who speak at a rate in excess of two hundred words per minute) are exceptions. News anchors and reporters, documentary narrators, talk-show hosts, interviewers, and classical and popular music announcers must have pleasant voices and speak at a comfortable and easily understood rate of delivery.

As a radio announcer, you’ll rely totally on your voice for the communication of messages; on television, your voice is only slightly less important. It’s essential that you protect this instrument. Yelling until hoarse at sports events and smoking are two ways of “losing” or seriously impairing your voice. In addition to affecting voice quality, smoking cigarettes will decrease your lung capacity, and this in turn will negatively affect your breathing. At worst, smoking can cause a permanently hoarse voice, a rasping cough, and, eventually, emphysema or lung cancer. If you have a smoking habit, yet want to succeed as a professional announcer, you should seriously reassess your priorities. Quitting smoking becomes more and more difficult as you grow older. There’s never been a better time to quit than now!

## Speech Personality

Your speech personality is the way you sound and what makes you instantly recognizable when you speak to a friend on the telephone. A speech personality is made up of seven variables: (1) **pitch**, including pitch range and **inflection** patterns; (2) **volume** (degree of loudness); (3) **tempo**, or rate of delivery; (4) **vitality**, or **energy**; (5) **voice quality**, including resonance, timbre, and tone; (6) **pronunciation**; and (7) **articulation**, sometimes referred to as *diction* or *enunciation* (the movement of speech organs to make speech sounds). The overall sound of your voice is shaped by the first six of these variables. In addition to vocal sounds, you have a distinctive manner of articulation—the way in which you break up both **phonated** tones (voiced consonants, diphthongs, and vowels) and

**unphonated** sounds (the unvoiced consonants discussed in Chapter 4, p. 114) into words and phrases. Pronunciation and articulation are closely linked and are examined in detail in Chapter 4. Chapter 3 focuses on pitch, volume, tempo, vitality, and voice quality.

You can, to a degree, isolate each of these speech qualities and characteristics and work on them for speech improvement. Using appropriate exercises, you can concentrate on your pitch, for example, without at the same time working on volume or tempo. Eventually, however, your efforts must come together if your speech is to avoid affectation and to blend successfully into the aural representation of the personality you want to project. You may not like some aspects of your speech personality, but one of the most positive results you can expect through your study and practice of announcing is a considerable improvement in your speech.

## Analyzing Your Speech

The two readings that follow are designed to help in evaluating your speaking voice. Every speech sound of American English appears in initial, medial, and final positions in each reading if it occurs in those positions. The exercises are intended to meet four objectives: (1) to require you to manufacture all speech sounds to help detect possible speech problems; (2) to use the more difficult sounds several times; (3) to detect any problems of slurring over words; and (4) to make the reading as brief as possible. The passages may seem nonsensical, but you should read them as though they make a great deal of sense. Try to use your regular patterns of inflection and stress and your normal rate of delivery; only by doing so can voice or articulation problems be detected. It's highly recommended that you record your readings so that, after detecting specific problems, you can work on them and use your original recording to measure progress.

### William and His Friends

This is the story of a little boy named William. He lived in a small town called Marshville. Friends he had galore, if one may judge by the vast numbers of children who visited his abode (UH-BODE'). Every day after school through the pathway leading to his house, the little boys and girls trudged along, singing as though in church. Out into the yard they came, a vision of juvenile (JOOV'-UH-NUHL) happiness. But, joyous though they were, they served only to work little William up into a lather. For, although he assuaged (UH-SWAYDGD') his pain with comic books and the drinking of milk, William abhorred the daily routine. Even Zero, his dog, was aghast at the daily appearance of the running, singing, shuffling, open-mouthed fellows and girls. Beautiful though the sight may have been, William felt that they used the avenue leading to his abode as an awesome item of lush malfeasance (MAL-FEEZ'-UNCE). Their little oily voices only added fuel to the fire, for William hated music. "Oooo," he would say, "they mew like cats, baa like sheep, and moo like a cow. My nerves are raw." Then back into his menage (MAY-NAZH') the little joker (JO'-KER) would scamper, fast action earnestly being his desire.

Here's an alternate diagnostic reading:

### The Battle of Atterbury

The big battle was on! Cannon thundered and machine guns chattered. The troops, weary after months of constant struggle, found themselves rejuvenated by a vision of triumph. Atterbury, the junction of three main roads, was on the horizon. Using whatever annoying tricks he could, Jacques (ZHOCK) Deatheridge, the former millionaire playboy, was much in charge as he eyed the oil capital of the feudal republic. Few would say that the Beige Berets had not cashed in on Jacques's flash of genius. Then the rather uncommon English fellow, a zany half-wit to many who now would writhe in agony, looked puzzled for a moment; the mob on top of Manhasset Hill was frantically throwing him a signal. He snatched the message from the courier. "My gracious," he muttered. "Atterbury is our own capital!" Elated, nonetheless, he invited his overawed band to play in his honor. After a solo on the drums, Jacques spoke to the multitude. "Rejoice, my fellow citizens! All is not bad! At least our troops have won one victory!"

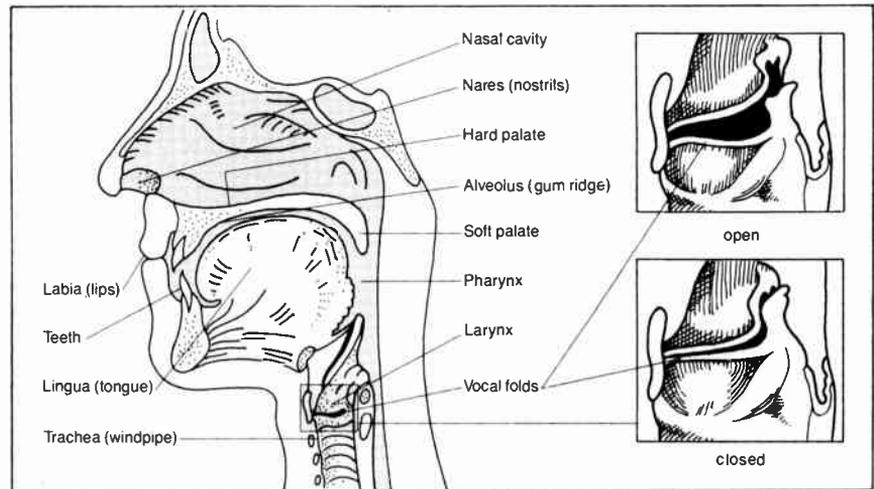
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## Voice Analysis

To describe the way a person speaks, we say the voice is of high or low **pitch**; that the speaker's **volume** is loud or soft; that the

**Figure 3.1**

Vocal sounds are emitted through the vocal folds (cords), shown open and relaxed (upper right) and tensed and closed (lower right). Vocal folds are small bands of tissue that stretch across the larynx. When you begin to speak, larynx muscles pull on the vocal folds, narrowing the opening. Air emerging from the lungs vibrates against the tensed folds and forms the sounds you produce.



speaker's **tempo** is fast or slow; that the speaker shows **energy**, or **vitality** or the lack of it; that the speaker's **voice quality** is pleasing, grating, resonant, or "thin"; that words are or are not spoken according to established **pronunciation**; and that the speaker clearly enunciates or slurs words, which refers to **articulation**. In the sections that follow, pitch, volume, tempo, vitality, and voice quality are examined in some detail.

## Pitch

In audio terminology, **pitch** is determined by the frequency of vibration of sound waves. Medium- to low-pitched voices are generally more pleasant than high-pitched voices. An exception occurs when a voice is pushed so far down the pitch scale as to sound guttural, unnatural, or even grotesque. You should speak near a pitch level that is comfortable and easy to vary for emphasis or variety and that doesn't strain your voice. Whatever your pitch range, make sure you don't consistently speak at your lowest level, because good speech demands variety in pitch (inflection). If you always speak at your lowest level, you have no way of lowering your pitch for selected words.

Pitch in human speech is determined by the rate of vibration of the vocal folds, sometimes referred to as the vocal cords; the faster they vibrate, the higher the pitch. The vocal folds of a mature woman generally vibrate about twice as fast as those of a mature

man, so female voices are generally about an octave higher than male voices.

To make the best use of your voice, find and develop your optimum pitch—the pitch at which you feel most comfortable and are able to produce your most pleasant sounds. Most of us sound best when we're speaking in the lower half of our available pitch range. Although careless speakers make little use of their available range, with practice nearly everyone can achieve a range of between one and two octaves.

You can determine your **optimum pitch** in several ways. One effective system is based on the theory that your optimum pitch is that level at which you produce the greatest amount of resonance. **Resonance** is the amplification of vocal tones during speech as the result of vibrations of the chief resonators: the bones of the chest and face, the **trachea** (windpipe), the **larynx** (which connects the trachea and the pharynx and contains the vocal folds), the **pharynx** (between the mouth and the nasal passages), the mouth, the nose, and the sinuses and cheekbones. When you resonate, you can feel these vibrations most noticeably alongside your nose. Place your palms on your cheekbones and your fingers on the sides of your nose. Now read a series of short sentences, each at a different pitch level. You should be able to feel it when you hit your optimum pitch. And, by recording and playing back the test sentences, you'll hear, without the distraction of bone-conducted sound, what you sound like when you're at or very near your optimum pitch.

Another useful method for determining optimum pitch involves a piano. Sitting at the piano, sing the scale as low and as high as you comfortably can, striking the note that corresponds with each sound. If your singing voice covers two octaves, your optimum speaking voice should be at about the midpoint in the lower of the two octaves. In other words, optimum pitch is very close to a quarter of the way up from your lowest pitch to your highest. Having found the note that corresponds to your optimum pitch, start reading a prose passage. When you reach a vowel sound that can be prolonged, hold the tone and strike the note that matches your optimum pitch. You can easily tell if you're consistently above, on, or below your optimum pitch level.

Because your vocal folds are actually two muscles, they're subject to contraction. In a taut, contracted state, they vibrate at a more rapid rate than when they're relaxed. The faster they vibrate, the higher the pitch. Because of this, your pitch may become more

pleasant-sounding if you can relax your vocal folds. To relax your throat muscles, however, you must simultaneously relax the rest of your body. Because announcing is a performing art, and because performing usually causes tension, it's important that you learn to relax. Professional announcers with several years of work experience behind them usually have no problem with nervousness. But inexperienced students of announcing who perform before an instructor and fellow students or audition for that coveted first job can expect to be nervous. Some experience mic fright or a raised pitch or stumble over words. (Chapter 7, "Performance," discusses causes and cures of these common problems.)

Some radio and television announcers speak above their optimum pitch level. Many sports reporters apparently believe that a loud, frenetic, mile-a-minute delivery enhances the significance of their reports, and both the frenzy and the volume level tend to raise their pitch. On-the-scene reporters sending eyewitness stories to their stations amid high levels of ambient noise sometimes must raise their volume level—and with it, their pitch—to be heard. And some television performers unconsciously attempt to project their voices to a *camera* positioned several feet distant, rather than to the *lavaliere mic* that's only ten or twelve inches from their mouths. This habit raises both the volume level and the pitch. Use your medium: electronic communication doesn't usually require high volume. Speak softly, and the pitch of your voice will remain pleasingly low.

**Inflection** refers to the altering of the pitch or tone of the voice. Repetitious inflection creates a singsong voice, and lack of inflection causes monotone speech. Good speech avoids the extremes and reaches a happy medium. Untrained speakers often fail to use variations in pitch sufficiently, and the result is a boring performance. On the other hand, some poorly advised speakers—told, perhaps, that they must avoid a monotone delivery—employ pitch patterns that regularly and repetitiously go up and down without regard to the meaning of the words spoken. When you practice to increase pitch variety, avoid falling into predictable patterns in which you raise and drop your pitch every so many words. Alter your pitch to emphasize words that are important to the meaning of your message. *Always* use inflection to stress words that should be **underscored**, as indicated in *this* sentence by the use of *italics*.

Listen intently and critically to tape recordings of your speech. If you believe that you need to improve the degree and style of your

pitch variations, use the exercises at the end of this chapter. Remember to speak aloud and to tape, replay, and note your progress. To practice increasing your pitch range, see the drill material in Appendix A.

## Volume

Volume level is seldom a problem in broadcast speech, except for laypersons unfamiliar with microphone use and reporters or sportscasters who cover events that produce high levels of ambient noise. In a studio or control room, sensitive microphones pick up and amplify all but the weakest of voices. An audio console, properly operated, ensures that the correct volume of speech is going through the board and on to the transmitter. Always remember that your listener is close to you. Speak in a normal voice, as you would in a face-to-face conversation.

Outside the studio environment, volume level can be a problem. The noise from a parade, a political convention, or a sports event may make it necessary to use a louder voice. Under these circumstances you may achieve the best results by moving closer to the mic and actually reducing your volume level. On the other hand, if conveying the excitement of the event dictates an increased volume, back away from the mic and speak up. Your pitch may go up as you do so, but that might enhance the excitement of your report.

Most radio and television speech is best when delivered at a conversational level. Because this level remains relatively constant for all of us, an optimum distance from mouth to mic achieves speech that's suited to the event. A weak voice too distant from the microphone requires an increase in the gain (volume level) of the console or tape recorder; this in turn increases the volume of the ambient noise. On the other hand, a strong voice too close to the microphone can produce popping, excessive sibilance, or an unpleasant aspirate quality. **Sibilance** is the hissing sound heard in speaking words that include the letters *s*, *sh*, and sometimes *z*. **Popping** is the blast of air heard when speaking the plosive sounds *p*, *b*, *t*, *d*, *k*, and *g*. To **aspirate** is to release a puff of breath, as when saying the word *unhitch*. Aspirate sounds, like sibilance, are a part of our spoken language and tend to be exaggerated by microphones. A *windscreen* or *pop filter*, as well as an audio device called a *de-esser*, will reduce popping and excessive sibilance, but any such device will also eliminate the higher frequencies.



**Figure 3.2**

Based on the content of the copy, an announcer will adjust the tempo to match the mood—quick and light, slow and grave, or punchy and businesslike. This reporter in Houston keeps his tempo measured to match the news of the day. (Courtesy of KUHF-FM, Houston)

Establishing your optimum volume level and microphone placement (distance from the mouth) should be one of your first priorities as a student of announcing. Because microphones vary in sensitivity, pickup pattern, and tonal reproduction, it's important to experiment with each type of microphone you're likely to use.

## Tempo

Your tempo, or rate of delivery, is sometimes determined by the number of words to be read in a specified time, and sometimes by the mood or nature of the occasion. In general, newscasts and hard-sell commercials are read quite rapidly, whereas documentary narration, classical music copy, announcements on many popular music stations, and institutional commercials are spoken more slowly. When ad-libbing, you must judge what speed is appropriate to the mood of the event (whether it's an interview, a live report from the field, or a description of a sports event) and adjust your rate of delivery accordingly.

There's no single correct rate at which to speak or read. When you have no time limit, gear your speed to the mood of the occasion or of your script. But keep in mind that most of us speak too rapidly much of the time. Speed is often the enemy of clear articulation. If read at too rapid a rate, the sentence "So give to the college of your choice" becomes "So give tuhthukallage uvyer choice." There's an absolute limit to the reading speed you can achieve without sacrificing good articulation. Few of us are good judges of our own speech; this is doubly true when it comes to judging tempo. Aside from requesting help from others, the best way to learn to achieve your optimum speaking or reading rate is by frequent use of an audio tape recorder. Isolate the one problem of tempo and work on it until a good rate of speed becomes automatic. If you detect slurring in your speech, the discussion and exercises in Chapter 4 should help you improve the clarity of your speech.

Aside from a good basic rate of delivery, you should also work for variety in speed. Speeding up for throwaway phrases and slowing down for emphatic words or phrases will help give more meaning to your message. Throwaway phrases include "member, FDIC," "substantial penalty for early withdrawal," and "your mileage may vary."

The diagnostic reading called "William and His Friends" (page 64) includes two rather obvious "speed traps" that may cause you

to trip over your tongue. Other less obvious traps in the piece may lead you into slurring if you read it too fast. Your challenge is to keep your reading moving while avoiding stumbles.

## Vitality, Energy

Two speakers with nearly identical speech characteristics may sound quite different if they vary greatly in vitality, or energy.<sup>1</sup> Though a sense of vitality is easily communicated through rapid speaking or an increase of volume, you needn't rush your delivery or speak loudly to convey vitality. Many speakers are able to communicate feelings of energy or enthusiasm even when speaking slowly and softly; others may speak rapidly but use little energy and therefore come across as unenthusiastic. Many DJs and sports announcers speak with a fairly low volume level, but attain a feeling of vitality by speaking rapidly.

Working toward two objectives will help you project vitality: first, use a degree of energy that's appropriate to your personality, and, second, gear the degree of vitality to the mood or significance of the event you're describing. Above all, don't push yourself up to a forced or unnatural level of vitality or one inappropriate for the occasion. Most announcers are at their best when they're being themselves. You may need years of study and practice to develop your latent speaking potential, but you shouldn't try to hasten the process by copying the speech personality of an announcer whose work you admire; you'll certainly waste your time if you try to substitute someone else's personality for your own.

Many beginning students of announcing are more subdued (and therefore show less energy) in performing assignments than they are in their normal, out-of-class speech exchanges with friends. When performing, your objective might well be to lift yourself up to your customary level of vitality when driving home a point in a spirited discussion. If, however, you're a "low-key" person, you may want to capitalize on your natural qualities as you project vitality through *restrained urgency*. This is accomplished by using a relatively low volume—speaking with an almost hushed voice—and a measured delivery. In doing this, you stress key words by prolonging them or by pausing slightly before and after them and by using

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<sup>1</sup>The terms *vitality*, *energy*, and *intensity* are used interchangeably in this discussion.

whatever other means you possess to indicate that you're "holding back" your emotions.

Here are two readings that ask for differing degrees of energy. The first radio commercial demands a great deal of vitality. You should read and record this first with subdued volume but high-level intensity, as the author intended. You next may want to try it with all the stops pulled out: use as much volume, energy, and vocal pyrotechnics as you can muster. Try it several more times, varying different elements of speech production with each reading: use a faster pace, a slower pace, more inflection, and then a limited pitch range. Try it with *reduced* vitality and *increased* volume. Listening to and judging the results of each variation should help you gain an understanding of the ways your interpretation changes both the impression you convey to listeners and how you feel about your performance.

The second reading asks for a more restrained delivery. It's whimsical, slow-paced, and is to be read in a tongue-in-cheek manner. After recording it in the style indicated, try it in every variation of mood, rate, volume level, pitch, and degree of energy you can conjure up.

Note that the first spot was created several years ago, before Eastern Airlines folded. It is revived here because it's an excellent illustration of a hard-hitting, staccato, and brash writing style that mirrors the brash qualities of the city it promotes.

EASTERN AIRLINES

Young and Rubicam, Inc.

60 SECONDS

MUSIC: (UP-TEMPO FULL ORCHESTRA)

ANNCR: For sheer brass, nothing can touch it. Houston. The big rich. Brash. Confident. A brawler. That just opened the finest opera house in the Southwest. That calls itself one of the world's fashion centers. And is. Houston. It's oil. Hard cash. Enchi-

ladas in the Mexican quarter. It's a fast quip. A millionaire who rode before he could walk. The NASA space center. If ever there was a frontier, Houston is it. If ever there was a cosmopolitan city, call it Houston. But mostly, call it guts.

SFX: (SOUND OF JET TAKEOFF)

Houston . . . an Eastern address. Eastern Airlines has 3 nonstop jets going there every business day—throughout the business day. A lot of people want to get to Houston. We'd like to make it easier for every one of them. We want everyone to fly.

The next commercial sets a much different mood. It, too, requires energy, because without energy a reading can be boring. The energy asked for, though, is that born of conviction; to be successful in the performance of an announcement such as this, you need to project restrained belief in the story you're telling and the product you're selling.

AGENCY: Allen and Dorward

CLIENT: New Century Beverage Company

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Here is your one-minute gnu (NEW) training lesson for today. Gnu is spelled G-N-U, The first question most new trainers ask is, "What's gnu?" The gnu is part ox, part antelope, and part horse. This gives him a slight identity complex and makes

**Figure 3.3**

Michele Flannery, music director for noncommercial station KPFA, operates her own board and associated broadcast equipment. Michele received her B.A. degree in communications arts, with an emphasis in radio, television, and film, from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. (Courtesy of Michele Flannery and KPFA)



him mean. He may charge, hook you with his horns, throw you down, and stomp on you. That's when you start the lesson. Remember, you can't teach an old gnu new tricks. Give the command, "Pay attention." If he hooks you and throws you and stomps you again . . . you have his attention. So stop the lesson and pour yourself a frosty, ice-cold Mug Old Fashioned Root Beer. Mug Root Beer is the ideal drink for gnu trainers and old gnu trainers. Mug Old Fashioned Root Beer. Regular or Diet. You haven't tasted root beer like this in years.

## Voice Quality

### Resonance versus Thinness

A good voice for the electronic media is one with **resonance** (an intensification of vocal tones during articulation as a result of vibrations). A sensitive, top-quality microphone such as a condenser mic can enhance your natural resonance. But even the best equipment can only work with what you give it, and a voice that's thin or lacking in resonance can be significantly improved only by its owner.

The sound vibrations that originate with your vocal folds are weak and colorless. As described in the section on pitch, sound vibrations need resonators to strengthen and improve the quality of sound. The chief resonators are the bones of the chest and face, windpipe (**trachea**), **larynx**, **pharynx**, mouth, nose, cheekbones, and the sinuses.

In general, thinness of voice is caused by one or more of three factors: shallow, weak breathing; speaking at too high a pitch (in general, the higher the pitch, the less resonance); and inadequate use of the movable resonators (the pharynx, larynx, and tongue).

As with any other speech problem, the first step in assessing a voice problem is diagnosis. Do you have a thin voice? What causes it? What do you need to do about it? Read the following passage slowly, with your best resonant quality. Record it, using a sensitive professional microphone and a high-quality tape recorder. If possible, ask help from a person qualified to assess both voice quality and the apparent causes of thinness. Begin this reading approximately five feet from the microphone, speaking at a volume level appropriate to that distance. At each number, move forward about six inches, until you're reading the final sentence about eight inches from the mic. Lower your volume as you move in. On playback, determine whether your resonance is significantly affected by distance and volume level. Unless other negative qualities interfere (excessive sibilance, popping, nasality), this test should help you find and use your optimum microphone position to bring out resonance.

1. Johnny has an IQ of 170, but he can't read. The words are jumbled, upside down. Mirrored.
2. He has dyslexia. A learning disability that affects one out of every ten children.
3. Johnny goes to school and faces frustration, humiliation, and ridicule.
4. It's a tragedy because the techniques are there to help the dyslexic child. They can learn to read and write. And survive in school.
5. They can even go to college. If—and only if—dyslexia is diagnosed early. And dealt with.
6. Today, more than a dozen centers in Massachusetts can diagnose dyslexia—even among preschoolers.
7. To find out more, call 1-555-6880.
8. 1-555-6880.
9. One out of every ten kids has dyslexia.
10. And every one of them needs help.<sup>2</sup>

If yours is a thin, colorless voice, you should be able to increase resonance by following these suggestions:

- Practice deep breathing. Learn to breathe from the diaphragm. Your **diaphragm** is a large muscle that separates your chest from your stomach (the bottom of the chest from the top of the abdomen). Shallow breathing will result in a shallow or thin voice. While you speak or read, consciously try to increase the force of air coming from your lungs.
- Make sure you're moving your articulators. Use the exercises in Chapter 4 to work on an exaggerated use of jaw, tongue, and lips.

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<sup>2</sup>Courtesy of Ingalls Associates, Boston.

- Make sure that there's no blockage of your nasal passages.
- Try to lower your pitch. (See the suggestions given earlier in this chapter.)
- Read passages that emphasize vowel sounds (nineteenth-century British poetry is excellent for this purpose). Prolong those sounds when they occur and try to keep your throat as open as possible. Among the suggested readings for this chapter are several standard speech-improvement books that include exercises.
- If you have a choice of microphones, discover the best instrument for your voice, and establish your optimum distance from it. (A ribbon mic will generally make your voice sound more resonant than will a dynamic mic.)

### **Breathing and Breathing Exercises**

It's all but impossible to have a strong, resonant voice if you have poor posture and shallow breathing. Correct breathing requires that you maintain good posture, that your neck, shoulders, and face be relaxed, and that you breathe from the diaphragm. Good posture means sitting or standing with a straight spine and with your shoulders drawn back. It's impossible to breathe properly when you're hunched over. Check your posture frequently throughout the day—every day. Become aware of when you stand or sit erect instead of slumping in your seat or slouching. When speaking or reading aloud, first check your posture and then eliminate any tension that may be present in your neck, shoulders, or face. In time, you should become so conditioned that good posture will be natural.

In the glory days of radio, those who announced, acted, sang, related stories, read the news, told jokes, or did play-by-play coverage of sports typically *stood* as they performed. Sound quality was even more vital then than now, because of the inferior fidelity of sending and receiving equipment. To gain every possible advantage of clear reception, announcers used every means to project strong and easily understood speech. Standing reduces pressure on the upper torso and the diaphragm and increases lung capacity. Even today, voice-over specialists stand as they rehearse and record commercials and documentary narrative. Most radio and television reporters stand as they record introductions, tags, and other bits of speech to be edited into “packages”—complete taped reports of a story. Some sports announcers also stand as they describe football and other high-intensity games. Whenever possible and appropri-

ate, stand as you perform announcing assignments—your voice quality and general effectiveness will be enhanced if you do so.

As described earlier, your diaphragm is a muscular membrane that separates your stomach from your chest cavity (lungs). Place your fingers just at the point where your upper abdomen meets your lowest ribs. When you breathe in, you should be able to feel outward movement, as air fills the lungs.

You simply can't have a strong, resonant voice if you're manufacturing speech sounds mainly in your mouth. Speech sounds other than sibilants and plosives are initiated by the vibration of the vocal folds. These sounds are then broken up into speech by the articulators. To produce a strong and healthy voice, the air stream that vibrates the vocal folds must be strong, which means that the stream should be forced up by the diaphragm. When you speak, you should try to "push" your voice all the way up from your diaphragm.

To begin a regimen of breathing exercises, you need only to count aloud and see how many numbers you can say without effort. As you practice this exercise several times each day, you should soon find yourself able to count to thirty before beginning to run out of breath. Along with the counting exercise, begin to read aloud whenever you can. Work to strengthen your breathing by taking care to always push your voice up from your diaphragm.

Other exercises to develop good breathing habits may be found in a number of texts on speech improvement, including those mentioned as suggested readings in Appendix E.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Improving Your Voice Personality

*Your voice is the most important instrument of communication you possess.* This is a strong statement, but it's by no means an exaggeration. Diagnostic exercises can help identify whatever problems you may have in voicing and articulating the words you use, but there's more to developing a pleasing, effective voice than *articulation*. Equally important is the *unlearning of bad attitudes toward oneself* that developed in childhood.

Barbara Lazear Ascher has done an excellent job of identifying a variety of

Barbara Lazear Ascher is a noted essayist, novelist, poet, and lecturer. She's written and read essays for NPR's "Morning Edition." A lawyer-turned-journalist, she's most at home with essays because, she says, "I'm impatient," and short pieces enable you to "get to the point right away." Her article, "Voice Lessons," is an example of a short piece, loaded with useful information. (Courtesy of Barbara Lazear Ascher)



attitudes and physical postures that contribute to good and bad use of our vocal mechanism. It's reprinted here in a slightly abridged form through the generous permission of Ms. Ascher and *Self* magazine.<sup>3</sup>

### Voice Lessons

The right voice can persuade a desperate person not to jump. It can extract a raise from your reluctant boss. It can calm a cranky pet. A dog trainer once told me: "Always speak in a low, quiet voice. You can yell and scream and it'll never work, but the minute you speak softly, you've got his attention." Could it be that what works on pups also works on people?

The voice I'm talking about flows from gentleness—a firm, adult *gentleness* not to be confused with *timidity*. Our voice conveys who we *are*, according to New York City acting coach Elizabeth Parrish. The problem is that too often it still carries inflections of who we *were*. We all know those voices that survive childhood. The don't-expect-too-much-of-me voice. The whiny life-is-unfair voice. To change your tone and your future, says Parrish, "you have to break a barrier as to who you think you are—the barrier you grew up with."

**Tune in to your tone** To convey gentleness and authority in an attractive, persuasive tone, we first have to hear ourselves. Voice specialist Arthur Joseph suggests you record and play back samples of your speech. What if you don't like what you hear? First, identify what you're conveying about yourself with your voice. Then, Joseph tells his students, "choose your vocal persona." He has them write down how they think they're perceived and how they'd like to be perceived. "What you write becomes a mission statement."

<sup>3</sup>Barbara Lazear Ascher, *Self*, August 1995, p. 132.

**Say who you want to be** You can use your voice as a tool for change, says New York City psychotherapist David S. Wilson, Ph.D. He has discovered that if his patients speak about themselves positively and aloud, they become what they say. Do this positive “self-talk” as many times a day as possible, he says, and your own voice will begin to replace the formative voices of childhood that scolded you to “Be quiet!” or to “Speak up.”

But first, according to Dr. Wilson, you need to hear your negative “self-talk,” those self-defeating opinions about yourself, whether it’s “I’m fat” or “I’m no good at languages.” You must hear yourself speak the accusation aloud because hearing it is how the thought originally got planted. Wilson points out that little children will say, “I’m a bad girl (boy)” because they hear their parents say it. “By the time you’re in your teens *their opinion* has become *your belief*, a primal belief, so that even if you’re a winner you think you’re a loser,” Wilson says. “People start saying, ‘I’m no good at languages’ or ‘I’m no good at numbers,’ and it becomes self-fulfilling.”

Once you hear it, you can stop the negative self-talk and replace it with a positive statement that says what you want to be. Speak statements that contain no negatives: “I’m thin” rather than “I’m not fat,” for example.

Repeat your positive statement aloud every chance you get, urges Wilson, and keep it simple. “I’m successful,” for instance, or “I’m an adult in control.” “If people stick with this,” he says, “their self-image is changed—and the change begins with the first utterance.”

**Stand or sit tall** Physical tension and body position affect the sound of your voice, according to New York City veteran voice teacher Ralph Proodian. If your lower back is tight, then your chest tightens and that tension radiates into the larynx. Relax your shoulders and neck; when tense, they also raise the pitch. The free flow of breath that will bring the most beautiful resonance to your voice requires perfect posture.

Proodian recommends testing your posture by standing with your back to a wall with your heels almost against it, your shoulders touching it. Then, with your palm facing the wall, run your hand behind your lower back. If there is just enough space to slide your hand in and out, then your posture is speech perfect.

**Take a deep breath** The vocal muscles are the only muscles that function through air pressure, according to Arthur Joseph. The velocity of air moving through the vocal folds creates vibration and pitch. “Inner conflict can stifle the airflow and prevent functioning,” he says. When we’re holding back feelings, we don’t breathe properly and our voice is thin, unpersuasive. We need to breathe freely in order to promote the richest cadence and melody in the sounds we make.

To breathe properly, Joseph reminds his students that breath is both emotional and physical. He instructs them to “allow a silent and loving breath” to move through the body before speaking. Then take another deep breath and send your voice out in an arc, as though it were a ski jumper.

**Explore the emotional power of sound** Vocal *sounds*, even more than *words*, have tremendous power to release emotions and bodily tension. Don Campbell, founder and senior adviser of the Institute for Music, Health and Education in Boulder, Colorado, recommends making long vowel sounds like *aaaah*, *eee* and *ooooh* to “learn the depths of your own personal voice.” To do this, sit comfortably in a chair, close your eyes and begin with *aaaah*. Make the sound as long and at as many different pitches as you like.

Experiment—let it sound like a yawn or a moan or a sigh. Go wherever your impulse leads you. Do this for three minutes and notice how you feel. Work your way through each vowel, noting how different sounds evoke different feelings, pitches and rhythms. For most people, low slow sounds are soothing, while higher pitched sounds (like *eee*) are energizing and lift the spirits. Like deep breathing, vocalizing can calm you down, which is crucial to a melodic speaking voice.

**Hear the music** “Listen to the French and Italians,” suggests Dwight Owsley, a cabaret singer in New York City with a voice you’d want to curl up with. “Notice how many different pitches their voices have. Americans tend to be very limited in their range, so that their voices, by comparison, seem flat.”

It’s true about the French. One of the many reasons that we find French women beautiful is the sound of their voices. Listen for a moment to the lilt, to the upward inflection and then the dip to a deeper range. She is able to convey tenderness and aloofness through the melody of her basic speaking voice.

The music of the voice is aesthetic, it’s character forming and, according to Campbell, it can be good for your health. Campbell teaches that the sound of one’s voice affects the body. Our voice, he says, is capable of harmonizing our inner and outer worlds—as the shamans and the singers of Gregorian chants know. Campbell tells the story of a French physician called in to treat a general malaise affecting monks in a Benedictine monastery. Following the reforms of Vatican II, the life of the monastery had changed radically. The physician determined that the problem was audiological—not physiological—and prescribed a return to the pre-Vatican II “diet of Gregorian chant.” The monks returned to their former practice of chanting eight or nine times a day for ten to twenty-five minutes, and appetites returned and their fatigue vanished. “Within six months the monastery was intact,” says Campbell.

The sound of their voices healed them.

## Common Voice Problems

### Nasality and Denasality

**Nasality** is caused by allowing air to exit through the nose, rather than the mouth, when sounding *m*, *n*, and *ng*. **Denasality** is caused by a blocked nasal passage, as when you have a cold. Pinch your nostrils and speak a sentence or two; you'll find that by preventing air from passing through your nose, you've produced a certain vocal quality—this is denasality. Now, without holding your nose, try to speak with a nasal tone. You'll find that the sound can be generated only by forcing air up through the nasal passage—this is nasality.

Proper use of the nasal passage involves selectively closing off sound with the lips or the front or rear of the tongue, to force sound through the nasal cavity. If you say, in turn, *sim*, *sin*, and *sing*, holding on to the last sound of each word, you'll find that for *sim* your lips close off the *M* sound, for *sin* the front of your tongue against the upper gum ridge (alveolus) creates the *N* sound, and for *sing* the rear of your tongue against the soft palate (or velum) produces the *NG* sound. These three nasal sounds are properly produced only by the correct placement of your articulators and an unblocked nasal passage.

If you have a nasal voice quality, your first problem is to determine whether it's caused by not properly sending the *M*, *N*, and *NG* sounds up through your nose, or whether it's the result of sending nonnasal sounds through the nasal passage. The following sentence should help you determine this. Read it slowly, pausing to prolong every vowel sound that can be held without change. Record and play back the results.

Many men and women can do this in many differing manners.

All the sustained *M*, *N*, and *NG* sounds should have nasal resonance associated with them (as a matter of fact, unless these sounds are allowed to pass through the nose, they can barely be sustained). All nonnasal vowels should have no trace of nasality.

You can check for nasal resonance by placing the tips of your fingers lightly on either side of your nose. When holding a nasal

consonant, you should feel a distinct vibration; when prolonging a nonnasal vowel, you should not. If you speak the word *women*, for example, the first prolonged vowel sound, *WIII*, should not have nasal resonance; you shouldn't feel vibration. The *WIIII* gives way to *WIMMMMM*, which should produce nasal vibration. The next vowel sound is *IHHHHHH*, which should be free from vibration. The final sound, *NNNNNNN*, should bring back the vibration. If you find that your nose doesn't produce vibrations on the nasal consonants, your problem is typical of the most common type of nasality. If, on the other hand, you find that you're nasalizing vowels that should not be nasalized, you have a less common and more difficult problem to work on.

If you're not nasalizing the nasal consonants *m*, *n*, and *ng*, your problem may be a physiological blockage, or you may simply be experiencing nasal congestion. In either case, there's no point in working on speech exercises as long as the blockage exists. Do whatever is appropriate to end the blockage, even if it means a trip to a speech therapist, an allergist, or a nasopharyngologist. If you have no physiological problem or congestion and still lack resonance on the nasal consonants, the exercises on resonance at the end of this chapter should help. If your problem is nasalization of nonnasal vowels, those exercises should also help. Work to avoid any nasal resonance in nonnasal words, but don't try to eliminate it from words that legitimately call for nasality.

## Huskiness

There *is* such a thing as a *pleasant* husky voice, one that suits a particular personality and is neither raspy nor grating, but an *excessively* husky or hoarse voice usually indicates a medical problem. Laryngitis, smoker's throat, infected tonsils, or infected sinuses can cause a husky voice. You should see an appropriate medical specialist for any of these conditions, which are handicaps for any type of voice work.

To some extent, huskiness can arise as the result of excessive nervous tension. If yours is an unpleasantly husky voice that has no medical explanation, you might improve your performance by drinking warm liquids such as tea or water and by using exercises designed to relieve tension. A section of Chapter 7, under the heading "Lack of Mental Preparation," presents one such relaxation ex-

ercise. Vocal exercises will help you overcome excessive huskiness or hoarseness only if your problem is the result of a misuse of your speech organs.

### **Excessive Sibilance**

Because the sibilant *s* is a common source of trouble to announcers, a diagnostic exercise is included here. Read the following passage into an audio recorder, play it back, and determine whether you have the problem of excessive sibilance. Before working to soften this sound, however, you should experiment with microphone placement and even the use of a windscreen or pop filter, for you may find that the problem is with the equipment or the way you're using it, rather than in your speech.

How long has it been since you saw a first-rate sideshow? Some of us certainly should be sad over the disappearance of the classic circus sideshow, once a staple of civic celebrations—six or seven acts, set forth in circumstances that seemed awesome, or at least mysterious. Certainly, sideshows were sometimes scandalous, and sometimes in questionable taste, but they served to keep our curiosity in a steady state of astonishment.

Exercises to work on the excessively sibilant *s* may be found on page 115.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Achieving a Low Pitch**

There's nothing intrinsically better about a low-pitched voice than a high-pitched one; either extreme can be unpleasant to the ears. A high-pitched voice can remind listeners of fingernails being scratched across a chalk board. An excessively low-pitched, guttural voice can sound one step removed from grunting. Many producers of commercials and documentaries are convinced that low-pitched *male* voices carry with them a certain "authority," despite the fact that many outstanding performances are regularly accomplished by both women and men with mid-pitch range voices. Extremely low voices continue to be heard on voice-over introductions to news programs and televised feature films, on "muscle" car commercials, and for products of any kind that have "macho-type" men as their target.

Although you may not be set on driving your pitch down into the cellar, you may believe that your voice would benefit from a slightly lowered pitch. Many of us, male and female alike, speak at a higher than desirable pitch. You can evaluate the appropriateness of your pitch by recording some of the exercises found in Chapter 4, "Pronunciation and Articulation." If an analysis of your voice makes you decide to lower your pitch level, use the following commercial to see just how much lower you want to (or are able to) go. You should read and record this piece several times, listening between takes to judge each performance. If you already have a low voice, make sure you don't creep along the bottom. Remember to work for variety in pitch (inflection). In addition to concentrating on pitch, try to read the commercial in exactly thirty seconds. If you read it in less time, you're probably not savoring the key selling words, and your speed may be interfering with the achievement of optimum pitch.

Mellow. Smooth and mellow. That's the way to describe Dairyland Longhorn Cheese. We use the finest Grade A milk from happy cows. Nothing but pure, natural ingredients. We take our time, letting the cheese age to the peak of perfect taste. We package Dairyland Longhorn in cheesecloth and wax, just like in the old days. And we speed it to your grocer, so that you get it at its flavorful best. Dairyland Longhorn Cheese. It's smooth and mellow.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Varying Your Pitch**

Say these sentences, inflecting on the italicized word or words:

When did <i>you</i> get here?	When did you <i>get</i> here?
I <i>hope</i> you're right.	I hope you're <i>right</i> .
Which <i>one</i> is it?	Which one <i>is</i> it?
Which one is <i>it</i> ?	<i>Which</i> one is it?
We <i>lost</i> the game!	<i>We</i> lost the game!
Don't say <i>that</i> .	Don't <i>say</i> that.
<i>She</i> found the key.	She <i>found</i> the key.
The <i>dog</i> ate the steak.	The dog ate the <i>steak</i> .

Inflect these words in isolation:

What?	Tremendous!
Certainly!	Ridiculous!
Maybe.	Surely.
Awful!	Life?
Sure!	How?
Try!	Stop.
Go!	Caught?

Note that the challenge is greatest with one-syllable words. The word *life*, for example, asked as a question, can accommodate both an upward and a downward inflection without becoming a two- or three-syllable word.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Varying Your Tempo**

The following commercial provides good opportunities for employing shifts in reading speed. (SFX is the standard abbreviation for *sound effects*.)

---

SFX: SOUND OF GRIZZLY MOTORCYCLE IN  
DISTANCE, GRADUALLY APPROACHING.

ANNCR: I can hear it in the distance.  
(PAUSE) Can you? (PAUSE) The "grrr-  
ing" of the Grizzly motorbike.  
(PAUSE) No, not a "purring," a "grrr-  
ing." What's the difference? A "purr"  
comes from a contented cat—a "grrr"  
is made by a hefty Grizzly, looking  
for adventure. Cats are great, but  
they're usually gentle. The Grizzly  
is wild, but not unmanageable.

SFX: GRIZZLY VOLUME CONTINUES TO INCREASE.

ANNCR: The Grizzly doesn't "putt-putt," and  
it doesn't purr. It has a warm, furry  
sound, as befits a creature of the

wild. (PAUSE) Here's the Grizzly,  
speaking for itself. (PAUSE)

SFX: SOUND UP FULL, THEN BEGIN FADE.

ANNCR: There it goes! (PAUSE) "Grrrr-ing"  
its way to where it's going. Hear the  
"grrr"? You can own the "grrr"—if you  
don't want a pussycat and think you  
can tame a Grizzly. Check us out.  
(PAUSE) We're in the Yellow Pages.  
The Grizzly. (PAUSE) It's for people  
who want womething on the wild side.

SFX: SOUND OF GRIZZLY TO CLOSE.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Working on Nasal Resonance**

Speak each pair of nasal and nonnasal words, keeping the tips of your fingers lightly touching the sides of your nose. Work for vibration with the first word of each pair and for lack of it with the second.

#### *M*

aim—aid	atom—attar	bump—butt
beam—beet	balm—back	summer—Sutter
arm—art	calm—cot	
farmer—father	ram—rat	

#### *N*

earn—earth	bend—bet
barn—bard	fawn—fall
bin—bit	own—oath
bane—bathe	band—bat
win—will	friend—Fred

#### *NG*

link—lick	ming—mick
bunko—bucko	wink—wick
bank—back	Manx—Max
tongue—tuck	singer—sitter
blank—black	trunk—truck

# 4



## Pronunciation and Articulation

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Variations in United States and Canadian Speech
- Causes of Mispronunciation
- Pronunciation
  - Speech Sounds of American English
  - Vowels
  - Diphthongs
  - Consonant Sounds
- SPOTLIGHT: The Debate over Standard American Speech
- Phonetic Transcription
- Articulation
  - Articulation Problems

After driving his motor home through nearly forty states of the United States mainland, Nobel laureate John Steinbeck recorded these impressions in *Travels with Charley*.<sup>1</sup>

One of my purposes [for making this trip] was to listen, to hear speech, accent, speech rhythms, overtones and emphasis. For speech is so much more than words and sentences. I did listen everywhere. It seemed to me that regional speech is in the process of disappearing, not gone but going. Forty years of radio and twenty years of television must have this impact. Communications must destroy localness, by a slow, inevitable process. . . . It is a rare house or building that is

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<sup>1</sup>Steinbeck, John. *Travels with Charley*. New York: Penguin Books, reprinted 1986, p. 106.

**Figure 4.1**

Television's spirited Bill Bellamy is a popular host on the Music Television Channel (MTV). Bill got his start as a stand-up comic in New York comedy clubs and has been a guest on many television shows. He says that "it's possible to make people laugh and think at the same time without being heavy-handed." (Courtesy Bill Bellamy and MTV Networks)



not rigged with spiky combers of the air. Radio and television speech becomes standardized, perhaps better English than we have ever used. Just as our bread, mixed and baked, packaged and sold without benefit of accident or human frailty, is uniformly good and uniformly tasteless, so will our speech become one speech.

These words, written in 1960, have not proved prophetic. People continue to speak with regional accents, despite the fact that, as John Steinbeck observed, an overwhelming percentage of broadcast announcers at both the local and national levels speak the "homogenized" English of broadcasting. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines accent as "a characteristic pronunciation," so, in truth, everyone speaks with an accent. There are many different but acceptable ways of pronouncing American English. Think of differences in the speech of a native-born Georgian, a Texan, a New Englander, a New Yorker, a Hoosier (Indianan), an Oregonian, and a person from Ontario Province. The first section of this chapter investigates **pronunciation**, the way words are accented and inflected by a given speaker, and the second discusses a closely related topic—**articulation**—the breaking up of the sounds of speech into recognizable words. Pronunciation has to do with accent or dialect; articulation with the precision or lack of it in sounding words and syllables.

**Figure 4.2**

News anchor Rosie Allen prepares for her afternoon drive-time newscast. Born in Louisiana and reared in Denver, Rosie speaks Standard American English. Her career has taken many turns, including vocalist for a band at age eighteen, three years in the U.S. Army, radio station news director, and head of public affairs. She's worked as co-anchor with Ed Baxter since 1984. (Courtesy of Rosie Allen and KGO-AM, San Francisco)



## Variations in United States and Canadian Speech

Despite the richness represented by regional differences in pronunciation, most broadcast executives have always favored what is called broadcast speech. More precise terms are **Standard American Speech** and **Standard American Dialect**. Although these terms are roughly defined as the native speech of well-educated Americans and Canadians of the Midwest and Far West, many acceptable variations of English are spoken in this vast geographical area. Many successful announcers have regional or other accents—among them Jim Lehrer (*NewsHour With Jim Lehrer*) and Ray Suarez (*Talk of the Nation*), both on PBS; Jeannie Moos, Myron Kandel, and Christiane Amanpour of CNN; Howard Stern; some sports announcers and announcers for “Grand Ol’ Opry”; Regis Philbin; the late Bill Moyers and Jacques Cousteau; and Louis Ruckeyser; among many, many others.

Additionally, announcers who do cartoon voices and commercial voice-overs often employ accents or dialects. Announcers on foreign language stations that broadcast in many languages from Ko-

rean to Spanish to Polish certainly do not employ Standard American speech!

Local announcers in every part of the United States speak Standard American, as do most television network announcers, and the prevalence of this mode of speech means that many broadcast executives still cling to belief in a “correct” way of speaking.

There are signs of change, most noticeable on cable and at the local station level. It’s now possible to hear on stations in nearly every part of the United States and Canada voices that are identifiably African-American, Hispanic, southern, British, “country,” and from New York/New Jersey or New England. This trend will undoubtedly continue. At the same time, your chances of succeeding in many types of announcing work may improve if you speak with a so-called broadcast standard accent.

As a student of announcing, if you don’t speak standard broadcast speech, you must decide whether or not you want to cultivate it. Such a decision should not be made lightly—overall pronunciation is an important part of your speech personality. Keep this in mind: if you’re truly an outstanding communicator with important words, the skill to say them clearly, and the ability to project an engaging personality, your regional, international, or ethnic dialect, whatever it may be, is of reduced importance.

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## Causes of Mispronunciation

Aside from regional differences from Standard American or standard broadcast speech, some deviations in pronunciation are not regional and are simply unprofessional. If we accept that speech that differs from Standard American is not substandard (except in the eyes of many broadcast executives), what do we define as incorrect pronunciation? One or more of the following problems can cause mispronunciation.

**Sloppy or Incorrect Articulation** If you say AIR for *error* or WIH-YUM for *William*, you’re mispronouncing because of laziness in the use of your articulators. Say the words *air* and *error* aloud. Note that *air* can be sounded by a simple closing of the mouth and a drawing back of the tongue; *error*, however, requires more ef-

fort—two distinct movements of the lips and two movements of the tongue. Other words often mispronounced because of sloppy articulation include *variable* pronounced VAR'-UH BUHL instead of VAR'-EE-UH-BUHL and *government* pronounced as GUV'-MUNT instead of GUV'-ERN-MENT. Articulation, which is related to pronunciation, is discussed in detail later in this chapter. If you're guilty of sloppy articulation, you should work extensively with the practice exercises on voice quality and articulation.

**Physical Impairment** Missing teeth, a fissure in the upper lip, a cleft palate, nasal blockage, or any degree of facial paralysis may make it impossible for a speaker to pronounce words clearly. If you have a correctable physical impairment that interferes with effective speech, such as missing teeth, you should consult an appropriate specialist.

**Misreading** Mispronunciations may result from a simple mistake, such as reading *amendable* for *amenable*, *outrage* for *outage*, *mediation* for *mediation*, or *through* for *though*. If you're a consistent misreader of words, you may have a learning impairment such as dyslexia and related challenges or a problem with your vision; either condition calls for consultation with a specialist.

**Affectation** Some Americans who employ Standard American for nearly all their speech pick up a Britishism here and there, and this practice can be jarring to a listener. Saying EYE'-THUH for *either* works well with New England or southern speech, but it usually sounds out of place when used by a westerner or a midwesterner. Affectation can be worked on and eliminated, but this task requires a keen ear and, in many instances, calls for the help of a qualified speech teacher.

**Unfamiliarity with Correct Pronunciation** Most of us have a reading vocabulary that's far more extensive than our speaking vocabulary. From time to time, we err (correctly pronounced ER, not AIR) when we attempt to use a word known to us only through our eyes. The word *coup* (pronounced KOO), for example, might be pronounced KOOP by one who knew it only from the printed page. People who've grown up in homes where American English was poorly pronounced, or who've learned English as a second lan-

guage, sometimes must overcome a limited speaking vocabulary and unfamiliarity with correct pronunciation by making a systematic effort to become somewhat of a linguist.

To be truly professional, you must develop an extensive vocabulary and cultivate clarity and consistency in pronunciation. Many books can help you build your vocabulary, but be sure you're not simply adding to your *reading* vocabulary. Appendix B provides a list of about three hundred words that are often mispronounced or are uncommon but likely to turn up in broadcast copy.

## Pronunciation

### Speech Sounds of American English

In this discussion of the speech sounds of American and Canadian English, **wire-service phonetics** and **diacritics** are used to illustrate sounds. For the benefit of those who've learned—or are learning—the **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)**, those symbols are also given. Wire-service symbols are always enclosed in parentheses: (PUH-REN'-THUH-SEEZ). Diacritical marks appear between virgules: /vûr'gyōōlz/. IPA symbols are enclosed in brackets: ['brækəts].

Speech sounds may be classified as vowels, diphthongs, and consonants. You may have been taught that the English language has five vowels—*a, e, i, o, u*. This is true of *written* English, but the statement is misleading. Our language actually requires us to manufacture *twelve* vowel sounds. A **vowel** is defined as a pure phonated (sounded) tone that doesn't use the articulators and can be held indefinitely without changing. If you say aloud the vowel (AH) /a/ [ɑ] as in *father*, you'll note that you can hold it as long as your breath lasts without substantial change in its sound. If you say the diphthong (OY) /oi/ [ɔɪ] as in *toy*, you'll notice that it glides from (AW) /ô/ [ɔ] to (IH) /ī/ [ɪ] and that you can't hold its entire sound. You *can* hold the last part of this diphthong indefinitely, but only because it's actually the pure vowel (IH) /ī/ [ɪ] as in *it*.

Now say aloud the consonant *p*. You'll notice that you can't do so unless you add some vowel sound, such as *o*. The *p* sound is merely exploded air and can't be prolonged. Other consonants, such as *n*, can be prolonged; but as soon as you stop using your articulators (in

the case of *n*, the tip of the tongue has been placed on the gum ridge behind the upper front teeth), the sound turns into a vowel sound such as (UH) /ə/ [ə]. Consonants, then, may or may not require phonation but always involve use of the articulators.

In some cases it becomes impossible to say whether an unacceptably uttered word has been mispronounced or sloppily articulated. Saying MIRR for *mirror*, for example, could be the result of either not knowing the correct pronunciation or simply not bothering to force the articulators to do their job. Many so-called pronunciation problems can be overcome by frequent use of the articulation exercises in this chapter.

## Vowels

The English language contains twelve vowel sounds, if we ignore the three or four sounds that lie between some of these twelve and occur rarely—and only regionally—in American speech. Vowel sounds are usually classified according to the placement of the tongue in the mouth, the tongue being the only articulator that materially affects their production. The front vowels are produced through the vibration of the vocal folds and are articulated by the tongue and teeth near the front of the mouth. The back vowels are produced in nearly the same way but are articulated by the tongue and the opening in the rear of the mouth.

These are the front vowels:

- (EE) /ē/ [i] as in *beet*
- (IH) /ī/ [ɪ] as in *bit*
- (AY) /ā/ [e] as in *bait*
- (EH) /ē/ [ɛ] as in *bet*
- (AAH) /ā/ [æ] as in *bat*

If you pronounce each of these sounds in turn, beginning at the top of the list and running to the bottom, you'll find your mouth opening wider as you move from one sound to the next. As your mouth opens, your tongue is lowered and becomes increasingly relaxed.

Here are the back vowels:

- (AH) /ä/ [ɑ] as in *bomb*
- (AW) /ô/ [ɔ] as in *bought*
- (OH) /ō/ [o] as in *boat*

(OOH) / $\text{oo}$ / [u] as in *book*

(OO) / $\text{oo}$ / [u] as in *boot*

If you pronounce each of these vowel sounds in turn, you'll find your mouth closing more and more, and the sound being controlled at a progressively forward position in your mouth.

There are two more vowel sounds that aren't classified as front or back: the *ER* sound, as in *her* (HER), and the *UH* sound, as in *fun* (FUHN). In the IPA, two symbols represent the *ER* sound: one when the sound is stressed, as in *bird* [bɜːd], and the other when the sound is unstressed, as in *bitter* [ɪ].

The IPA also has two symbols for the *UH* sound: one when the sound is stressed, as in *sun* [ʌ], and the other when the sound is unstressed, as in *sofa* [ə].

Table 4.1 describes the twelve vowel sounds according to the way each is manufactured.

**Vowel deviations** In the section that follows, standard broadcast, or Standard American Speech, is the reference point for pronunciation. In other words, despite what was written earlier about the growing acceptance by broadcast executives of regional and other variations in pronunciation, this section is written for those who want to practice standard broadcast speech. Pronouncing vowel sounds in ways that “deviate” from standard broadcast speech shouldn't be regarded as “substandard.”

Some people have grown up in environments where scores of words were spoken with vowel sounds that deviate from broadcast speech. Those who say MELK for *milk* or BE-KUZ' for *because* are committing vowel deviations. Vowel deviations can be changed, but first they must be identified.

It's not uncommon for speakers of American English to distort one or more vowel sounds. This doesn't refer to those who speak with regional accents other than Standard American. It's not incorrect for an easterner or a southerner to say AN-SUH(R) for *answer*, but it *is* substandard for speakers of American English anywhere to say FER-GIT for *forget* or JIST for *just*. Let's take a closer look at this type of vowel deviation.

Five vowel deviations occur with some regularity among Americans in any part of the United States and Canada, and several others occur less frequently. It's not surprising that these deviations take place between vowel sounds that are similar in place of production in the mouth.

**TABLE 4.1 How the Twelve Vowel Sounds Are Produced****Front Vowels**

*EE*, as in *beet*, is formed by holding the mouth slightly open, placing the tip of the tongue on the back surface of the lower front teeth, and arching the tongue toward the front of the mouth so that the sides of the tongue are in contact with the molars.

*IH*, as in *bit*, is formed by placing the tip of the tongue on the back surface of the lower front teeth and lowering and relaxing the tongue slightly more than for *EE*.

*AY*, as in *bait*, is formed in much the same way as the *IH* sound, but the mouth is in a more open position and the tongue lies almost flat in the mouth.

*EH*, as in *bet*, is formed with the mouth open still further than for the *AY* sound but with the tongue in just about the same relative position.

*AAH*, as in *bat*, is formed with the mouth quite open and the tongue lying flat on the bottom of the mouth. A certain tenseness in the jaws is noticeable.

**Back Vowels**

*AH*, as in *bomb*, is formed with the mouth quite open and the tongue lying flat and relaxed in the mouth.

*AW*, as in *bought*, is formed by holding the lips open (but not rounded) and raising the tongue slightly in the rear. The tip of the tongue lies low on the gum ridge under the lower front teeth.

*OH*, as in *boat*, is made by rounding the lips and raising the tongue slightly in the rear of the mouth.

*OOH*, as in *book*, is formed in much the same way as *OO*, except that the lips are more relaxed and slightly more open.

*OO*, as in *boot*, is formed by holding the front of the tongue in approximately the same position as for the *EE* sound and the rear of the tongue in a raised position. The lips are rounded and extended.

**ER and UH**

*ER*, as in *bird* and *bitter*, is formed by holding the tongue back in the mouth, with the tip poised somewhere about the midpoint between the hard palate and the floor of the mouth.

*UH*, as in *sun* and *sofa*, is formed by holding the mouth slightly open with the tongue quite relaxed and flat on the bottom of the mouth.

**Figure 4.3**

CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour's pronunciation reflects her Iranian childhood, as well as the English she learned from her British mother. Amanpour served as a CNN reporter during the Persian Gulf war, in Somalia, and in Bosnia. (Ken Regan, CAMERA 5)



**Five Major Vowel Deviations** The five chief vowel deviations discussed below are accompanied by readings to help you discover whether you have problems and provide you with exercises to overcome them.

1. (EH) for (AY) /ě/ for /ā/ [ɛ] for [e]

Those who distort the (AY) /ā/ [e] sound, turning it into (EH) /ě/ [ɛ] usually do so only when it's followed by an (UL) sound. This is because it's quite easy to sound the (AY) in a word such as *pay* but more difficult to sound it in the word *pail*. Say, in turn, the words *pail* and *pell*, and you'll see why some speakers slip into the easier of the two, thereby distorting the vowel sound of this and similar words. Read, record, and play back this diagnostic exercise to see if you're distorting the (AY) vowel sound:

The pale graduate of Yale hailed the mail delivery daily. She failed to go sailing, for fear of gales and whales, but she availed herself of the tall tales told her by the mail deliverer. "I shot a quail out of season and was sent to jail," he wailed, "but a female friend put up bail, so they failed to nail me." The

pale Yale graduate did not fail to hail the mail deliverer's tale.

### 2. (AAH) for (EH) /ă/ for /ĕ/ [æ] for [ɛ]

Unlike the problem just described, this deviation tends to be of regional or ethnic origin and not the result of one manner of pronunciation being easier than another. Those from cities or areas that have a sizable German-American population are most prone to make this vowel deviation. FANCE for *fence* and TALEPHONE for *telephone* are examples. Here's a diagnostic exercise for this sound:

My friend, who is well but elderly, helped me mend my fence. I telephoned him to let him know when to get here, but he didn't answer the bell, so I guessed he'd left. He's a mellow friend who never bellows, but he sometimes questions everything a fellow does. He took some lessons on television about fence mending, or else he wouldn't be able to help me mend my fence.

### 3. (EH) for (AAH) /ĕ/ for /ă/ [ɛ] for [æ]

Many Americans fail to distinguish between the vowel sounds in the words *Mary* and *merry*, giving both the (EH) /ĕ/ [ɛ] sound. Whereas (AAH) /ă/ [æ] isn't often a source of trouble in the sounding of words such as *bat*, *champion*, and *sedan*, it often slips into (EH) /ĕ/ [ɛ] in words in which it's more difficult to sound the (AAH), such as *shall*. Here's a diagnostic reading:

Mary left the Caribbean to visit Paris. She carried her clothes in a caramel-colored carriage. Mary tarried at the narrow entrance of the barracks. There was a caricature of Mary that chilled her marrow. Mary said, "I shall never tarry in Paris again."

Note the difficulty of hitting the (AAH) /ă/ [æ] sound when many words using this sound appear in rapid succession. Note, too, how the passage begins to sound “foreign” to our ears. The (AAH) sound will remain in American English speech, but it is gradually disappearing from words in which its manufacture is difficult.

4. (AH) for (AW) /ä/ for /Ô/ [a] for [ɔ]

Some speakers fail to distinguish between these sounds, giving the same vowel sound to the words *bought* and *bomb*. Of the following readings the first uses words for which the (AW) sound is appropriate, the second mixes words using both sounds.

We all talked about the day in the fall when Loretta sawed off the longest stalk. Our jaws dropped in awe of her raw courage. She caught the stalk in a bolt of gauze and waited for the dawn to prevent the loss of all her awful, morbid, haunted house of horror.

I saw them haul the bomb from the bottom of the waterfall. All around, I saw the awesome possibility of large-scale horror. Lost souls watched in a state of shock. The bomb slowly fought its way clear of the pond. Water dripped from the bottom of the bomb. I lost my fear, for I saw that the bomb was not awfully large.

5. (IH) for (EE) /ī/ for /ē/ [ɪ] for [i]

Sounding (EE) before an *l* calls for slightly more effort than sounding (IH) in the same construction. For this reason, some speakers habitually say RIH'-LEE for *really* and FIHL for *feel*.

Sheila Fielding had a really strong feeling that something really bad would come of her deal to have the

keel of her boat sealed. She wanted to shield the keel, so that peeling paint wouldn't be a really big deal. Sheila really hit the ceiling when she saw the bill. As Sheila reeled, she took the wheel and dragged the keel with the peeling paint across the pier and into the field, where her feelings were really healed.

Several other vowel deviations are occasionally heard. Those whose speech includes these deviations (with some exceptions) tend to be quite consistent. Table 4.2 lists these deviations with examples of “standard” and “non-standard” pronunciation.

**TABLE 4.2 Some Vowel Deviations**

Vowel Sound	Word	Standard Pronunciation	Deviation
(AW) for (OOH)	<i>poor</i>	(POOHR) /pōōr/ [pʊr]	(PAWR) /pôr/ [pɔr]
/ô/ for /ō/	<i>your</i>	(YOOHR) /yōōr/ [jʊr]	(YAWHR) /yôr/ [jɔr]
[ɔ] for [ʊ] as in <i>book</i>	<i>sure</i>	(SHOOHR) /shōōr/ [ʃʊr]	(SHAWHR) /shôr/ [ʃɔr]
	<i>tourist</i>	(TOOHR'-IST) /tōōr'ɪst/ [ˈtʊr,ɪst]	(TAWR'-IST) /tôr'ɪst/ [ˈtɔr,ɪst]
	<i>jury</i>	(JOOHR'-EE) /jōōr'ē/ ['dʒʊr,i]	(JAWHR'-EE) /jôr'ē/ [ˈdʒɔr,i]
(ER) for (OOH) /ûr/ for /ō/	<i>jury</i>	(JOOHR'-EE) /jōōr'ē/ ['dʒʊr,i]	(JER'-EE) /jûr'ē/ [ˈdʒɜːi]
[ɜ] for [ʊ] as in <i>book</i>	<i>sure</i>	(SHOOHR) /shōōr/ [ʃʊr]	(SHER) /shûr/ [ʃɜ]
	<i>insurance</i>	(IN-SHOOHR'-UNS) /ɪn-shōōr'əns/ [ɪn'ʃʊrəns]	(IN-SHER'-UNS) /ɪn- shûr'əns/ [ɪn'ʃɜəns]
	<i>assure</i>	(UH-SHOOHR') /ə-shōōr'/ [ə'ʃʊr]	(UH-SHER') /ə-shûr/ [ə'ʃɜ]

Vowel Sound	Word	Standard Pronunciation	Deviation
(IH) for (EH) /i/ for /ē/ [ɪ] for [ɛ]	<i>tender</i>	(TEN'-DER) /tēn'dər/ ['tɛndə]	(TIHN'-DER) /tīn'dər/ ['tɪndə]
	<i>get</i>	(GEHT) /gēt/ [gɛt]	(GIT) /gīt/ [gɪt]
	<i>send</i>	(SEND) /sēnd/ [sɛnd]	(SIHND) /sīnd/ [sɪnd]
	<i>engine</i>	(EN'-JUHN) /ɛn'jən/ ['ɛndʒɛŋ]	(IHN'-JUHN) /īn'jən/ ['ɪndʒɛŋ]
	<i>friend</i>	(FREHND) /frēnd/ [frɛnd]	(FRIHND) /frīnd/ [frɪnd]
(ER) for (UH), (AW), or (IH) /ûr/ for /ə/, /ô/, or /ī/ [ə] for [ə], [ɔ], or [ɪ]	<i>familiar</i>	(FUH-MIL'-YER) /fə-mīl'-yər/ [fə'mɪljə] (FAWR-GET') /fôr-gēt'/	(FER-MIL'-YER) /fûr-mīl'-yər/ [fə'mɪljə] (FER-GET') /fûr-gēt'/
	<i>forget</i>	[fər'gɛt]	[fə'gɛt]
	<i>congregate</i>	(KANG'-GRIH-GAYT) /käng'grī-gāt/ ['kɑŋgrɪgɛt]	(KANG'-GER-GAYT) /käng'gûr-gāt/ ['kɑŋgəgɛt]
	<i>garage</i>	(GUH-RAHZH') /gə-rāzh'/ [gə'rɑʒ]	(GER-AHZH') / gûr-āzh'/ [gə'rɑʒ]
	<i>lubricate</i>	(LOO'-BRIH-KAYT) /lōō'brī-kāt/ ['lubrɪkɛt]	(LOO'-BER-KAYT) /loo'bûr-kāt/ ['lubəket]
(EH) for (IH) /ē/ for /ī/ [ɛ] for [ɪ]	<i>milk</i>	(MIHLK) /mɪlk/ [mɪlk]	(MEHLK) /mēlk/ [mɛlk]
	<i>since</i>	(SINSS) /sīns/ [sɪns]	(SENSE) /sēns/ [sɛns]
	<i>fill</i>	(FIHL) /fīl/ [fɪl]	(FELL) /fēl/ [fɛl]
	<i>think</i>	(THINGK) /thīngk/ [θɪŋk]	(THENGK) /thēngk/ [θɛŋk]
(IH) for (EH) /ī/ for /e/ [ɪ] for [ɛ]	<i>cent</i>	(SENT) /sēnt/ [sɛnt]	(SIHNT) /sīnt/ [sɪnt]
	<i>men</i>	(MEHN) /mēn/ [mɛn]	(MIHN) /mīn/ [mɪn]
	<i>helicopter</i>	(HEL'-IH-KAHP-TER) /hel'ī-köp'tər/ ['hɛlɪkɑptə]	(HIL'-IH-KAHP-TER) /hīl'ī-köp'tər ['hɪlɪkɑptə]
	<i>many</i>	(MEHN'-EE) /mēn'ē/ ['mɛn,i]	(MIHN'-EE) /mīn'ē/ ['mɪn,i]

Vowel Sound	Word	Standard Pronunciation	Deviation
(UH) for (IH) /ə/ for /ī/ [ə] for [i]	it (as in <i>get it?</i> )	becomes <i>uht</i> (as in <i>get uht?</i> )	
(UH) for (AW) /ə/ for /ô/ [ə] for [ɔ]	<i>because</i>	becomes <i>be-kuz</i>	

## Diphthongs

The **diphthong** or **glide** is a combination of two vowel sounds spoken in rapid order with a glide from one to the other. The diphthongs are represented as follows:

(Y) /ī/ [aɪ] as in *bite* (BYTE) / bīt/ [baɪt]

(AU) /ou/ [aʊ] as in *bout* (BAUT) / bout/ [baʊt]

(OY) /oi/ [ɔɪ] as in *boy* (BOY) / boi/ [bɔɪ]

(YU) /yō / [ju] as in *beauty* (BYU'-TEE) /byō'te/ [bjuti]

The vowel sound (AY) /ā/ [e], as you'll see by saying it aloud, is actually a glide; it definitely goes from (AY) to (IH). Because of this move from one sound to another, it's sometimes considered a diphthong and given the symbol [eɪ] in the IPA.

Diphthongs are a source of trouble to some speakers. Diphthong deviation tends to be regional and, though not necessarily substandard, is not compatible with Standard American Speech. If you have trouble with diphthongs, practice making each of the vowel sounds that form them and then speak the two sounds consecutively with increasing rapidity. The following exercises will help only if you're producing the sounds of the diphthongs according to the standards of broadcast speech.

Read these sentences to practice the diphthong (EYE) /ī/ [aɪ].

1. I like my bike.
2. Lie in the silo on your side.
3. Fine nights for sighing breezes.
4. Why try to lie in the blinding light?
5. Cy tried to fly his kite.

6. My fine wife likes to fly in my glider.
7. Try my pie—I like it fine.
8. Shy guys find they like to cry.
9. My sly friend likes to be wined and dined.
10. Like all fine and right-minded guys, Mr. Wright liked best to try to find the slightest excuse to lie about his life.

These sentences allow you to focus on the (AU) /ou/ [aʊ] sound.

1. Flounce into my mouse's house.
2. Cows allow just about too much proudness about them.
3. Round and round went the loudly shouting lout.
4. A mouse is somewhat louder than a louse in a house.
5. A bounding hound went out on the bounding main.
6. Grouse are lousy bets when abounding results are found.
7. A cow and a mouse lived in a house.
8. The louder they proudly cried, the more the crowd delighted in seeing them trounced.
9. They plowed the drought-stricken cow pasture.
10. Allow the grouse to shout louder and louder, and you just about drown out the proud cows.

Use the following sentences to practice the diphthong (OY) /oi/ [ɔɪ].

1. A toy needs oiling.
2. The soybeans are joyously coiling.
3. Floyd oiled the squeaky toy.
4. Goya painted Troy in oils.
5. His annoying voice was boiling mad.
6. The oyster exploited the joyous foil.
7. Roy and Lloyd soiled the toys.
8. Joy, like a spoiled boy, exploited her friends.
9. What kind of noise annoys an oyster? A noisy noise annoys an oyster.

Read these sentences for practice with the (YU) /yōō/ [ju] sound.

1. I used to refuse to use abusive news.
2. The kitten mewed, but I refused to go.
3. The music was used to imbue us with enthusiasm.
4. The beautiful view used to confuse.

5. June was beautiful.
6. The newest pupil was wearing his suit.
7. The cute kitten mewed.
8. He eschewed responsibility for the news.
9. The few new musical numbers were confusing to the beautiful girl.
10. A few beautiful girls are using perfume.

## Consonant Sounds

The English language contains twenty-five consonant sounds (*phonemes*), which are classified in various ways, the most basic of which is according to whether or not they are voiced. The letter *b*, spoken with a vibration of the vocal folds, is called a **voiced consonant**, whereas *p*, formed in exactly the same way but not phonated, is called an **unvoiced consonant**.

A more detailed and more useful system, based on how the sound is formed, classifies the consonants in this way:

**Plosives** begin with the air from the throat blocked off; and the sound is formed with a release of the air. The plosive consonants are *p*, *b*, *t*, *d*, *k*, and *g*.

**Fricatives** are created by the friction generated when air moves through a restricted air passage. The fricative consonants are *f*, *v*, *th* (as in *thin*), *th* (as in *the*), *z*, *s*, *sh* (as in *shoe*), *zh* (as in *vision*), *y* (as in *yellow*), and *h* and *hw* (as in *when*).

**Nasals** are resonated in the nasal cavity. The nasal consonants are *m*, *n*, and *ng* (as in *sing*).

**Semivowels** are similar to the true vowels in their resonance patterns. The consonants *w*, *r*, and *l* are the semivowels.

**Affricates** combine a plosive with a fricative. The consonants *ch* (as in *choose*) and *j* (as in *jump*) are the affricates.

Still another system classifies consonants according to their place of articulation.

**Labial, or bilabial, consonants** *Labia* is Latin for “lip.” The lips are primarily responsible for the labial consonants, *p*, *b*, *m*, *w*, and, in a less obvious way, *hw*.

**Labiodental consonants** The lower lip is in proximity to the upper teeth. The labiodental consonants are *f* and *v*.

**Interdental, or linguadental, consonants** The tongue (*lingua*) is between the upper and lower teeth. The interdental consonants are *th* /th/ [θ] (as in *thin*) and *th* /th/ [ð] (as in *then*).

**Lingua-alveolar consonants** The tip of the tongue is placed against the upper gum ridge (*alveolus*). The lingua-alveolar consonants are *n*, *t*, *d*, *s*, *z*, and *l*.

**Linguapalatal consonants** The tip of the tongue touches (or nearly touches) the hard palate just behind the gum ridge. The linguapalatal consonants are *y* (as in *yellow*), *r* (as in *rain*), *sh* (as in *shoe*), *zh* (as in *vision*), *ch* (as in *chew*), and *j* (as in *jump*).

**Linguavelar consonants** The rear of the tongue is raised against the soft palate (*velum*), and the tip of the tongue is lowered to the bottom of the mouth. The linguavelar consonants are *k*, *g*, and *ng* (as in *sing*).

**Glottal consonant** The glottal consonant, *h*, is formed by the passage of air between the vocal folds without vibration of those folds.



## SPOTLIGHT

### The Debate Over Standard American Speech

A regional dialect—other than “standard American speech”—may limit your announcing opportunities. For better or worse, most broadcast executives throughout the United States and Canada (except those who manage non-English-speaking stations) favor announcers who speak Standard American over those with other regional accents. A brief history of broadcast speech in America helps explain how this attitude came about.

From the beginning of radio broadcasting in the United States, attempts were made to require announcers to use standardized pronunciation. In 1929, less than a decade after the first radio broadcast, the American Academy of Arts and Letters began the yearly award of a gold medal to the radio announcer who best exemplified the kind of speech of which the academy approved. In awarding the 1930 medal to Alwyn Bach of NBC, the Academy commented, “We believe the radio announcer can not only aid the European immigrant to acquire a knowledge of good English, but he can influence the speech of isolated communities whose young people have no other means of comparing their own accent with



Peter Jennings was born in Toronto, Canada, and attended Trinity College School in Port Hope, Ontario. He began his broadcasting career as a radio interviewer on CFJR. He moved to television as a program host with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and then became a co-anchor on the CBC national network. In 1964 he was chosen to anchor the ABC nightly news. He continues to work as an on-the-scene reporter. (© 1994 Copyright Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.)

the cultivated speech of those who have had the advantage of travel and education.”<sup>2</sup>

In taking the position that one style of American English speech was superior to others, the academy was following a European model. England and France each had a great variety of dialects within their borders. But not all those ways of speaking were considered “proper.” Cockney, Midlands, and Cornish dialects in England and the speech of the people of Marseilles and Strasbourg in France were looked down upon by those who spoke with “correct” pronunciation. Also, during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many small European kingdoms, duchies, provinces, church-owned lands, and independent cities were consolidated into the nations of Germany and Italy. The boundaries of these nations coincided roughly with language groupings. But the German that was spoken in Berlin was quite different from that spoken in Bavaria, and the Italian spoken in Genoa was not the same as that spoken in Sicily. Before long, “correct” or “official” ways of pronouncing the language were established in these newly formed nations. From this action it was but a short step to social discrimination based on regional accent or dialect.

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<sup>2</sup>“Broadcast Announcing Styles of the 1920’s,” by Michael Biel, a paper presented at the convention of the Broadcast Education Association, March 16, 1974.

Many believe that the United States, the land of equal opportunity and upward mobility regardless of origins, had no reason to follow Europe's lead. Until the advent of radio broadcasting, there were two standards for correct American pronunciation. The first was *platform speech*, an overarticulated, oratorical manner of speaking, with a strong Oxford-British flavor. The second was the speech used by "the enlightened members of the community." This phrase is significant, for it sanctions regional differences in pronunciation. Correct American speech could therefore vary—being that spoken by educated persons in New England, the South, the Midwest, or the West Coast, for example.

This acceptance of regional differences in pronunciation has been maintained by linguists and those who compile dictionaries, but was abandoned by broadcasters during the early years of radio broadcasting. Platform speech was precisely what the American Academy of Arts and Letters promoted, as spelled out in its statement of criteria for good radio speech: "first, clear articulation; second, correct pronunciation; third, freedom from disagreeable local accent; fourth, pleasing tone color; fifth, evidence of cultivated taste."<sup>3</sup>

By the mid-1930s, objections to the stilted, quasi-English manner of speaking began to force change. However, despite the trend toward a more natural and conversational style of speech, the objective of standardized pronunciation remained. Standard American Speech became the standard for announcers all over the United States and English-speaking Canada. Standard American is thought to be pleasant, easily understood, and more common than any other regional accent. Even though it is not the only style of American speech that is pleasant and effective, for years those with southern, New England, eastern, or southwestern accents (as well as those with Asian, Latin American, or Middle Eastern accents) have been underrepresented on announcing staffs. A few exceptions may be noted: New England accents have long been accepted for the announcing of symphonic and operatic music; southern and eastern accents have been heard on many sportscasts; and nearly all regional accents have been accepted for news reporters, analysts, and commentators. All regional accents have been heard on commercials and talk shows.

Some significant breakthroughs have occurred. Joan Rivers, George Plimpton, Jim Lehrer, and Keith Jackson are examples of successful performers with regional accents. Peter Jennings speaks Standard American in almost all instances but still uses the Canadian *out* and *about*. Announcers who speak with identifiable southern, eastern, and New England accents may be heard on many stations and some networks. It may be that this trend will continue, and even accelerate. Regional pride may some day bring the full richness of our language in all its variations to the American radio and television public.

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<sup>3</sup>From Biel, "Broadcast Announcing Styles of the 1920's."

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## Phonetic Transcription

As an announcer, you face unique and challenging problems in pronunciation. In reading news, commercial, and classical music copy, you'll frequently encounter words of foreign origin, and you'll be expected to read them fluently and correctly. As a newscaster, you'll be expected not only to pronounce foreign words and names with accuracy and authority, but also to know when and how to Americanize many of them. Although British announcers are allowed to Anglicize categorically, you'd be seen as odd or incompetent if you said DON KWICKS'-OAT for Don Quixote or DON JEW'-UN for Don Juan, as they do. Appendix C is devoted to helping you develop the ability to transcribe difficult words into one or more systems of phonetics. Wire-service phonetics, diacritics, and the International Phonetic Alphabet are discussed.

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## Articulation

**Articulation** problems arise from too fast a rate of delivery or from improper placement or faulty use of the articulators (the jaw, the tongue, and the lips). Read the brief selection that follows, and discover if you have difficulty sounding all of the syllables of each word.

### THE DIAGNOSTIC CENTER

This is undeniably the most conscientiously designed diagnostic center imaginable. I recognize that, from an architectural standpoint, the building is magnificent. It also is strategically placed. At the same time, however, is it environmentally sound? Does it mirror our civilization's preoccupation with transcendental human competencies? Looking at the phenomenon

**Figure 4.4**

Montreal Expos French-language announcing team Denis Casavant and Roger Brulotte must be fluent and articulate in two languages and pronounce words correctly in both. (Courtesy of Denis Casavant and Roger Brulotte)



from an unexpectedly malevolent point of view, we probably should ultimately find an alternative.

Because many North American speakers suffer from poor articulation, many of the exercises in this chapter are intended to help improve articulation. Analysis of your performance with the diagnostic readings “William and His Friends,” “The Battle of Atterbury,” and “The Diagnostic Center” should tell you if you have difficulty with articulation, including slurring, mumbling, or omitting syllables and some speech sounds. If you find you have problems, perform the appropriate exercises daily for as long as necessary. The exercises will do you good, however, only if you read the material *aloud* and make a conscious effort to successfully form every syllable of every sentence. It’s wise to exaggerate articulation at first and then gradually move toward normally articulated speech.

### Articulation Problems

Several speech sounds are frequent sources of slurred, unpleasant, or “fuzzy” speech, and should be corrected by anyone who intends to become a professional announcer. Of the twenty-five consonant sounds in the English language, the nine that cause most articula-

**Figure 4.5**

Sports producer and announcer Keith Jackson is one of many sports announcers with a pronounced southern U.S. accent. His Georgia manner of pronunciation gives his voice a mellowness and softness that have made him vocally identifiable for many years. (© 1994 Copyright Capital Cities/ABC, Inc.)



tion problems are discussed here, along with exercises to help you overcome any problems you may have with them.

*t* The consonant *t* is an unvoiced lingua-alveolar plosive. The *T* sound is formed by releasing unvoiced air that's been temporarily blocked off by the pressure of the tip of the tongue against the upper gum ridge. Note that *t*, like all other plosives, is best softened when speaking into a microphone.

The medial *t* is a problem for many American and Canadian speakers. In the West and Midwest, it's often turned into a *d*, as in saying BAD'-UL for *battle*. In some parts of the East Coast, it's turned into a **glottal stop**, as in saying BAH-UL' for *bottle* ['bʔəl]. To help you determine whether you have a medial *t* problem, record and listen to this reading:

The metal kettle was a little more than half full. I settled for a little bit of the better stuff and waited while an Irish setter begged for a pitiful allotment of the fatter part of the kettle's contents. The setter left, disgusted and a little bitter over

the matter of the lost battle for a better portion of the beetle stew.

For extra work with the medial *t* try saying the following with increasing speed: *beetle, bittle, bayttle, bettle, battle, bottle, bootle, berttle, buttle*.

Use the following sentences to practice the consonant *t*:

1. Tiny Tim tripped toward the towering Titan.
2. The tall Texan tried to teach the taxi driver twenty tall tales of Texas.
3. Attractive though Patty was, the battling fighters hesitated to attempt to please her.
4. The bottled beetles were getting fatter.
5. The fat cat sat in the fast-moving draft.
6. Herbert hit the fat brat with his short bat.

**th** The consonant *th* /*th*/ [θ] (as in *thin*) is an unvoiced interdental fricative. This sound is frequently a source of trouble, because the microphone tends to amplify any slight whistle that may be present. In making this sound, place the tongue *up to*, but not *into*, the space between the upper and lower teeth, which are held about an eighth of an inch apart. Air passing over the top of the tongue and between its tip and the upper front teeth makes the *TH* sound.

The following sentences can be used to practice the unvoiced *TH* sound.

1. Think through thirty-three things.
2. Thoughts are thrifty when thinking through problems.
3. Cotton Mather lathed his bath house.
4. The pathway led to the wrathful heath.
5. The thought of the myth was cutting as a scythe.
6. Thirty-three thinking mythological monsters, wearing pith helmets, wrathfully thought that Theobald was through.

**s** The consonant *s* is an unvoiced lingua-alveolar fricative. It's one of the more common sources of trouble for announcers. A slight misplacement of the articulators may cause a whistle, a thick, fuzzy sound, or a lisp. Of the two methods of producing *s*, neither seems clearly superior to the other. In the first, the sides of the tongue are in contact with the upper teeth as far forward as the incisors. The

**Figure 4.6**

This AKG 414 condenser announce microphone has been fitted with a windscreen to reduce both sibilant and popping sounds. An alternate device, a screen of foam, is seen to the right of the mic. (Courtesy of AKG Acoustics)



tip of the tongue is held rather high in the mouth, and a fine stream of air is directed at the tips of the upper front teeth. The teeth, meanwhile, are held slightly apart. In the second method of making *s*, the tongue is fairly low in the mouth at the rear and at the tip, and is raised just behind the tip to make near contact with the gum ridge. A fine stream of air is permitted to flow through this passage, down toward the upper and lower front teeth, which are held slightly apart. Because most microphones tend to exaggerate any slight whistle or excessive sibilance, work for a softened *s*.

If you produce excessive sibilance, use these exercises:

1. Should Samson slink past the sly, singing Delilah?
2. Swimming seems to survive as a sport despite some strange circumstances.
3. Lessons on wrestling are absurd, asserted Tessie.
4. Assurances concerning some practices of misguided misogynists are extremely hysterical.
5. The glass case sits in the purse of the lass.
6. Past the last sign for Sixth Place, the bus lost its best chance to rest.

*sh* The consonant *sh* /sh/ [ʃ] (as in *shoe*) is an unvoiced lingual-palatal fricative. It's made by allowing unvoiced air to escape with

friction from between the tip of the tongue and the gum ridge behind the upper front teeth. Although this sound isn't a common source of difficulty, you should guard against its becoming a thick, unpleasing sound. To form *sh*, make certain that air doesn't escape around the sides of the tongue; keep the central portion of the tongue fairly low in the mouth.

Exercises for sounding *sh*:

1. Shortly after shearing a sheep, I shot a wolf.
2. The shapely Sharon shared her chateau with Charmaine.
3. Mashed potatoes and hashed cashews are flashy rations.
4. The lashing gale thrashed; lightning flashed, and the Hessian troops gnashed their teeth.
5. A flash flood mashed the cash into trash.
6. Fish wish that fishermen would wash their shoes.

*n* The consonant *n* (as in *nothing*) is a voiced lingua-alveolar nasal. Unlike *m*, it can be sounded with the mouth open, because the tongue, rather than the lips, blocks off the air and forces it through the nasal cavity. The sounding of *n* is responsible for much of the excessive nasality characteristic of many irritating voices. If you detect, or someone detects for you, a tendency to overnasalize such sounds, spend several sessions with a tape recorder learning how it feels to soften them.

You can use these sentences to practice the sounding of *n*:

1. Ned's nice neighbor knew nothing about Neil.
2. Now the new niece needed Nancy's needle.
3. Indigestion invariably incapacitated Manny after dinner.
4. Many wonderful and intricate incidentals indirectly antagonized Fanny.
5. Nine men were seen in the fine mountain cabin.
6. Susan won the clean garden award and soon ran to plan again.

*ng* The consonant *ng* /ng/ [ŋ] (as in *sing*) is a voiced linguavelar nasal. It's formed much as the consonant *g*, but it lacks the plosive quality of that sound. One of the most common problems with *ng* involves turning this sound into "in" in words that end with *ing*, saying *runnin'* or *losin'* for *running* and *losing*. Each announcer must, of course, determine whether it's appropriate to do this. A newscaster will undoubtedly decide not to. Drive-time music and

sports announcers, depending on their speech personality, may decide that it's permissible. A less common pronunciation problem involving this sound is the practice in some parts of the East of adding *g* in the middle of a word such as *singing* (SING'-GING) ['sɪŋgɪŋ].

Use these sentences to practice the *ng* sound.

1. The English singer was winning the long contest.
2. He mingled with winged, gaily singing songbirds.
3. The long, strong rope rang the gong.
4. Running and skipping, the ringleader led the gang.
5. Among his long songs, Engel mingled some lilting things.
6. Along the winding stream, the swimming and fishing were finding many fans.

*l* The consonant *l* (as in *willing*) is a voiced lingua-alveolar semi-vowel, formed by placing the tip of the tongue against the upper gum ridge and allowing phonated air to escape around the sides of the tongue. This sound causes little difficulty when in an initial or final position in a word, but it's frequently a source of trouble in a medial position. If you say aloud the word *William*, you'll notice that the tip of the tongue is placed low in the mouth for *Wi*, raised to the upper gum ridge for *ll*, and returned to the floor of the mouth for *iam*. Obviously, it's easier to speak this name without moving the tongue at all, but then it sounds like WIH-YUM, ['wɪjəm], and the *l* sound is completely lost. Unlike some English speech sounds that may be softened or dropped without loss of effectiveness, the lost medial *l* is definitely undesirable.

Here's a diagnostic reading for the medial *l*:

Millions of Italians filled the hilly section of Milan. The milling celebrants whirled all along the palisades, down by the roiling river. Lilting lullabies, trilled by Italian altos, thrilled millions as they willingly milled along the boulevard. "It's really thrilling," said William Miller, a celebrant from Schiller Valley. "I'm compelled to

call this the most illustrious fellowship in all of Italy.”

If you have difficulty with the medial *l*, practice with these exercises:

1. A million silly swallows filled their bills with squiggling worms.
2. Willy Wallace willingly wiggled William’s million dollar bill.
3. Lilly and Milly met two willing fellows from the hills.
4. A little melon was willingly volunteered by Ellen and William.
5. Bill filled the lily pot with a million gallons of water.
6. The mill filled the foolish little children’s order for willow leaves.
7. William wanted a million dollars, but he seldom was willing to stop his silly shilly-shallying and work.
8. Philip really liked Italian children, although he seldom was willing to speak Italian.
9. Enrolling in college really was thrilling for William, even though a million pillow fights were in store for the silly fellow.
10. Billy Bellnap shilled for millions of collegians, even though his colleagues collected alibis galore in the Alleghenies at Miller’s celebration.

*hw* The consonant *hw* (as in *where*) is an unvoiced labial fricative. It’s a combination of the two consonants *h* and *w* and is achieved by forming the lips for *w* but releasing the air that makes *h* first; then the *w* sound follows immediately, so the *h* sound is barely heard. Although the *hw* sound in words such as *when* is lost by most speakers, announcers should include it—at least until it drops out of our language altogether.

These sentences are useful for practicing the *hw* sound:

1. Mr. Wheeler waited at the wharf.
2. Wherever the whippoorwill whistled, Whitby waited.
3. Why whisper when we don’t know whether or not Mr. White’s whelp is a whiz?
4. “Why not whet your knife?” whispered the white-bearded Whig.
5. Whitney whittled the white-headed whistle.
6. On Whitsun, Whittier was whipping Whitman on a whim.

*r* The consonant *r* (as in *runner*) is a voiced linguapalatal semi-vowel. In certain areas of the United States, Canada, and in England, *r* is frequently softened or completely dropped. In Standard American, or broadcast speech, however, all *r*'s are sounded, though they needn't and shouldn't be prolonged or formed too far back in the throat. A voice described as harsh is frequently one that overstresses *r* sounds. However, in attempting to soften your *r*'s be careful to avoid affectation; a pseudo-British accent is unbecoming to Americans and Canadians.<sup>4</sup> Few speakers can successfully change only one speech sound. The slight softening of *r* should be only one part of a general softening of all harsh sounds in your speech.

Use these sentences to practice the consonant *r*:

1. Rather than run rapidly, Rupert relied on rhythm.
2. Robert rose to revive Reginald's rule of order.
3. Apparently a miracle occurred to Herman.
4. Large and cumbersome, the barge was a dirty hull.
5. Afraid of fire and sure of war, the rear admiral was far away.
6. The bore on the lower floor left his chair and went out the door.

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<sup>4</sup>This observation is true for those who want to sound "conversational" and unaffected. At the same time, one hears a great many commercial announcers—most often those for so-called "prestige" commodities—speaking with quasi-British accents.



# 5

## American English Usage

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Our Changing Language
- SPOTLIGHT: Politically Correct Language
  - American English and Ethnicity
  - Gender in American English
  - Nations and Citizens of the World
- Usage Guidelines
  - Age Referents
  - Jargon and Vogue Words
  - Redundancies
  - Clichés
  - Latin and Greek Plurals
- Nonstandard Expressions and Usage
  - Slang
  - Solecisms
  - Words Often Misused
  - Deliberate Misuse of Language

To be an announcer is to be a user of words, and serious students of announcing will undertake a careful study of their language—English for most in the United States, English and French for most Canadians, and, for those who intend to broadcast in a non-English language, perhaps Spanish, Chinese, German, Polish, Russian, or Tagalog. Learning about language means engaging in several different but related studies. It means making a lifelong habit of using dictionaries. It means becoming sensitized to nuances of language

and finding the precise word, rather than the approximate one; changing your vocabulary as changes in our language occur; cultivating and practicing the art of plain talk. And it means perfecting your pronunciation.

This chapter discusses our changing language. It's designed for those who will speak on English-language stations, and it considers usage from the perspective of announcers for the electronic media.

Top professional announcers use words with precision and manage to sound conversational while honoring the rules of grammar. Some broadcast announcers, however, are far from perfect and commit frequent usage errors. Here are some recent examples of mistakes made by broadcast announcers:

"The power is out, traffic lights aren't working, and traffic is snarling." Although the drivers may have been snarling, congested traffic is said to be *snarled*.

"That's like shooting ducks in a barrel." The announcer mixed together two clichés—"shooting fish in a barrel," and "shooting sitting ducks."

". . . and this poor old guy was trodding along the street, looking for aluminum cans." The word is *trudging*, the present participle of *trudge*. The announcer may have meant *plodding*.

"And, while Debbie's marriage was floundering on the rocks, . . ."

To flounder is to stumble or lurch. The correct word is *founder*, a term used for a ship in danger of sinking.

"And \_\_\_\_\_ is the latest state to reintroduce corpulent punishment." *Corpulent* means "excessively fat." The announcer meant *corporal* punishment, a euphemism for the death penalty. Even a skinny person might receive corporal punishment.

"The secretary of state reportedly will visit South America late this summer." There are many kinds of visits—long visits, brief visits, surreptitious visits—but no one can make a *reported* visit. The announcer meant, "It is reported that the secretary of state . . ."

"Coach Washington has done a great job of gerrymandering his team in light of its injuries." The sports reporter meant *jury-rigging*, a term for coping with problems by improvising temporary solutions. To *gerrymander* is to draw voting district boundaries in such a way as to give an advantage to the political party that drew them.

“The jury’s verdict culminated a case that had dragged along for seven months.” The verdict may have *concluded* the case, but the case *culminated* in a verdict.

“And the Oakland A’s are on a pace to set a new, all-time record!” By definition, when a record is set it is both new and “all-time”; this is a rare case of *double* redundancy.

“The U.S. was outcompeted last year to the tune of 1.5 billion dollars.” The United States may have had a 1.5-billion-dollar trade deficit, but the nonword *outcompeted* doesn’t stand up to linguistic logic or rules of grammar.

American English is a dynamic, ever-changing language. Although change is slow during periods of relative stability, it never ceases. During times of upheaval, whether political, economic, or social, changes in our language take place rapidly. World War II, for example, created many new words, among them *blitz*, *fellow traveler*, *fifth column*, *radar*, and *quisling*. Operation Desert Storm brought us *SCUDs*, *stealth bombers*, and *smart bombs*. Many computer-related terms have been added to our language, including *byte*, *modem*, *RAM*, *ROM*, and *hacker*. Professional announcers must be alert when reading and listening if they want to keep up with our changing language.

News reporters, interviewers, commentators, DJs, talk-show hosts, sportscasters, and weather, environmental, and consumer reporters—in short, announcers who speak ad-lib—frame their own thoughts into words. They must choose those words well and pronounce them correctly. To do an outstanding job, announcers must be experts with their language.

## Our Changing Language

From the 1960s and well into the 1990s, separate movements brought about many changes in both spoken and written American English. First was the rise of African-American consciousness, followed by similar movements among other ethnic groups. Among many other changes, ethnic consciousness demanded that new terms replace Negro, American Indian, and other labels of ethnicity.

Second, the women’s movement that began in the 1970s pointed up the many inappropriate contexts for words such as *mankind*,

*manpower*, and *chairman*. Announcers, writers, and politicians were amazed to discover how gender-biased our language was. You may be surprised to learn that, before this concern about gender bias in language caught on, terms commonly used in broadcasting included *anchorman*, *cameraman*, *make-up man*, and *floorman*!

An important part of this movement was the decision made by the U.S. Department of Labor to change government-approved job titles to remove both age and gender bias. The terms *junior executive* and *salesman* were replaced by *executive trainee* and *sales associate*. Later changes included *flight attendant* for *stewardess*, and *host* to mean both males and females who fulfilled that role.

An extension of the movement to change offensive or exclusionary language addressed both ethnic and gender concerns. Unfortunately, this development soon was named “political correctness”—usually abbreviated to PC—by those who resisted change in American English usage.<sup>1</sup> Although the term is inaccurate—the matter seldom has anything to do with politics, and the term *correctness* would be better changed to *consideration* or *awareness*—we’re stuck with the term, and so it will be used here.

The concept of political correctness has been used to justify many excesses. Some people who are upset over changes in our society have used the PC label to attack almost any position they oppose. A six-year-old boy has been suspended from school for kissing a girl classmate on the cheek; extremists opposing the eating of animals have thrown imitation blood on steak-house customers, claiming that eating meat is “politically incorrect.” The first is an example of foolish overreaction; the second is an inappropriate, violent assault. There’s nothing *political* or *correct* about either incident. PC, in its most significant and useful applications, asks us to reconsider our use of language that may be offensive or hurtful to others. As an announcer, you should be alert to the sensitivities of your listeners. Comments that exclude or hurt others are made in broadcasting chiefly by those who are unaware of the offense and by talk-show demagogues who intentionally insult and offend others. The Spotlight for this chapter discusses this issue at greater length.

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<sup>1</sup>Political correctness is the subject of an article by John Leo in the January 31, 1994, issue of U.S. News & World Report, pp. 19 and 20. The author highlights examples of PC overkill.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Politically Correct Language

This is a personal note from me, Stuart Hyde, to you.

A friend of mine once told me that, when his mother was in her eighties and living in a retirement home, she always introduced him to her friends as her “baby.” Despite the fact that he was anything but a “baby,” he *was* her youngest child. He was embarrassed by this introduction until he realized that this usage was common in that setting and was acceptable and amusing to his mother’s friends. They understood the intent and the context of the words she used. It was acceptable to use *this* expression in *this* environment, and within *this* group of people.

At the same time, it’s important to understand that usage appropriate to one setting may be out of place and resented in other contexts. That difference is the subject of this Spotlight.

Members of “closed” groups sometimes use words and names that would be unacceptable if used outside the group. Perhaps you belong to a closed group where good-natured banter, including insults, is common. Some such groups are ethnically related; others are ethnically diverse, as in social groups called “cliques” (pronounced “kleeks” by my generation and most likely “klicks” by yours. “Locker room” banter often is paralleled by that of professors at a university luncheon table—but only if those present have formed a distinct “closed” group. Within such groupings, blunt statements are made and nasty names used, all directed toward joviality; such behavior is most likely natural and will never change. It has to do with bonding, testing, and camaraderie. Insults in such a context seldom hurt because they come from friends. But it’s quite a different matter to be called an offensive name by an *outsider*, or to use derogatory terms when speaking to an outsider, or, *even more to the point, when speaking in public, as on the public airwaves.*

**Political correctness (PC)**, is a term coined in the 1990s to describe a movement that actually began as far back as the 1970s. The move was motivated by the recognition that some names and words are offensive or exclusionary and should be used with caution or dropped altogether. Despite some excesses committed in the name of political correctness, the movement is long overdue in sensitizing us to language that is noninclusive and inconsiderate of the feelings of others.

The term “political correctness” is poorly chosen because the movement has little to do with politics; at the same time, the term *does* have the virtue of being widely used and, therefore, widely understood. What this term really means is

that we should be ever sensitive to the feelings of others and we should incorporate this sensitivity into our speech and our actions. As talk-show host Michael Krasny states:

Political correctness is less the appropriate phrase than *civility* and *kindness*, expressions that should be an integral part of rational—or even *irrational*—discourse. Whatever the nature of the discussion, or whatever is being broadcast, we all need to be mindful and sensitive (without getting carried away) to that which can hurt or wound or undermine.<sup>2</sup>



Michael Krasny (Courtesy of Michael Krasny and KQED-FM)

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<sup>2</sup>Radio talk-show host Michael Krasny is professor of English at San Francisco State University. He earned his Ph.D. at the University of Wisconsin. His weekday shows are long on information, intellectual stimulation, and significant controversy and devoid of the opinionated and sensationalized utterances of a few popular talk-show hosts who claim that they are “merely entertainers.”

As already mentioned, the impetus to avoid hurtful terminology and demeaning statements predates the “politically correct” movement by several decades. One example from the past is the change made several years ago by Stanford University in renaming its mascot “Cardinal,” dropping the term “Indians.” The Atlanta Braves, the Cleveland Indians, and the Washington Redskins, among many others, have been criticized for using Native American designations for their mascots. Other mascot names have been criticized, including “Minutemen” (excludes women) and “Norsemen” (too Aryan and too masculine). A great many hymns, carols, creeds, and prayers of the Christian church have been undergoing review and revision to eliminate a long-standing male orientation—“God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen,” is one example.

In addition to terms of ethnicity and gender, political correctness asks us to consider our use of language in other contexts that might be offensive or hurtful. PC suggests we use the term “international students” instead of “foreign students,” because the word *foreign*, is, in some constructions, negative. (“She had a foreign object in her eye.” One definition of foreign is “not natural; alien.”)

PC also asks us to be careful in choosing words to describe those with physical or mental deviations from the norm. *Norm* is a relative term, not a standard by which those who differ from it should be negatively judged. In times past, jokes were told (and laughed at) that ridiculed alcoholics as well as people who were obese, stuttered, had regional or national accents, or differed in some other way from the majority of the citizens in a community or a nation. The concept of the “superiority” of the majority and the “inferiority” of the minority goes back to ancient times when people born with red hair (in some societies) were considered evil and where mothers of twins were harassed as adulterers because twins were thought to require two different fathers. Left-handedness was considered a defect by many societies. The French word for “left-handed” is *gauche*, meaning “clumsy,” but the Italian version is even harsher—*sinistra*, from the same Latin root as the English word *sinister*. (By contrast, the French term for “right,” *a droit*, became the English word, *adroit*.)

This chapter’s sections on age referents, slang, ethnicity, and gender are designed to help sensitize people to the fact that words, carelessly or insensitively used, can hurt others. Perhaps you were referred to as a child for some time after you felt grown up; people in their sixties—or even in their seventies—can also feel demeaned if they’re described as old or elderly. Perhaps you suffered from schoolyard taunts about your appearance or your behavior when you were younger. If so, you know how much such actions can hurt. The old expression “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me” is totally false. Derogatory names can be devastating! Additionally, slang terms for mental or physical conditions can be extremely hurtful, as in calling someone a *retard* or a *blimp*.

Finally, to call a woman a *girl* or a *gal* may be resented by many who see it as demeaning—much as adult African-American men and women resent being called “boys” and “girls.” Many women *do* call one another “girl” or “gal,” however, and there’s nothing wrong with this practice when there’s agreement within the group that the words are acceptable and even slightly humorous.

As an announcer, you should always consider the feelings of your listeners. Comments that exclude or hurt others in our society are used in broadcasting only by those who are unaware of the offense and by a number of talk-show demagogues who intentionally insult and offend others. If you truly care about people, your feelings will be reflected in the words you choose. Using in-group language outside the group is always dangerous, and the likelihood that your remarks will cause some people to feel degraded is great. When in doubt, play it safe by following the rules of sensitive and considerate usage! In the context of this Spotlight, make sure that the language you use outside a group or on the air is “politically correct.”

The decline of colonialism, from which emerged new nations such as Tanzania, Namibia, and Sri Lanka—and the nouns and adjectives used to identify them and their citizens—brought important changes to our language. The breakup of the Soviet Union also created several new nations, among them Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia, Turkmenistan, Latvia, and Lithuania. Czechoslovakia split into two nations, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. The former Yugoslavia broke up into warring factions involving Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Croatia. Turmoil continues in the Balkans, and further divisions and alignments may change both boundaries and the official names of its nations.

## American English and Ethnicity

During the past two or three decades, several ethnic groups have asked for changes in the terms used to identify them. Some of these changes—from *Negro* to *black* to *African American*, for example—occurred easily and in a relatively brief period. In other cases, change has been hindered because of a lack of consensus on preferred usage. For example, some Americans of Filipino ancestry want to be called *Pilipinos*, but it’s not yet clear whether this term

will gain general acceptance.<sup>3</sup> People whose ancestors lived in Mexico and Central America aren't in agreement on the appropriateness of such terms as *Latin American*, *Hispanic*, or *Chicano*. As a broadcast announcer, you must carefully watch developments in our evolving language, so that your speech will reflect up-to-date usage. The discussion that follows gives general principles of usage.

Some members of non-European ethnic groups in the United States resent being given a hyphenated status, such as Chinese-American. Preferring to be regarded simply as Americans, they point out that Americans of European descent are not identified in news stories as German-Americans or Italian-Americans and that the U.S. government does not apply ethnic terms to such people, lumping them together for most purposes as "whites." There's no consensus on this point among any major ethnic group, however, and any metropolitan telephone directory may list organizations under such headings as "Japanese-American . . .," "Mexican-American . . .," and "African-American . . ."

In broadcasting, the racial or national background of Americans is irrelevant in most, but not all, circumstances. For instance, if a person of Mexican heritage is interviewed on the subject of soccer or rapid transit, that person's heritage is not an essential or even appropriate matter of comment. On the other hand, if the same person were being interviewed on the subject of bilingual education or the working conditions of Mexican-American farm workers, mentioning the person's heritage could be a legitimate means of establishing his or her interest in, and special knowledge of, those topics. There are times, then, when an announcer may legitimately refer to the ethnic background of a person or group. The general rule is to ignore ethnicity when it has nothing to do with the subject at hand. There is a corollary: *do* refer to ethnic background when it helps promote understanding.

You must also be accurate in using ethnic terms. It is imperative that you check on sensitivities in your area and follow the established practice of those who are most respectful of others when using ethnic designations. It could be embarrassing to you and painful to some members of your audience if you used a term considered in poor taste.

Nowhere is the task of correct identification more difficult than

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<sup>3</sup>There is no *f* in Tagalog, the official language of the Philippines.

in designating the large group of people often referred to in U.S. government documents as “Spanish surnamed.” The difficulty arises from the diversity of their heritage, which may be Spanish, Filipino, Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Central American, or South American. “Spanish surnamed” embraces all these different cultures and races, but it’s both cumbersome and too general for broadcast use. More specific terms must be applied. For Americans who come from or owe their ancestry to Mexico, the Caribbean, or Central or South America, the term *Latin*, or *Latin American*, is appropriate; the derivatives *Latina* and *Latino* may be used to designate female and male, respectively. *Mexican-American* is acceptable to all or nearly all members of that ethnic group. Some use *Chicano* and *Chicana*, *La Raza*, or *Mexican* to describe themselves, but not all members of Mexican-American communities find these terms acceptable. *Hispanic* is widely used by the U.S. government for census purposes, but it’s generally considered a misnomer by those whose forebears lived in a former Spanish colony, rather than in Spain.

Puerto Ricans, because they are U.S. citizens, should not have “American” tacked onto their designation. A person from Cuba may be referred to as either a *Cuban* or a *Cuban-American*, depending on whether that person is a resident alien or a naturalized citizen. *Spanish-American* and *Filipino-American* are acceptable designations for people originally from Spain or the Philippines.

When referring to Americans whose names are of Spanish origin, don’t assume that a person from the Southwest is of Mexican ancestry, that a person from Florida is Cuban, or that a person who lives in New York is Puerto Rican. Though you may be right, where ethnic or national background isn’t known, it’s better to avoid using a specific term than to guess.

The original inhabitants of the United States were called Indians by early European explorers. Five hundred years later, debate continues on the designation of this group of citizens. The federal government uses the classification “Native Americans” in many demographic and statistical reports, yet it continues to operate the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Some members of this group don’t like the term *Indian*, yet refer to themselves as members of the American Indian Movement. *American Indian* is acceptable in some parts of the United States but considered derogatory in others. It’s generally acceptable to use Anglicized tribal designations—Sioux, Navajo, Nez Perce, Apache, and Zuñi, for example.

Black Americans prefer the term *black*, *African American*, or *Afro-American*. At present, *Negro* and *colored person* are offensive to most African Americans, but note that many of them, as well as many Asian Americans and Native Americans, refer to themselves as “people of color.” Also, the organization called the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has found no reason to change its name.

The term *Chinaman* is fortunately seldom heard today. It’s extremely insulting and must be avoided. Americans of Chinese heritage may be referred to as *Chinese*, *Chinese Americans*, *Sino-Americans*, *Asians*, or *Asian-Americans*. Many people use the term *Asian* when referring to people who came from Asia or whose ancestors came from there, but, because “Asia” includes India, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea, China, and Japan, it is considered an imprecise and rather misleading term. When appropriate, substitute a more specific term than *Asian*. *Oriental* is no longer acceptable when referring to a person; you may speak of an Oriental rug but not of an Oriental person.

Not only Americans of color are concerned about their designations. Others are offended from time to time by insensitive announcers. Scots bridle when they are referred to as “Scotch.” People from Scotland are *Scots*, *Scottish*, or *Scotsmen* and *Scotswomen*. Scotch is an alcoholic beverage manufactured by the Scots. Scots may sometimes drink Scotch. *Scotch* should not, of course, be used as a synonym for stingy because, like most stereotypes, it is both offensive and false.

People from Canada are *Canadians* and shouldn’t be referred to as *Canucks*. Those living near the border between Canada and the United States know about this prohibition, but others living far from Canada may not realize that *Canuck* is considered derogatory by French Canadians. A professional Canadian hockey team is named the Vancouver Canucks, but it’s one thing to call oneself a Canuck and another to be called that by a stranger.

People of Polish ancestry are never *Polacks*; a person of Polish ancestry is a *Pole* or a *Polish-American*. Announcers should never say “Polack,” even in jest.

You should refer to citizens of Iran as *Iranians*, but never as Arabs. Iranians share Islamic faith with their Arab neighbors, but Iranians are not Arabs.

Don’t use *Welsh* to mean a failure to pay a debt. Don’t say *Irish* or *Dutch* to mean hot-tempered. Don’t use the word *Turk* in any

**Figure 5.1**

Bryant Gumbel majored in Russian history at Bates College in Maine. An avid athlete, he played baseball and football at Bates. After graduating, he became the weekend sports-caster on KNBC-TV, Los Angeles. In 1982 he became the first African-American co-host on the *Today* show. (Courtesy of NBC)



construction indicating that a person so labeled is brutal or tyrannical, such as “young Turk.” Avoid the term *Dutch* in any of several derogatory connotations, such as *Dutch treat*, where each person pays for his or her share. Another offensive term is *Indian giving*, meaning to give something and then take or demand it back. No list of dos and don’ts can substitute for sensitivity and consideration. If you use phrases such as *Mexican standoff*, *French leave*, or *Chinese fire drill*, you could find yourself in serious trouble as an announcer.

## Gender in American English

The women’s movement brought about significant changes in the terminology we use for a great many acts, objects, and occupations. The historic male orientation of our language was the source of three general areas of discontent. The first was the use of *man* and *mankind* to refer to the entire human race. The second was the group of nouns and verbs that have “maleness” built into them; *chairman*, *spokesman*, and *manning the picket lines* are examples. The third was the generic use of *he* and *his* when both genders are meant, as in “Everyone must pay his taxes.”

Over the centuries the male orientation of our language has

gradually increased. Originally, *man* referred to the entire human race. In the proto-Indo-European language—the prehistoric base for many modern languages, including English—the word for man was *wiros* and the word for woman was *gwena*. *Manu* meant human being. As the centuries passed and language changed, *man* came to be used for both males and the human race.

Because words help determine and define reality, terminology had to change to eliminate the male bias in our everyday language. Such changes were reflected in the U.S. Department of Labor's *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*, 4th edition (2 vols., revised 1991), in which the official terminology for nearly 3,500 occupations was changed to eliminate discriminatory referents.<sup>4</sup> Publishing houses prepared guidelines for authors with instructions and suggestions for removing gender bias from their writings. Linguists seriously proposed that the rules of grammar be changed, so that "Everyone must pay their taxes" would become correct usage.

Words that some people consider sexist actually are not. The Latin word *manus* means "hand," and it formed the basis of a great many English words, including *manacle*, *manage*, *manager*, *manner*, *manual*, *manicure*, *manifest*, *manipulate*, *manufacture*, and *manuscript*.

Most likely, you've grown up with inclusive language, because changes in usage to avoid male bias in language have been rapid and widespread. Few announcers need to be told that *flight attendant* has replaced both *airline steward* and *stewardess*, that *firemen* and *policemen* are now *firefighters* and *police officers*, and that the *mailman* has become the *mail* or *letter carrier*. If, however, you find yourself using obsolete terms for workers in any field, make a conscious effort to change this practice.

One way of avoiding male-oriented terminology when including people of both sexes is to use the plural. An awkward statement such as "Everyone should send in his or her entry so that he or she will be eligible for a prize" can easily be turned into "All listeners must send in their entries to be eligible for prizes." Another way is to use the second person: "Send in your entry so you'll be eligible for a prize." Because television and radio are intimate media, the

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<sup>4</sup>In 1997, the U.S. Department of Labor replaced the "outmoded" *Dictionary of Occupational Titles* with O\*NET, the *Occupational Information Network*, "a comprehensive database system for collecting, organizing, describing, and disseminating data on job characteristics . . ."

use of the second person helps establish a direct link between announcer and listener.

## Nations and Citizens of the World

Broadcast announcers, especially news anchors and reporters, can expect to refer at one time or another to nearly every nation in the world. If you were to read a news story from Grenada, Tajikistan, or Kenya, where would you turn to find the correct pronunciation of these nations? Nearly any comprehensive dictionary will tell you to pronounce the first nation as (gruh-NAY-duh), the second as (tah-JEEK-iss-tahn), and the last as (KEN-yuh).<sup>5</sup>

It's equally important to use the correct noun and adjective when referring to citizens of a nation. A citizen of Tajikistan is a (TAH-jeek), a citizen of Grenada is a (gruh-NAY-dee-un), and (KEN-yun) is both noun and adjective for the people of Kenya. Whenever you're unsure of the correct noun or adjective, use the Internet to access the U.S. State Department or the Central Intelligence Agency, where you'll find reliable and up-to-date information.<sup>6</sup> If you're in or near a large city, such information may be obtained by phoning the appropriate consulate or embassy. Announcers aren't expected to know pronunciation and terminology for all the nations of the world, but they're expected to know where to find the information.

Note that we Americanize the names of many nations. The country we call Ivory Coast is actually République de Côte d'Ivoire (RAY-POO-BLEEK' DIH COAT DEE-VWAR'). Because we've Americanized the names of nearly all nations, you should try for correct American pronunciation rather than attempting to pronounce the name as a native of the country would pronounce it. This general rule is true even for countries for which we haven't changed the spelling, such as Mexico. Remember, though, that pronunciation changes over the years. There's a continuing trend toward giving correct or nearly correct Spanish pronunciation to the names of nations such as Uruguay, Colombia, and Costa Rica. If you're a Spanish-speaking American announcer, correct pronuncia-

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<sup>5</sup>The British pronounce Kenya as (KEEN-yuh), but citizens of that nation prefer (KEN-yuh).  
<sup>6</sup>To make this easier and faster, you may want to "bookmark" the government agencies that you find most useful and accurate as sources of international information.

tion of such names is acceptable and may even be preferred by your audience and supervisors.

## Usage Guidelines

### Age Referents

Many young adults find it offensive to be called a boy or a girl, just as middle-aged persons resent being called elderly. Be sensitive to the feelings of those described by age classifications, and of listeners and viewers who may object to your classifications. Age is, of course, not always an appropriate referent. In a report that a musician triumphed at a concert, you needn't give the musician's age—unless he or she is extremely young or old. On the other hand, in a report of the death of a well-known person, age is a legitimate item of information. When the age of a person is known and of some significance—as with athletes, prodigies, or people who have reached an unusual age, such as one hundred—give the correct age and avoid using an age category.

At times it's appropriate to state that a person is within a recognized age group. Use the criteria in Table 5.1 as a guide.

Elderly people are often referred to as *senior citizens*, but many dislike the term. *Senior* is somewhat more acceptable, though there always will be some individuals who resent being classified by an age category.

The word *kid*, meaning a young person, is sometimes acceptable and at other times in poor taste. You're safe when speaking of a kid sister or brother or in saying, "Your kids will love this!" When your focus becomes narrower and you speak of a specific person, you run the risk of provoking resentment: a child up to the age of twelve or thirteen probably will accept the label *kid*; adolescents gradually begin to object as they approach the age of fourteen or fifteen. The term is never appropriate when describing a tragedy. In general, slang words or words that seem flippant don't belong in a story that involves suffering or death.

**TABLE 5.1 Guidelines for Using Age Referents**

<b>Label</b>	<b>Appropriate Age Range</b>
<i>child</i>	Between birth and puberty (approximately 12 or 13)
<i>boy or girl</i>	Before puberty
<i>youth</i>	Between puberty and legal age (approximately 13 to 18)*
<i>juvenile</i>	Between 13 and 18
<i>adolescent</i>	Approximately 13 to 19
<i>teenager</i>	13 through 19, inclusive
<i>young adult</i>	Between 18 and 21
<i>man or woman</i>	Over 18
<i>adult</i>	Over 18
<i>middle-aged</i>	Approximately 40 to 65
<i>elderly</i>	Beyond late middle age (above 70)
<i>old</i>	Advanced years (above 75)
<i>senior</i>	Beyond retirement age (usually above 70)

\* "Legal age" is an imprecise term. Sixteen is the legal age in most states for obtaining a driver's license; eighteen is the legal age for voting; twenty-one is the legal age in most states for purchasing alcoholic beverages. Many people under the age of 18 are tried as adults for crimes they are accused of committing.

## Jargon and Vogue Words

Every profession and social group has a private or semiprivate vocabulary, and some of their words and phrases enter the mainstream of public communication. It's useful and enriching when expressions such as *gridlock*, *agribusiness*, *software*, or *hostile takeover* (a business term) are added to our vocabulary. But as an announcer, you should guard against picking up and overusing expressions that are trite, precious, deliberately distorting, or pre-

tentious. Here are a few recent vogue words and phrases with translations into plain English (slightly facetious in some cases).

### From the Military

<i>de-escalate</i>	To give up on a lost war
<i>balance of power</i>	A dangerous standoff
<i>nuclear deterrent</i>	The means by which war can be deterred when antagonistic nations possess enough nuclear weapons to destroy the world
<i>debrief</i>	To ask questions of someone
<i>collateral damage</i>	Dead civilians or destroyed buildings that were not the intended targets
<i>friendly fire</i>	The accidental killing of soldiers by their comrades

### From Government

<i>at home and abroad</i>	Everywhere
<i>nonproliferation</i>	Monopolization of nuclear weapons
<i>disadvantaged</i>	Poor people
<i>Department of Human Resources Development</i>	The unemployment office
<i>decriminalize</i>	To make legal
<i>dehire</i>	To fire an employee

### From Academe

<i>quantum leap</i>	A breakthrough
<i>de-aestheticize</i>	To take the beauty out of art
<i>dishabituate</i>	To break a bad habit
<i>microencapsulate</i>	To put into a small capsule
<i>found art</i>	Someone else's junk
<i>megastructure</i>	A large building

A few words that should be used precisely and sparingly, if at all, are *rhetoric* (when the meaning is “empty and angry talk”), *charisma*, *relevant*, *obviate*, *facility* (when referring to a building),

*viable*, and *meaningful*. Avoid vogue phrases that have already become clichés, such as *a can of worms*, *head honcho*, *pushing the envelope*, *the bottom line*, and *more bang for the buck*.

One of the most offensive speech habits that announcers can adopt is tacking the suffix *-wise* onto nouns to create awkward words:

Culturewise, the people are . . .

Foodwise, your best buy is . . .

National-securitywise, we should . . .

Such clumsy errors are made by those who don't know any better and by others who've found such usage an easy way to avoid correct sentence construction. The suffix *-wise* does, of course, have a legitimate use in words such as *lengthwise* and *counterclockwise*.

## Redundancies

To be **redundant** is to be repetitive. Redundancy can be a useful tool for reinforcing or driving home a point in a commercial or an editorial. But there's an important difference between *intentional* redundancy—as in a great speech, where a phrase is repeated several times to reach an emotional climax—and the pairing of two words that mean the same thing. *Close proximity* is redundant because *close* and *proximity* (or *proximate*) mean the same thing. A *necessary requisite* is redundant because *requisite* contains the meaning of *necessary*. Careless speech is plagued with redundancy, so be on guard and use repetition only when it serves a purpose.

The chart on pages 138–139 shows some redundancies sometimes heard on radio and television. Develop a keen ear for redundancies. Recognizing errors in usage is the first step toward avoiding them.

## Clichés

A **cliché** is an overused expression or idea. Many clichés are **similes**, a figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared—“Frank was strong as a bull.” Other clichés are merely overused expressions: “without further ado,” “to make a long story short,” “at any rate,” or “none the worse for wear.” It's important to detect trite catch phrases or overused similes that may have in-

**PHRASE**

*an old antique*

*both alike, both at once, both equal*

*completely surround, completely abandon, completely eliminate*

*cooperate together*

*divide up, end up, finish up, rest up, pay up, settle up*  
*equally as expensive*

*excess verbiage*

*exchanged with each other*

*general consensus*

*Hallowe'en evening*

*I thought to myself*

*knots per hour*

*more preferable*

*most outstanding, most perfect, most unique*

**WHY IT'S REDUNDANT**

There can be no such thing as a new antique.

*Both* refers to two people or things, and *alike*, *at once*, and *equal* all imply some kind of duality.

To surround, to abandon, and to eliminate are done completely if they're done at all.

To cooperate means that two or more work together.

All of these are burdened by unnecessary "ups."

If something costs what another thing does, then inevitably their costs are equal. (Say instead, "equally expensive" or "as expensive as.")

Because *verbiage* means wordiness, it contains the concept of excess.

An exchange is necessarily between one and another.

*Consensus* means general agreement.

*Hallowe'en* includes *evening* in an abbreviated form.

Barring telepathy, there is no one else one can think to.

A *knot* is a nautical mile per hour, so *per hour* is redundant.

Use this phrase only if you're comparing two preferences.

A thing is outstanding, perfect, or unique, or it isn't. There are no degrees of any of these qualities.

*novel innovation*

To be innovative is to be novel; this phrase essentially says a “new new thing.”

*Sahara desert*

*Sahara* means “desert.”

*serious crisis*

It’s not a crisis unless it’s already become serious.

*set a new record*

All records are new when they’re set.

*Sierra Nevada mountains*

*Sierra* means “rugged mountains.”

*still remains*

If something remains, it must be there still.

*totally annihilated*

*Annihilate* means to destroy totally.

*true facts*

There can be no untrue facts.

*visible to the eye*

There’s no other way a thing can be visible.

*abundant wealth*

*Wealth* means having a great amount.

vaded your vocabulary and then to eliminate them. Memorable speakers and writers are noted for their avoidance of commonplace expressions, as well as for their language skills in evoking the mood, character, or the ambiance of a particular place.

Most popular clichés were once innovative and effective. They became clichés by being overused and, in many instances, misapplied by people who weren’t aware of their original meanings. In a recent postgame interview, a sports reporter made this comment: “With Pete having a sprained ankle, and you playing with a broken toe, it seems that you guys played the game with your hearts on your sleeves.” The term, *hearts on your sleeves* is a cliché, but that’s not the only problem. The phrase is from the days of chivalry (knighthood) and means “openly showing your love” for a lady. The reporter apparently intended to say something like this, “You guys are all heart.” (Another cliché, by the way. . . !)

Many who use the cliché *as rich as Croesus* have no idea who Croesus was or the degree of his wealth. Similarly, the expression

**Figure 5.2**

Just as important as using respectful terms to describe U.S. citizens' age, ethnicity, and gender is the ability to apply those same considerations to covering international stories. When announcing such stories from the studio or on location—as CNN's Bernard Shaw is doing here as he reports for *The International Hour* from Moscow—one must research unfamiliar pronunciations for names of people and places and correct terms for citizens of various nations. (Courtesy of Turner Broadcasting)



*slow as molasses in January* may be used by some who aren't familiar with the viscous properties of molasses.

Many clichés reflect our rural past. We say he was “mad as a wet hen,” “fat as a pig,” “stubborn as a mule,” “silly as a goose,” “strong as an ox,” “busy as a bird dog,” and similar expressions. Though not all clichés are similes, most similes in common use are clichés. Most of these animal similes are learned and used by people who've never associated with creatures of the barnyard or field. Most of us should replace these expressions with similes that reflect our own experiences.

Good use of language demands that we think before we use the first cliché that comes to mind. Commonly used clichés include these:

*hustle and bustle*

*first and foremost*

*at this point in time*

*stop on a dime*

*by and large*

*the phone was ringing off the hook* (few of today's telephones have hooks)

*hurly-burly*  
*quick as a flash or quick as a wink*  
*quiet as a grave or quiet as a tomb*  
*dead as a doornail*  
*dry as a bone*  
*as cool as a cucumber*  
*as hungry as a bear*  
*fresh as a daisy*

The effectiveness of these clichés and dozens more like them has simply been eroded by endless repetition. Good broadcast speech isn't measured by the ability to produce new and more effective images, but often creative expression can make for memorable communication. See what a little thought and time can do to help you use language creatively. How would you complete the following similes to create novel and effective images?

*as awkward as* \_\_\_\_\_  
*as barren as* \_\_\_\_\_  
*as deceptive as* \_\_\_\_\_  
*as friendly as* \_\_\_\_\_  
*as quiet as* \_\_\_\_\_  
*as strange as* \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to overworked similes, many other words and phrases have become hackneyed through overuse. Many clichés can be heard on daily newscasts. If you intend to become a news reporter or newscaster, make a careful and constant study of words that have become meaningless and replace them with meaningful synonyms.

One cliché of the newsroom that deserves special attention is *pending notification of next of kin*. This is a stilted and clumsy way of saying, "until relatives have been notified." There's a great story, perhaps apocryphal, that an underprepared radio announcer, working a night shift, tore an "urgent" bulletin off a teletype machine, rushed to the microphone, and began reading the bulletin: "And there's a report just in that the prime minister of South Africa has died." Then, not knowing how to pronounce the minister's name, quickly ad-libbed, "His identity was not released, pending notification of next of kin."

Many speakers and writers use clichés without knowing their

**OVERWORKED PHRASE****SUGGESTED  
ALTERNATIVE***has branded as ridiculous  
a shroud of secrecy**has called ridiculous  
kept secret**deem it advisable**consider it advisable**was held in abeyance**was suspended**informed sources at the  
White House**White House aides**earmarked several million  
dollars**set aside several million  
dollars**stated in no uncertain  
terms**was definite about**a flurry of activity**sudden activity*

precise meaning—an easy way to fall into error. For example, the adjectives *jerrybuilt* and *jury-rigged* sometimes become “jerry-rigged” and “jury-built” when used by people unaware that the first adjective means “shoddily built” and the second is a nautical term meaning “rigged for emergency use.”

It’s also important to avoid incorrect quotations from or allusions to works of literature. The following are some examples of this type of mistake.

“Far from the maddening crowd” is the incorrect version of “far from the madding crowd’s ignoble strife,” from Thomas Gray’s “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.”

The phrase “suffer, little children” or “suffer the little children” has recently been used to mean “let the little children suffer.” The original expression, in the King James Bible version of Mark 10:14, is “Suffer the little children to come unto me.” In this context, *suffer* means “allow” or “permit”: “Allow the little children to come to me.”

“Alas, poor Yorick, I knew him well.” This is both corrupt and incomplete. The line from *Hamlet*, Act V, scene i, reads:

“Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow of infinite jest.”

The misquotation “Music hath charms to soothe the savage beast” is an inelegant version of a line from the play *The Mourning Bride* by William Congreve. The correct version is “Music hath charms to soothe the savage *breast*.”

The all-too-familiar question “Wherefore art thou Romeo?” is consistently misused by people who think that *wherefore* means “where.” It means “why.” The question asks “*Why* are you Romeo?” not “*Where* are you, Romeo?”

“Pride goeth before a fall” is actually, in the King James Bible version of Proverbs 16:18, “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

“A little knowledge is a dangerous thing” is close, but not close enough, to what Alexander Pope actually wrote: “A little learning is a dangerous thing.”

These are but a few of many common misquotations. As a broadcast announcer, you should routinely check original sources. Excellent sources for checking the accuracy of quoted phrases are *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations*, and the *Merriam-Webster Book of Quotations*, available in print editions as well as on compact disks. Use a quotation only if it truly belongs in your work. When in doubt, skip the cliché—even correctly cited clichés are still clichés.

## Latin and Greek Plurals

When you discuss broadcast media, be meticulous in using *medium* for the singular and *media* for the plural. Radio is a *medium*. Radio and television are *media*. We can speak of the *news media* but not of *television news media*. If people who work in broadcast media don't practice correct usage, no one else will, and the incorrectly used plural *media* will take over for the singular form.

*Data* is another Latin plural that's commonly misused as the singular, as in “What is your data?” This sentence should be “What *are* your data?” The sentence “What is your datum?” is correct if the singular is intended.

Many other words of Latin and Greek origin are subject to similar misuse. Here are some of the more important of these (note that the Greek words end in *-on* and the Latin words end in *-um*):

**SINGULAR**

*addendum*  
*criterion*  
*memorandum*  
*phenomenon*  
*stratum*  
*syllabus*

**PLURAL**

*addenda*  
*criteria*  
*memoranda*  
*phenomena*  
*strata*  
*syllabi*

Words that refer to graduates of schools are a more complicated matter, for both gender and number must be considered:

Female singular: *alumna*, “She is an alumna of State College.”

Female plural: *alumnae*, pronounced (UH-LUM’-NEE) /ə-lŭm’nē/ [ə’lŭmni], “These women are alumnae of State College.”

Male singular: *alumnus*, “He is an alumnus of State College.”

Male plural: *alumni*, pronounced (UH-LUM’-NY) /ə-lŭm’nī/ [ə’lŭmnai] “These men are alumni of State College.”

Male and female plural: *alumni*, pronounced as the male plural, “These men and women are alumni of State College.”

## Nonstandard Expressions and Usage

### Slang

The very definition of *slang* is determined more by how one feels about its use than by any objective criterion. To some, “slang” means corrupted speech; to others it means a creative and effective use of language. Slang is condemned by language purists, but most of us use it without apology in some settings and contexts. *Ain’t* is a slang word generally avoided by speakers, but sometimes we use it for effect, as in “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” Another nonstandard term, *humongous* is used to advantage in all but the most formal speech. Perhaps the best and most neutral definition of slang comes from the *American Heritage Dictionary*:

**slang** (slang) *n.* A kind of language occurring chiefly in casual and playful speech, made up typically of short-lived coinages and figures of speech that are deliberately used in place of standard terms for added raciness, humor, irreverence, or other effect.

Slang is an important means of changing and infusing language with vitality. Some slang expressions arise from a need to name a new object or phenomenon. *Lemon* and *gas guzzler* are two effective ways of describing a faulty automobile; *tailgating* is a creative term for that risky practice. Other slang terms originate as **euphemisms**—a word substituted for another that’s considered indelicate or too blunt—as in calling a toilet a *can* or a *head*.

Slang, the nonstandard vocabulary of a given culture or subculture, is often brilliantly effective. Some of its effectiveness is due to its originality. Slang terms often are coined to fill a perceived need for a new term or to create a word that has more “punch” than standard equivalents. Because, as the dictionary notes, slang is short-lived, several of the examples used here will probably be “history” by the time you read them. But examples are necessary, and although slang travels speedily, it seldom ages well!

Expressions such as *crash pad* for a place where a person could sleep without fee or invitation, and *head shop*, a store specializing in apparatus to use with illegal drugs, came from the so-called hippie culture (another slang expression) of the 1960s. As evidence of rapid change in slang word usage, you may not be familiar with these once popular terms.

The space program brought us *glitch*, meaning a minor mishap, as well as names for many objects or processes that weren’t in existence when the program began. Sweeping changes in health care in the mid-nineties gave us *wellness* and *managed care*. Other slang expressions have entered our language by way of ethnic groups: *Mafia* from the Italian; *kosher* from Yiddish by way of Hebrew; African languages have given us *voodoo*, *banana*, and *cola*; *macho* was contributed by Latinos but derived from Spanish; and *smorgasbord* is from the Swedish language.

Many slang expressions are created by members of specialized groups, including those involved in sports. These terms are sometimes called **jargon**, the specialized language of a trade, profession, or similar group. *Front-runner* and *by a nose* are from horse racing; *hat trick* from hockey; *off-base* from baseball, and *blitz* from football

**Figure 5.3**

Music announcers on stations with an all-jazz format often use slang to great effect. The very term, *jazz*, is of slang origin, and the free and improvised nature of jazz rebels against restraints in word choice. Creative music seems to benefit from creative use of language when introducing and commenting on it. (Courtesy of Bob Parlocha)



(although it originated in wartime Europe, as an abbreviation of *blitzkrieg*, “lightning war”).<sup>7</sup>

Although slang may be used in many creative ways to enrich our speech, it’s important to remember that one person’s slang may not fit another’s speech personality. Many expressions used by African Americans, such as *The Man*, or *bro*, may sound pretentious or condescending when spoken by whites. Similarly, words of foreign origin, such as *mensch* or *schlepping*, may sound out of place when used by someone who has only a vague notion of their meaning and uses them in inappropriate contexts. Some users of in-group expressions resent outsiders who take over their language.

Words derived from the worlds of crime and drugs are avoided by announcers in most instances. Terms such as *ripped off*, to mean stole, or *busted*, to mean arrested, are devised to lessen the seriousness of the activity being described. “He was busted for crack” sounds far more innocent and trivial than the straightforward translation, “He was arrested for possession of cocaine.” To “rip someone off” is to steal from a person, and theft shouldn’t be trivialized; slang makes some illegal actions seem less serious than they

<sup>7</sup>See an expanded discussion of jargon earlier in this chapter.

**Figure 5.4**

Many schools maintain on-air or “carrier current” radio stations offering students opportunities to practice on-air announcing skills. Use such a challenge to polish your use of American English, and develop a life-long practice of modifying your vocabulary to conform to ongoing changes in our language. (Courtesy of Robert Dozoka and KALX, Berkeley.)



are and, perhaps, even a little humorous. Though you should, in general, avoid using street expressions, be aware that a few stations encourage—or even require—announcers to use such language.

As an announcer, you should become sensitive to when and how nonstandard—or not yet standard—language adds or detracts from your message. Slang that might be appropriate in a commercial may be out of place in a newscast. Although sports announcers, talk-show hosts, and popular music announcers often use slang to good effect, it’s usually avoided by news commentators and analysts.

## Solecisms

A **solecism** is a nonstandard or ungrammatical usage. It’s related to a **barbarism** (a word or phrase not in accepted use), and both should be avoided by broadcast announcers. You don’t need to be told that *ain’t* is unacceptable or that educated speakers don’t use *anywheres*. We all in early childhood pick up substandard words and phrases, but they survive to plague us if we don’t become aware of them. These include the following:

*Foot for feet*, as in “She was five foot tall.” Five is more than one, and it demands the plural *feet*: “She was five feet tall.” (No one would say that a person is “five foot, six inch tall.”)

*Was enthused over* for *was enthusiastic about*.

*Guess* as a substitute for *think* or *suppose*, as in “I guess I’d better read a commercial.”

*Expect* for *suppose* or *assume*, as in “I expect he’s on the scene by now.”

*Try and* for *try to*, as in “She’s going to try and break the record.”

*Hung* for *hanged*, as in “The lynch mob hung the cattle rustler.”

*Hung* is the past tense of *hang* in every meaning other than as applied to a human being. Correct usages are “I hung my coat on the hook” and “He was hanged in 1884.”

*Outside of* for *aside from*, as in “Outside of that, I enjoyed the movie.”

*Real* for *really*, as in “I was real pleased.”

*Lay* and *lie* are problem words for some speakers of English. *Lie* is an intransitive verb (does not require a direct object) meaning “to recline.” It’s used correctly in the following examples:

Present tense: “I lie down.”

Past tense: “I lay down.”

Past participle: “I had lain down.”

*Lay* is a transitive verb (requiring a direct object) that means “to place.”

Present tense: “I lay it down.”

Past tense: “I laid it down.”

Past participle: “I had laid it down.”

Hens *lay* eggs, but they also *lie* down from time to time. A parent can *lay* a baby on a blanket and then *lie* next to her.

## Words Often Misused

*Hopefully*, *reportedly*, and *allegedly* are three adverbs misused so consistently that some modern dictionaries now accept their misuse. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs; in other words, adverbs tell us how something happened. In the sentence “He runs rapidly,” *rapidly* is the adverb, and it modifies the verb *runs*. The adverb tells how he ran.

*Hopefully* means “with hope” or “in a hopeful manner.” To say, “Hopefully, we’ll win,” is not the same as saying, “We hope we’ll win.” The first implies that *hope* is the means by which we’ll win. *Hopefully* is used properly in these sentences: “She entered college hopefully”; “He approached the customer hopefully.”

**Figure 5.5**

One of the most over-used and misused words in broadcast journalism is *allegedly*. A news reporter was recently heard saying, "The alleged gunman then killed himself with a shot to the head," which makes no sense at all! Whenever possible, say the name or position of the *alleged*, as in "Police Sergeant Rivoli alleged that the same man held up both banks." And, remember—people don't commit crimes in an *alleged* manner. (Spencer Grant, *The Picture Cube*)



There's no proper use of *reportedly*. This quasi-adverb is of recent origin and doesn't stand up to linguistic logic because there's no way to do something *in a reported manner*. To say "He was reportedly killed at the scene" isn't the same thing as saying "It's reported that he was killed at the scene." "He was reportedly killed" means that he was killed *in a reported manner*. Additionally, using the word "reportedly" tells attentive listeners that the reporter really isn't sure of the information.

The adverb *allegedly* is widely misused. It's impossible for a person to steal, kill, or lie in an alleged way. "Twenty people were allegedly killed or injured by the crazed gunman" makes no grammatical sense. *Allegedly* and *alleged* (the adjective) are perhaps the most overworked and misused words in broadcast journalism. To be generous, we can assume that the consistent use of *allegedly* indicates that reporters are making an effort to be fair. To say on a newscast that "Jones allegedly stole eighty typewriters" may make you guilty of poor grammar, but it shows that you don't want listeners to assume that Jones has been found guilty of grand theft.

Many reporters, newswriters, news directors, and station managers believe that the use of *allegedly* protects the station from charges of libel, but that's not always true. You aren't protected

when using the term unless the story includes the name or title of the person doing the “alleging.” It’s safe to say “Police Captain Mundt alleged that the man threatened to kill his hostage.” And, when you state the name or title of the allexer, you can omit the qualifying term *alleged* altogether. The only sound reason for using any of the derivatives of *allege* is to help preserve the notion that all people are innocent until proven guilty. Here are a few recently noticed misuses of forms of *allege*:

- “The bullet, allegedly fired at the president . . .” This is ludicrous—the reporter can hardly question the fact that a gun was fired and that a bullet whizzed past the president when viewers are shown the incident on videotape.
- “Jones will stand trial for alleged auto theft.” *Alleged* is unnecessary in this sentence. The notion of a trial contains the allegation, by a district attorney, of guilt.
- “The experts have examined the alleged bullets used in the assassination.” The idea of an “alleged” bullet raises the possibility that it was not a bullet at all.

When considering the use of any term of allegation, ask yourself these questions: (1) Is the word necessary to qualify the statement? (2) Am I using it correctly? Clearly, *allegedly* and *alleged* are unnecessary in the three examples given. Is it possible or useful to say who is doing the alleging? “Meyer is alleged by his estranged wife to have set fire to the store” is longer and more cumbersome than “Meyer, the alleged arsonist,” but it contains more useful information and is fairer to Meyer than the shorter version; the indication that Meyer’s wife did the alleging also removes the possibility of your being sued for libel! One might question whether the term “is alleged” is the best way of saying this. Why not, “Meyer’s wife claims that . . . ? Here are some correct and incorrect uses of these terms:

**Incorrect**

“The striking teachers allegedly destroyed their attendance records.”

**Correct**

“The principal alleged that the striking teachers destroyed their attendance records.”

**Incorrect**

“Benson is allegedly an undercover agent.”

“Chang allegedly is set to buy the hockey team at the end of the season.”

(Note that this is wrong in two ways: it isn't possible to buy anything in an alleged manner and terms of allegation should be reserved for instances in which there's possible wrongdoing.)

**Correct**

“Benson is alleged by the State Department to be an undercover agent for a foreign power.”

“Chang is reported to be set to buy the hockey team at the end of the season.”

*Allegedly*, like *hopefully* and *reportedly*, is a poor reporter's copout. These words fail to tell us who is doing the alleging, the hoping, or the reporting. To say “The negotiators are reportedly near an agreement” is only slightly worse than saying “The negotiators are reported to be near an agreement.” The second statement is proper grammar, but it would be far better as a news item if it said who made the statement. As a reporter, you may not know who's doing the alleging, the hoping, or the reporting, but it's part of your job as a field reporter to find out and to include that information in your report.

Adverbs such as these three (*hopefully*, *reportedly*, and *allegedly*) represent a special problem to announcers: should you go along with conventional misuse? One argument in favor of doing so is that everyone understands what's meant. An argument against it is that widespread misuse of adverbs undermines the entire structure of grammar, which makes it increasingly difficult for us to think through grammatical problems. Because any sentence can be spoken conversationally without misusing adverbs, it is to be hoped that professional announcers will use adverbs correctly.

Other often misused words can trip up unwary speakers and writers:

Don't say *anxious* when you mean *eager* or *desirous*. *Anxious* means "worried" or "strained" and is associated with anxiety.

*Connive*, *conspire*, and *contrive* are sometimes confused. To *connive* is to cooperate secretly in an illegal or wrongful action. To *conspire* is to plan together secretly; one person can't conspire, because a conspiracy is an agreement between two or more persons. To *contrive* is to scheme or plot with evil intent; one person is capable of contriving.

*Contemptible* is sometimes confused with *contemptuous*. *Contemptible* is an adjective meaning "despicable." *Contemptuous* is an adjective meaning "scornful" or "disdainful." You may say "The killer is contemptible" or "He is contemptuous of the rights of others."

*Continual* and *continuous* are used by many speakers as interchangeable synonyms, but their meanings aren't the same. *Continual* means "repeated regularly and frequently"; *continuous* means "prolonged without interruption or cessation." A foghorn may sound continually; it doesn't sound continuously unless it's broken. A siren may sound continuously, but it doesn't sound continually unless it's going off every five minutes (or every half-hour or every hour).

*Convince* and *persuade* are used interchangeably by many announcers. In some constructions either word will do. A problem arises when *convince* is linked with *to*, as in this incorrect sentence: "He believes that he can convince the Smithsonian directors to give him the collection." The correct word to use in this sentence is *persuade*. *Convince* is to be followed by *of* or a clause beginning with *that*, as in "I couldn't convince him of my sincerity" or "I couldn't convince him that I was honest." The sentence "I couldn't convince him to trust me" is incorrect. In the following sentence, recently heard on a network newscast, *persuade* should have been used: "He did not know whether or not the president could convince them to change their minds."

*Distinct* and *distinctive* aren't interchangeable. *Distinct* means "not identical" or "different"; *distinctive* means "distinguishing" or "characteristic." A distinct odor is one that can't be overlooked; a distinctive odor is one that can be identified.

*Emanate* means to "come forth," "proceed," or "issue." You may say, "The light emanated from a hole in the drape." Note that only light, air, aromas, ideas, and other such phenomena can emanate. Objects such as rivers, automobiles, or peaches can't emanate from mountains, a factory, or an orchard.

*Farther* and *farthest* are used for literal distance, as in “The tree is farther away than the mailbox.” But *further* and *furthest* are used for figurative distance, as in “further in debt.”

*Feasible* is often used interchangeably with five other words: *possible*, *practical*, *practicable*, *workable*, and *viable*. These words should be differentiated by people who want to be precise in their use of American English.

*Feasible* means “clearly possible or applicable”: “The plan was feasible” or “Her excuse was feasible.”

*Possible* means “capable of happening”: “It’s possible that the plan will work.”

*Practical* refers to the prudence, efficiency, or economy of an act or thing: “This is a practical plan” or “He’s a practical person.”

*Practicable* means “capable of being done”: “The plan is hardly practicable at this time.” Note that *practicable* never refers to persons.

*Workable* means “capable of being worked or dealt with”: “The plan is workable.” Note that *workable* implies a future act.

*Viable* means “capable of living, growing, or developing”: “That is a viable tomato plant.” Recently *viable* has replaced *feasible* in many applications. Avoid using this overworked word. If you remember that it’s derived from the Old French *vie* and the Latin *vita*, both of which mean “life,” it’s unlikely that you will speak of “viable plans.”

*Flaunt* and *flout* are often used interchangeably and therefore incorrectly. To *flaunt* is to “exhibit ostentatiously” or to “show off.” To *flout* is to “show contempt for” or to “scorn.” You may say “He flaunted his coat of arms” or “He flouted the officials.”

*Fulsome* originally meant “abundant,” but over the years it has come to mean “offensively excessive” or “insincere.” The *American Heritage Dictionary* advises against using this word in a positive sense, as in “fulsome praise,” stating that this usage is obsolete.

*Implicit* means “implied” or “understood”; *explicit* means “expressed with precision” or “specific.” “He made an implicit promise” means that the promise was understood but wasn’t actually stated. “His promise was explicit” means that the promise was clearly stated.

To *imply* is to “suggest by logical necessity” or to “intimate”; to *infer* is to “draw a conclusion based on facts or indications.” You may say “Her grades imply a fine mind” or “From examining her

grades, I infer that she has a fine mind.” Avoid the common practice of using one of these words to mean the other.

*Libel* originally meant any written, printed, or pictorial statement that damages by defaming character or by exposing a person to ridicule, but libel also includes words spoken over the air, especially when read from a script. *Slander* means “the utterance of defamatory statements injurious to the reputation of a person.” *Defamation* is a more general term meaning both libel and slander.

A *loan* is anything lent for temporary use; to *lend* is to “give out or allow the temporary use of something.” *Loan* is a noun, and *lend* is a verb. You may say “She applied for a loan” or “He lent me his rake” or “Don’t lend money to friends.” Avoid using loan as a verb, as in “Don’t loan money to friends.”

The suffix *-ology* means “theory of.” *Methodology* is not the same as *method*; it’s the theory of methods. *Technology* isn’t the same as the manufacturing of products; it’s the theory of technical applications of scientific knowledge. You can avoid compounding confusion by obtaining precise definitions of all the words ending in *-ology* that you habitually use.

*Oral* means “spoken.” *Verbal* means “of, pertaining to, or associated with words.” *Aural* means “of, pertaining to, or perceived by the ear.” *Verbal* is less precise than *oral*, because it can mean spoken or written; for this reason, the phrase “oral agreement” rather than “verbal agreement” should be used if the meaning is that the agreement wasn’t written. Although *oral* and *aural* are pronounced the same, they’re used in different senses: “She taught oral interpretation” but “He had diminished aural perception.”

*People* (not persons) should be used in referring to a large group: “People should vote in every election.” *Persons* and *person* should be used for small groups and for individuals: “Five persons were involved” and “The person spoke on the telephone.” A *personage* is an important or noteworthy person. A *personality* is a pattern of behavior. It’s technically incorrect to call a DJ a **personality**, even though the term has wide acceptance.

Most dictionaries indicate that *prison* and *jail* can be used interchangeably, but strictly speaking a jail is maintained by a town, city, or county, whereas prisons are maintained by states and the federal government. Jails generally confine prisoners for periods of less than a year; prisons or penitentiaries are for people with longer sentences.

*Repulsion* is the act of driving back or repelling; *revulsion* is a

feeling of disgust or loathing. Don't say, "His breath repelled me," unless you mean that his breath physically forced you backward.

*Reticent* means "silent"; *reluctant* means "unwilling." Don't say "She was reticent to leave" when you mean "She was reluctant to leave."

*Rhetoric* is the art of oratory or the study of the language elements used in literature and public speaking. Rhetoric isn't a synonym for *bombast*, *cant*, or *harangue*. *Rhetoric* is a neutral term and shouldn't be used in a negative sense to mean empty and threatening speech.

A *robber* unlawfully takes by violence or intimidation something that belongs to another; a *burglar* breaks into a house or store to steal valuable goods. Although both actions are felonies, they're different crimes, so *robber* and *burglar* shouldn't be used interchangeably.

*Xerox* is the trademark of a corporation that makes copying machines. The company specifies that *Xerox* is the name of the company or, if followed by a model number, a specific machine. A photocopy made by that or any other machine is not "a Xerox."

This review of common usage errors is necessarily limited, but it may be adequate to alert you to the issue of correct usage. If you habitually make errors such as those described here, consider taking composition courses beyond those required and making English usage a lifelong study.

## Deliberate Misuse of Language

As an announcer, you'll at times have to read copy that's ungrammatical, is marked by poor usage, or requires deliberate mispronunciation. Here are a few examples: "So, buy \_\_\_\_\_! There's no toothpaste like it!" If there's no toothpaste like it, the advertised product itself doesn't exist; the correct expression is "There's no *other* toothpaste like it." In "So, gift her with flowers on Mother's Day!" the word *gift*, which is a noun, is used ungrammatically as a transitive verb. You can *give* her flowers on Mother's Day, but unless all standards of grammar are abandoned, you can't *gift* her. You may be asked to pronounce the Italian island Capri, KUH-PREE' instead of the correct KAP'-REE. When you're asked to commit these and other errors as an announcer, what should you do?

You may resent the advertising agency that asks you to foist poor examples of American speech or pronunciation on the public.

Although some errors in usage are made by copywriters through ignorance, don't assume that all copywriters are unaware of correct standards of grammar or pronunciation; many of the mistakes in their copy are deliberate. Poor grammar, advertising copywriters believe, is more colloquial and less stilted than correct grammar. Poor usage causes controversy, and to attract attention is to succeed in the primary objective of any commercial message. Mispronunciations are often used because the American public, for whatever reasons, has adopted them.

The problem with being obliged to make deliberate mistakes is that knowledgeable members of your audience will assume that the mistake is yours and other listeners may believe that the poor usage or mispronunciation actually is correct! Use language properly in all broadcast circumstances you control; when you're asked to read ungrammatical copy exactly as it's written, you should, when possible, ask the writer or the agency if it can be changed.

This chapter ends much as it began, with a brief compilation of some usage errors heard on radio and television. The sentences that follow have one thing in common—all are incorrect:

- "The owner of the destroyed house was nonplused about it." This would seem okay, except that in the accompanying sound bite, the owner said, "Well, it could've been worse." The owner, then, actually was *nonchalant*, rather than *nonplussed*.
- "So much for the wisdom of political pundits." This blunder was heard several times during a recent political campaign. The correct word is *pundit*, derived from the Hindi "pandit," meaning a learned person.
- "The Bears were hoping to cash in on their field position, but that point is now mute." The word is *moot*, which in this usage would mean "irrelevant."
- ". . . and, for music lovers, this Saturday night at 8:00 the Opera Guild stages the Mozart opera, *The Marriage of Figuroa*." "Figuroa" is a major thoroughfare in Los Angeles, named after an early Californian. The announcer meant *Figaro*.
- ". . . and, when the storm came in, it rained unrelentlessly for the next eight hours." The unnecessary *un* canceled out *relentlessly*, so, according to the reporter, it didn't rain much at all! (Beware of unnecessary *uns* that mean the opposite of what was intended, as in "unloosen the knot.")

“... so, it’s important for the inspectors to sift through the chafe.”

The announcer meant *chaff*, a word referring to the outer coating of grains removed during threshing. To *chafe* is to “irritate by rubbing.”

“A barge with a large wench is on its way to the scene of the accident.” It’s unlikely that even a *huge* wench could lift a truck from the bay.

“They [the 49ers] have been top heavy, passwise to runwise.” This statement, made during a football broadcast, combined jargon (tacking *-wise* onto nouns) with an expression (“top heavy”) that isn’t a good substitute for “lopsided,” “unbalanced,” or “disproportionate.”

This list of errors in usage is brief, to be sure, but it illustrates the kinds of mistakes made by professional speakers who should be providing models of correct speech. If you make mistakes such as these or if you confuse *who* and *whom*, *shall* and *will*, *like* and *as*, and *which* and *that*, this chapter should serve as notice that you should undertake a serious study of American English. The suggested readings in Appendix E include several works on American English usage that should be a part of every announcer’s library.

**PRACTICE****Improving Vocabulary and Pronunciation**

Turn to Appendix B. Choose fifty words whose meanings or pronunciations are unfamiliar. Using a cassette recorder and the pronunciation guides provided, record each word. Repeat it until you're comfortable with the sound of its correct pronunciation. Then, consulting a dictionary, read and record the word's most common definition(s).

**PRACTICE****Analyzing Regional Accents**

Watch several local, PBS, and network newscasts and determine the percentages of news reporters and anchors and weather, sports, or environmental reporters who employ Standard American and of those who speak with regional accents. Jot down at least ten regional differences in speech patterns—and guess the origin of the accents.

# 6



## Broadcast Equipment

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Digital Workstations  
    Preparing to Work at a Tapeless Radio Station  
    But Don't Ignore the Old!
- SPOTLIGHT: Equipping Broadcast Studios for the  
    Twenty-first Century
- Microphones  
    Internal Structure  
    Pickup Patterns  
    Intended Use
- Audio Consoles
- Audio Storage Systems  
    Tape Carts, CD and DAT Players, and Digital Cartridge  
    Machines  
    Turntables
- Automated Radio Stations

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### Digital Workstations

You're reporting for another day's work at your Adult Contemporary radio station. You receive scripts for the commercials you're to produce prior to your on-air shift and move to a small **production studio**, with a digital workstation, complete with **audio console** and computer system. You use a **track ball** (which functions as a mouse) to select a **music bed**. You activate the recorder, which

mixes your voice and the music background onto a hard disk, and begin to record a commercial.<sup>1</sup> As you speak, a “picture” of your reading appears on the video display monitor. It progresses across the screen from start to finish of your reading.<sup>2</sup>

With the aid of the track ball, you later edit any portion of the recording to eliminate or replace unwanted sounds, such as a sneeze or the wheeze of overaspirated intake breaths. Most audio workstation equipment is set for **automatic gain control** (AGC), so when a reduced or barely audible sound is detected, the sounds of your intake breaths gain in volume as the AGC “searches” for sound. To eliminate unwanted sounds, you locate on the computer screen the point at which the sound begins, press a key to mark it, then find the ending point and make a second mark. These marks “surround” the segment you’re editing. A keystroke deletes the sound between the two marks.

An *exchange* option allows you, not to *delete*, but to re-record one or more sentences, to place marks at the start and end of the unwanted section, and to simultaneously erase it while inserting the preferred version. Other options permit you to change the volume or the equalization of any portion of your recording, or to remix the volume balance between voice and music bed. When you’re satisfied with your edited commercial, you give it an identification name and number, and store it on a mass storage hard disk. You may produce two to a dozen commercials before you’re through with this day’s commercial production. On days with few commercials to produce, you may, instead, record promos for your station.

You later enter the **on-air studio**, ready to start your four-hour shift as a DJ. Before you take over from the DJ whose shift precedes yours, you begin your preparations. Working from a log prepared by the music director, you access the hard disk that stores the music library, and select and stack in order the music cuts you’ll play during your time on the air. You then turn to a computer terminal, complete with keyboard, a track ball, and a video data monitor. A log, prepared by the traffic department, lists the commercials

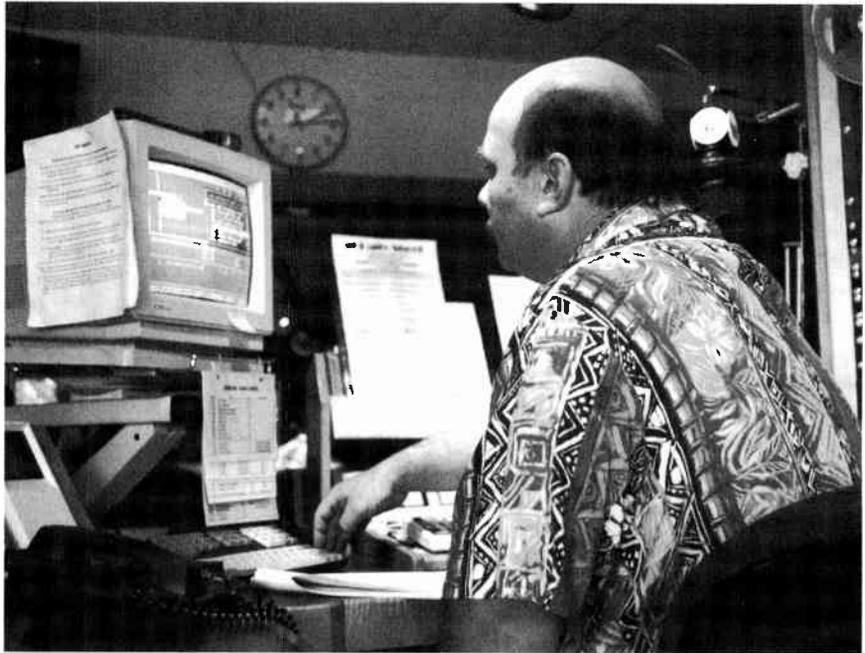
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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this text, both “*disk*” and “*disc*” are used. The word *disk* is used when referring to computers; *disc* is used when referring to vinyl phonograph records as it has been for many years.

<sup>2</sup>Shingo Kamada, technical supervisor at KCBS and KLLC, San Francisco, gave generously of his time and knowledge to make the information in this chapter current with radio station practices.

**Figure 6.1**

DJ Tom Plant works with a keyboard, a track ball, and a video data monitor to select and “stack” commercials stored on a hard disk. He follows a log, prepared by the traffic department, which lists in order the commercials to be played during his four-hour shift. (Courtesy of Tom Plant and KZST, Santa Rosa)



to be played during your shift, as well as the order and the precise times at which they'll be broadcast. Many of the commercials were sent from advertising agencies to your station over high-quality telephone lines and digitally reconstructed on a hard disk. Some commercials and nearly all of your public-service announcements (PSAs), jingles, and station promos were created in your production studio by you and co-workers, and transferred from an audio console/video terminal system to the same mass storage disk that holds the agency-produced commercials. With the aid of the track ball, you select all stored commercials to be played, and assemble them in the order in which they'll be broadcast. Recorded station IDs, jingles, promos, and PSAs also are stored on a hard disk, and these have been stacked by traffic.

None of the recorded material is in your announce booth—it exists only on the computer hard disk in an adjacent room. As the time comes to play each program element—music, commercial, jingle—you use the track ball to *find*, the video screen to *see*, and the computer keyboard to *select* each; when the time comes to play each of them, you press the “play” command, and the cut you've

previously selected is sent to the audio console and then out over the air.

While music is played, you receive telephone calls from listeners. As you answer the phone, you inform callers that they will be recorded; if there's no objection, you then activate a recorder to make an audio record of the conversation. There are two reasons for recording these calls: the first is to preserve actual conversations to avoid later problems about prizes, prize winners, or other issues that could arise from misunderstandings; the second is to collect comments that may later be edited into sound bites to be used in station promotions.

### **Preparing to Work at a Tapeless Radio Station<sup>3</sup>**

Today's radio announcers are required to perform well with the electronic marvels described in this opening scenario. If you remain in radio for even a few years, you'll definitely need to operate similar hi-tech equipment, and eventually to operate equipment that hasn't yet been invented! Even if you begin your career at a small-market station, you may be asked to work with highly sophisticated computerized operations. Although in years past equipment at smaller stations lagged decades behind that found at large and prosperous stations, today such apparatus may be found at stations of every size. The twin factors of reduced equipment costs and the ability to operate stations with fewer employees combine to make technological upgrading economically attractive to station owners.

You're unlikely to currently have access to all the equipment described at the start of this chapter. How can you learn? How can you prepare? Read what Tom Skinner, owner and general manager of KZST-FM has to say about preparation for work at a tapeless operation:

Knowledge of specific equipment isn't the key to employment with us. First comes talent. Then, we look for dependability, attitude, open-

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<sup>3</sup>This chapter briefly discusses automated radio. Syndicated radio programming is rapidly growing in importance and has replaced some automated radio systems, but, because it's essentially a distribution system, it isn't discussed here. Both syndicated programs and satellite delivery are briefly mentioned in Chapter 9, "Interview and Talk Programs." See Chapters 7, 9, and 11 for tips relating to television equipment.

mindedness, enthusiasm—such qualities as these. We're not afraid of the new technology. We can teach new employees how to use it *as long as they're computer literate*. We send employees to schools run by equipment manufacturers when we get new equipment or have other reasons for them to get concentrated training. Talent is basic.

Julie Stoeckel of KLLC agrees but adds that in a highly competitive market, if there's a choice between two talented people, the job will likely go to the one who's best prepared to operate equipment.

Taking both comments into account, your educational goals are twofold: first, develop your *performance abilities*; second, learn *operational skills*, including **audio engineering** and **computer operations**. Most of the chapters of this text are devoted to assisting you in achieving the first goal; here are suggestions for achieving the second:

- First, and most basic, is to take at least one and preferably two or more courses in **audio engineering**. To be of practical use, courses should include in-studio recording on multichannel recording consoles, mixing of multiple inputs, editing, use of board equalization, reverberation systems, graphic equalizers, limiters, overdubbing, and sound reinforcement.
- Second, enroll in one or more courses in hands-on use of both Macintosh and PC computers, to include experience with the major computing programs: Microsoft Word, MacWrite II, Claris Works, WriteNow, Microsoft Excel, and so forth.

You must realize, however, that taking a few courses in computing will not adequately prepare you to work in a tapeless, computerized station. During your first semester in college, you should start using computers to generate term papers and all other out-of-class writing assignments. Most colleges have easily accessible computer labs on campus. Owning your own computer costs more but is more time and work efficient; low-cost used and refurbished PCs and Macs are widely available.

As you choose your courses, keep these words in mind: education for any sort of technical operation isn't limited by the sophistication of the tools you use for practice. You don't become an efficient operator of audio consoles by training on models of every board found at stations across the country, including the most advanced; rather, you learn *what a board does* and *how it does it*. Although you practice with a *specific* console, your understanding of

audio recording, collecting, mixing, equalizing, and editing can quickly be transferred to a board you've never used.

The same applies to learning about and using advanced communication systems. The major differences between learning basic computer operations on a more primitive pre-Power Mac or 286 PC as opposed to a state-of-the-art computer are such incidentals as speed, memory, storage capacity, and similar variables. *The principles are the same. To summarize, your highest priority should be developing your talent to make yourself an effective and compelling communicator; your second goal should be a sound working knowledge of audio engineering and computer applications.*

### **But Don't Ignore the Old!**

As you prepare to work with state-of-the-art equipment, you also must learn the old ways of doing your job. This means learning to operate tape cartridge machines, DAT and CD recorders and players, and turntables. You also must develop both electronic and manual tape editing skills. Although, as already noted, audio technology is rapidly moving away from the use of tape in any form, radio station program and music directors agree that you should prepare for your career by learning to operate equipment that was for years standard in one application or another. The reasons for this are as follows:

- Even the most expensive and sophisticated hard disk systems occasionally “go down.” Music on compact discs, as well as commercials, jingles, promos, and PSAs on tape carts or DAT, must be available to carry on the broadcast operation.
- You can't be sure that every station you'll apply to will be an entirely tapeless operation. Many AM stations, as well as a smaller number of FM stations, continue to use equipment from earlier times.
- Some stations have huge inventories of music on vinyl discs that they're gradually cleaning up and dubbing to recordable CDs or mass-storage hard disks. A classical, country, or jazz music station, for example, may have irreplaceable versions of unique performances that can be electronically cleaned to remove scratches, popping, or other unwanted “noises” before being transferred to storage disks. When cleaning noisy discs, it's also possible to alter

the equalization to, for example, make the intro “hotter.” The starting point for such a cleanup operation is cuing and playing vinyl discs on a turntable.

- Many stations continue to use DAT (digital audio tape) for archival material. DATs take up little space, store much information, are easily cued to access specific information, are easy to dub and send by overnight delivery, and are of good sound quality.
- Recordable CDs continue to be used in several ways: to record and send specific music cuts to chosen destinations, to store cleaned up music where a mass-storage disk is not available, and to record telephone conversations.
- Finally, many people currently in management positions learned and performed all of these tasks earlier in their careers, and they retain respect for others with a broad-based knowledge of their field.

When working as a news anchor, talk-show host, or DJ, you’ll be surrounded by costly and delicate equipment; if you abuse or improperly operate it, you can defeat your best announcing efforts. Working an air shift while doing your own engineering is called **working combo**.<sup>4</sup> Improper use of a microphone can result in excessive sibilance, popping, or voice distortion. Improper use of an audio console can result in poor broadcast sound quality and even damage to the equipment. Radio announcers of every specialization must be aware of the proper and safe use of broadcast equipment.

Most television announcers seldom touch broadcast equipment other than microphones, but they must know how to relate to all standard items of equipment, including cameras, floor monitors, and props.<sup>5</sup> They also are likely to spend part of their working day with equipment such as word processors and computerized editing stations.

Radio announcers usually operate equipment in a station’s production and on-air studios. At small- and medium-market radio stations, announcers spend some of their working time producing

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<sup>4</sup>To work “combo” is to announce while doing your own engineering. Few DJs, news, sports, weather, traffic, or feature reporters enjoy the luxury of working with an engineer.

<sup>5</sup>Television reporters at local stations must be skilled in video editing and, at many stations, camera operations. Television program hosts, performers for commercials, actors on dramatic shows, and sports play-by-play announcers generally do not operate equipment, but must learn to relate to it. Chapters 7, 9, and 12 give extensive coverage to this topic.

commercials, PSAs, and station promotional features and so must operate several types of broadcast equipment.

This chapter provides an elementary introduction to radio equipment. Be sure to supplement your reading with practice, for no book can develop your manipulative skills or train your ears to make audio judgments.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Equipping Broadcast Studios for the Twenty-first Century

Imagine sitting in the news anchor's chair and gazing out on a studio filled with cameras but containing no human operators. Picture yourself setting up (and storing for later network playback) thousands of cable features and commercial spots on a computerized machine or programming a twenty-four-hour radio format that may or may not use a live announcer and for which the songs are transmitted from on-line rather than from CDs.

From the phonograph that was used in the first radio broadcast (in 1906 from Brant Rock, Massachusetts, by Reginald Fessenden) to the sound boards, multi-CD players, and lighting systems of today, broadcast equipment continues to evolve. And though many television and radio stations operate on a shoestring budget and get by with outdated equipment, those that can afford to are already testing the electronic devices of the twenty-first century. NBC News anchor Tom Brokaw, for example, makes eye contact with unassisted cameras. Three freewheeling robotic cameras, supplemented by two wall-mounted cameras, have replaced a camera crew of six people who earned a combined \$600,000 per year. The first generation of camera robots was a bit constrained by rail tracks, which allowed them to move only back and forth along a fixed path. Later robots, such as those used also by the NBC studios in Burbank, California, and the Cable News Network of Turner Broadcasting System in Atlanta, are mounted on wheeled pedestals. They roam freely about the studio, using laser scanning with a system of reflectors to stay on course. They can be set for either preprogrammed camera angles or remote-controlled maneuverability.

Radio long depended on open-reel tape and later on tape carts to store programs and commercial segments. Today, radio stations are rapidly moving to all-digital, tapeless operations. Compact discs, digital audiotape (DAT), and digital cartridge machines (DCMs, which use standard or enhanced 3½-inch floppy disks), together with mass-storage hard disks that stockpile commercials, jingles, station promos, and other program elements, are replacing equipment that

has been in use for thirty or more years. Many medium- and large-market radio stations in the United States have already changed the way they program. New equipment allows a station to categorize all of its recordings on storage disks (by theme, composer/group, or length of piece), to assemble a day's program and compare it with programming of the recent past, and sometimes play directly from computer to airwaves. One broadcasting system offers a computer system with a researched library of adult contemporary and easy listening songs, which can be combined in any order and played directly from on-line, with or without a DJ.

Other companies have developed software systems such as Selector and MusicScan, which offer increased precision and flexibility in hourly and daily music programming. Stations can schedule jingles to "match" corresponding music selections and index and cross-index music for any programming challenge that may arise.

Cable television is profiting from advances in audio/video electronic cart machines, called multievent recorder/player systems (MERPS). A MERPS' memory and storage capacity allows for network playback at various times, back-to-back programming of even the shortest promotional segments, and transmission from the computerized machine itself rather than an old-fashioned master reel.

As we enter the twenty-first century, computerized broadcast equipment is becoming more sophisticated and more widely available to smaller radio and television stations. Presumably, though, humans will always be behind the designing and the programming of these devices—and in front of the microphones and cameras.



Robopod camera robot. (Courtesy of A. F. Associates)

## Microphones

When sound waves enter a microphone, they set in motion a chain of events that culminates in the apparent re-creation of the sound by the radio or television speakers. As the beginning pathway for the process, the microphone is of primary importance. If a microphone is improperly selected, improperly used, or damaged, the sound quality will be distorted throughout the remainder of its trip to the listener.

Sound waves are generated when we speak, and they also are generated by speakers in radio and television sets. All broadcast sounds begin and end as longitudinal pressure waves, but they can't be sent from studio to receiver in that state. For sounds to be broadcast, they must be converted from physical waves to electric energy. That process of transforming energy is called *transduction*, and the first step in that conversion is a microphone.

Microphones are classified according to *internal structure*, *pickup pattern*, and *intended use*. As an announcer, you most likely will not have a say in the microphones you use, but you should be able to recognize the types given to you so that you can use each to its best advantage.

### Internal Structure

**Ribbon or Velocity Microphones** The **ribbon or velocity microphone** contains a metallic ribbon that is supported at the ends and passes between the poles of a permanent magnet. The ribbon moves when sound waves strike it, generating voltage that is immediately relayed to the audio console. This type of microphone is extremely sensitive to all sounds within a great frequency range, is flattering to the human voice, and is unaffected by changes in air pressure, humidity, and temperature. In addition, it resists picking up reflected sound.

A ribbon mic works best if the speaker stands or sits eight inches to one foot away and speaks directly into it. This range usually provides deeper voice quality. If you find you have voice reproduction problems at close range, speak at an oblique angle across the mic's front screen.



RCA 77-DX ribbon microphone. (Courtesy of RCA)



Sennheiser MD 421-U dynamic microphone. (Courtesy of Sennheiser Electronic Corporation)

*Dynamic or Pressure Microphones* In the **dynamic** or **pressure microphone**, a lightweight molded diaphragm attached to a small wire coil is suspended in a magnetic field. Sound waves strike the diaphragm and are relayed to the coil, and the movement of the coil within the magnetic field transforms physical energy into electrical impulses. The dynamic microphone has a number of advantages. It's more rugged than other types, can be used outdoors with less wind blast, can be as small as a person's fingertip, and can perform better in a wider range of applications than any other type of mic. Only a well-trained audio operator is likely to be bothered by the fact that it doesn't reproduce the subtle colorations achieved by a high-quality ribbon or condenser mic.

When you use a dynamic mic, stand or sit six to ten inches away from and to one side of the front screen of the instrument. By talking slightly across the screened surface, you should project your voice quality at its best, especially if you speak at high volume or are given to excessive sibilance or popping.

*Condenser or Electrostatic Microphones* Often found in professional recording studios and FM stations, the **condenser** or **electrostatic microphone** is similar to the pressure mic in that it has a diaphragm, but instead of a coiled wire it has a fixed plate opposite the diaphragm. As sound waves strike and move the diaphragm, the voltage between the moving diaphragm and the fixed plate changes, thereby varying the sound signal.

If you're asked to work with a high-quality condenser mic, you should treat it as you would a dynamic mic. If the extreme sensitiv-



Sennheiser MKE 4032 condenser microphone. (Courtesy of Sennheiser Electronic Corporation)



Electro-Voice RE20, a cardioid dynamic microphone. (Courtesy of Electro-Voice)

ity of the condenser mic is creating sibilance or popping problems, try working farther away from it or speaking into it at an angle. One or both of these adjustments should correct the problem. Condenser mics require power for their operation. When used away from a station, they're powered by batteries. If you experience problems with a condenser mic, first check to make sure that the battery is there, is inserted in the proper position, and is not dead.

The **pressure zone microphone (PZM)** is a condenser mic designed to allow direct and reflected sound waves to enter the microphone at the same time.<sup>6</sup> Other mics pick up both direct and reflected sound but with a slight lag between the two, the result of varying distances from sound source to mic. The PZM eliminates this lag and has very little sound distortion. One definite advantage of a PZM microphone is that it doesn't *look* like a mic, which can reduce nervousness on the part of inexperienced guests.

## Pickup Patterns

A microphone's **pickup** or **polar pattern** is the shape of the area around it from which it can accept sounds for transmission with maximum fidelity and optimal volume. **Fidelity** refers to the degree to which the electronically produced sound resembles the original sound—in other words, its faithfulness to the original sound. Nearly all microphones can pick up sounds from areas outside their ideal pattern, but with reduced quality. For best results, speak from within the pickup pattern and generate enough volume so that the volume control knob can be kept at a minimal level. If you're **off mic** (out of the pattern) or if you speak too softly, the volume control will have to be turned up, and the microphone will distort your voice as it also transmits unwanted sounds from outside the pattern. When you use a stand, hand-held, or control-room mic, you need to know the pickup pattern of the instrument, must position yourself properly, and must adjust your voice level to optimize the sound.

Manufacturers classify microphones according to four pickup patterns:



Shure Beta 58 supercardioid dynamic microphone. (Courtesy of Shure Brothers, Inc.)

<sup>6</sup>PZM is a copyrighted trademark of Crown International, Inc.



Neuman U 87 and U 89 multidirectional condenser microphones. (Courtesy of Gotham Audio Corporation)

1. **Unidirectional**—only one side of the microphone is live.
2. **Bidirectional** (or figure eight)—two sides of the mic are live.
3. **Omnidirectional** (also called nondirectional or spherical)—the mic is live in all directions.
4. **Multidirectional** (polydirectional or switchable)—two or more patterns can be achieved by adjusting a control.

Nearly all unidirectional microphones have **cardioid** (heart-shaped) pickup patterns. Cardioid patterns range from wide to narrow (or tight) to **hypercardioid** (or supercardioid) patterns, which have a narrow front angle of sound acceptance and pick up very little sound from the sides. Hypercardioid mics are used chiefly as shotgun mics in television studios.

The PZM has a **hemispheric** pickup pattern, which means that, when the mic is placed on a flat surface such as a table, the area of sound acceptance is one-half of a sphere, like the northern hemisphere of the globe.

Descriptions and engineering diagrams of microphone pickup patterns such as those in Figure 6.2 are inadvertently misleading because they can't show the three-dimensionality of the pattern, nor can they indicate that the pattern changes when the relationship between instrument and sound source changes. Because cardioid mics can be placed in every conceivable position with respect to the sound source, their pickup patterns vary in design and are especially difficult to understand from engineering diagrams. The cardioid pattern shown in two dimensions on engineering data sheets will differ significantly depending on whether the mic is hand held or stand mounted at a 30-degree angle. The data sheet shows whether a particular cardioid microphone has a narrow or wide angle of front sound acceptance, and designates the areas of rear acceptance and rejection, but only actual practice with cardioid mics will teach you how to position them.

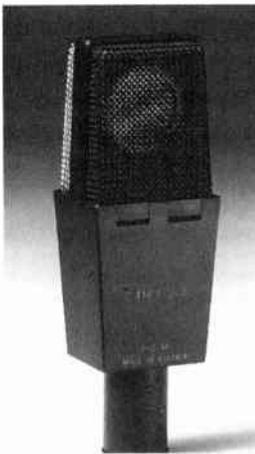
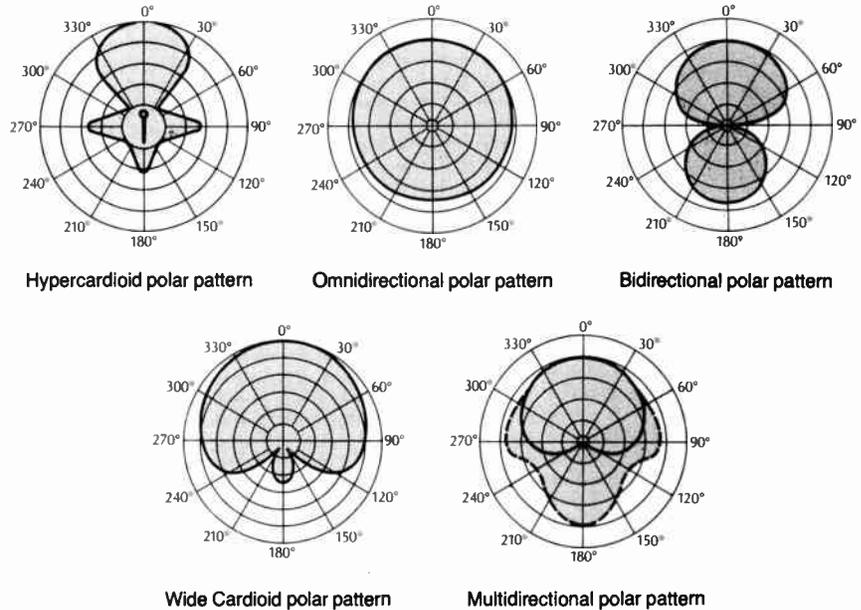
As you study the pickup patterns of cardioid mics shown in Figure 6.2, assume that the microphone is exactly in the center of the circle in each instance. Also remember that the actual pattern is three-dimensional.



Electro-Voice 635A/B, a dynamic omnidirectional microphone. (Courtesy of Electro-Voice)

**Figure 6.2**

Microphone polar patterns show how sounds are absorbed in different shapes, depending on what type of mic you use. Note that these pickup patterns are actually three-dimensional and that the shapes alter with the changing relationship between the instrument and voice.



AKG C 414 B-ULS microphone. This condenser mic features multiple polar patterns, from hypercardioid to figure-eight. (Courtesy of AKG Acoustics, Inc.)

**Intended Use**

Because recording studios and radio stations employ distinctive production methods, microphones have become increasingly specialized. They can therefore be classified according to intended or best use.<sup>7</sup> A microphone of one design may be ideal for one kind of work but inappropriate for another. For example, one dynamic omnidirectional mic may have been designed to be hand held and another to be permanently mounted above an audio console.

**Announce Microphones** Announce microphones are found in radio station on-air and production studios and in audio recording studio announce booths, and they are also used for off-camera film and television narration. Typical announce mics are the AKG 414, the Sennheiser MD 421-U, the Electro-Voice RE15 and RE20, the Shure SM7 and Beta 58, and the RCA 77-DX (an older mic that is still in use at some stations).

<sup>7</sup>Some of the popular microphones described here are no longer manufactured, but they will remain in use—especially at smaller-market radio stations—for years to come.



Beyer Dynamic MCE-5 Electret condenser microphone. (Courtesy of Beyer Dynamic, Inc.)

**Stand Microphones** Stand microphones are used chiefly in the production of radio commercials and voice-over narration for television commercials. The RCA 77-DX, AKG 414, Electro-Voice RE20, and Shure SM33 are examples.

**Hand-held Microphones** Hand-held microphones are versatile: they can be used indoors or out and can be fitted into a desk mount. The Electro-Voice 635A and RE55 are widely used models.

**Lapel or Lavalier Microphones<sup>8</sup>** Lavalier mics (lavs) are miniaturized microphones that can be clipped to a lapel, blouse, necktie or other item of clothing. They're extremely small, are of excellent sound quality, and their use frees both hands to perform whatever functions may require manipulation. Examples of widely used lavs are the Sony ECM-77 and the Beyer MCE-5.

**Headset Microphones** Miniaturized microphones connected to headsets are standard for play-by-play sports announcers. Both dynamic and condenser mics are used with headsets, but they must be designed to include a honeycomb pop filter in front of the diaphragm. The Shure SM2 is a popular headset microphone.

**Wireless Microphones** Wireless microphones are practical for work at remote locations and for studio work when performers need to move without the restraints of a mic cable. This type of mic is widely used in television production, as in talk shows where program hosts move among audience members to receive their comments.

Advances in microphone technology make it likely that instruments not even mentioned here will be in use by the time you enter the field of media performance. Regardless of progress in miniaturization, sensitivity, and fidelity, however, the principles of microphone use will remain the same for many years.

<sup>8</sup>Lavalier is spelled "lavalier" in some texts and manufacturer catalogs.

## Audio Consoles

Most radio announcers will, at one time or another, operate an **audio console** or **board**. DJs almost always work their own boards. Announcers at all-news radio stations usually work their own boards. Hosts of radio talk shows seldom work the board, but they almost certainly were required to do so at some earlier point in their career.

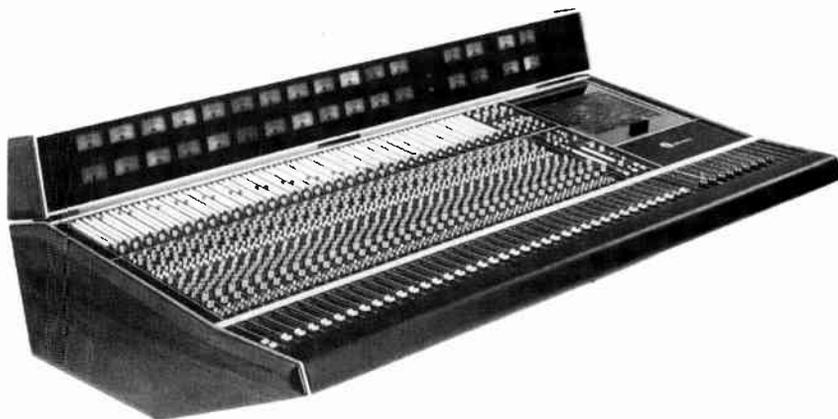
You can't learn to operate audio consoles merely by reading about them. Enroll in a course in control room operations to acquire the hands-on skill you need to function as a combo operator. Reading can, however, help you gain an understanding of what an audio console does and how the parts of a console work together to control sound. Whether you are working with an older, "conventional" analog console or a state-of-the-art digital board, the operational aspects are quite similar.

The audio console picks up the electrical impulses from microphones, cart machines, CD players, DAT cassette players, digital storage systems, and other sound sources. It mixes the sounds in proper proportions when more than one signal comes in, controls the **amplitude** (strength) of the electrical impulses, and sends them, by means of another amplifier, to a recording medium, such as a DAT, cart, mass-storage disk, or to a transmitter. In most on-air and production studios a microphone is suspended from an adjustable arm positioned in front of the console. Equipment for playing various program elements—music, IDs, commercials—is nearby. In some radio operations, several cart machines and CD or DAT players are placed within reach of the console operator; others have no more than a single computer terminal, complete with keyboard, a track ball, and a video data monitor—all program elements (other than your voice) are on hard disks outside the on-air studio. The physical arrangement of studios varies to suit the needs of a particular station.

Audio consoles may seem a bit intimidating at first glance, but they're actually simple to operate. On-air boards (those used by DJs) require the operation of only a few controls. Production boards are more complex, and those who operate them must have special training. **Production consoles** are equipped with controls for equalization, compression, and noise reduction and

**Figure 6.3**

Auditronics 700 Series audio mixing console—otherwise known as a production board. (Courtesy of Auditronics, Inc.)



assorted features for “sweetening” that make possible the production of high-quality commercials, station promos, musical IDs or logos, and other program material. **Sweetening** is the process of using equalization, reverberation, and other electronic effects to improve the quality of recorded sound. Figure 6.3 shows a production console. As an announcer at a station of any size, you’ll almost certainly work both an on-air board and a production console.

Most boards, however different they may seem at first glance, have essentially the same features. On-air boards are either **monaural** or **stereo**. These two general types are further distinguished according to whether their volume controls (**potentiometers** or **pots**) are **rotating knobs** or **vertical faders**. Most boards with rotating pots are constructed as a single unit; most boards with vertical faders are made up of several plug-in modules, and elements can be shifted as desired. A pot is also known as a **fader**, **volume control**, **attenuator**, or **gain control**.

Each station uses the input potential of its board in a unique way, so you shouldn’t merely learn to operate one board by rote. If you understand the reasons for doing what you do, you’ll be able to transfer your skills to other consoles with little additional instruction. The components of a basic, simple audio console are described in this section.

The sounds of radio begin with the electrical impulses from

microphones, hard disks, CD or DAT players, cart machines, and other sound sources. Many radio stations broadcast five-minute feeds from an affiliated news network at the top (beginning) of each hour and originate local three-minute newscasts at thirty minutes past the hour. Stations also periodically send signals from the **Emergency Alert System (EAS)**. Some music stations regularly put telephone callers on the air with special music requests. Provision, therefore, must be made for a number of signals to be selected, pass through, and be regulated by the board.

To accommodate as many as twenty sound sources, there would seem to be a need for that number of inputs with associated volume controls. But, it's possible to economize by installing **input selector switches**, which allow feeding more than one signal through each input channel.<sup>9</sup> Only one input can be activated at any given time.

Mics generate weak signals, so their output must be **boosted**, or amplified, before being fed into the board. The amplifiers that receive and boost signals from mics are called **preamplifiers (pre-amps)**; the one that collects, boosts, and sends the sounds to the transmitter or tape recorder is the **program amplifier**.

Controls are needed to vary the volume of sound and open and close microphones. The volume is regulated by a pot for each input channel. For microphone inputs the board has three-position selector switches with the positions designated as on, off, and spare (for future use). Each of the other input channels has a four-position selector switch with one off position and three channels for sending signals. Each of the three channels has its own program amplifier, so there are five amplifiers for the board: two preamps for the microphones and three program amplifiers. This board is therefore a two-channel stereo audio console.

The board has a volume level indicator. This indicator may be a **light-emitting diode (LED) array**—a series of dots, each of which is an LED, arranged either vertically or horizontally, that are illuminated according to the strength of the signal. Many portable AM/FM cassette players use LED indicators.

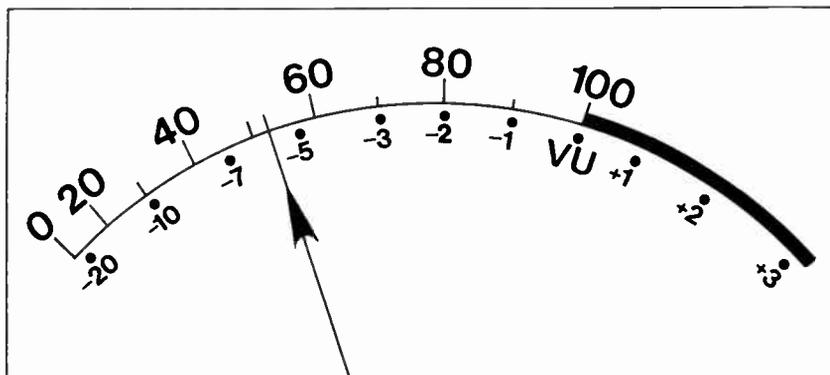
Another type of level indicator is a meter with a swinging nee-

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<sup>9</sup>Another way of reducing the number of pots needed is to use a patch panel and a board that allows the routing of signals to be varied.

**Figure 6.4**

The reading on a VU or VI meter should be neither too low nor too high.



dle, called a **volume unit (VU) meter** or **volume indicator (VI) meter**. The needle registers the volume level on a calibrated scale marked off in units from 1 to 100 along the black part of a semicircular line; above 100 the line becomes red. Readings that are too low on the scale are said to be **in the mud**, and those that are too high are **bending the needle, in the red**, or **spilling over**. If the volume peaks too high on the scale, the signal may be distorted (an effect called **overmodulation**), which can damage the equipment. Most broadcast stations have compressors and limiters in their transmission chain to reduce the problems of over- and undermodulation. A **compressor** decreases the volume of sound as the strength of the sound signal increases. A **limiter**, which often is combined with a compressor, maintains a steady volume output, regardless of the loudness or softness of the input. Some compressors are equipped with a filter that cuts out some of the highest frequencies, such as those of sibilant sounds, including *s*, *sh*, and *z*. This process is aptly named **de-essing**.

Stations that simulcast in stereo on FM and monaural on AM use boards that have three VU meters, one each for the left and right channels of a stereo signal, and another to show the level of the monaural signal that's being sent to AM station listeners.

A **muting relay** cuts the sound of the monitor speakers in the booth whenever a mic in the booth is open. This device prevents **feedback**, the loud squeal produced when the transmitted sound of a speaker reenters an open mic.

The controls described so far will enable you to pick up sounds from the mics and other sound sources and send them through the

board to the transmitter or a recorder. You can open and close the mics, mix signals from various sources, boost the signal strength of the mics, and monitor and adjust the volume level.

Difficulties that arise in manually balancing the input of more than one sound source are eliminated by the **master pot**, which can simultaneously raise or lower the volume of all sounds being mixed. This pot is generally left in a fixed position, but it can be used when necessary.

Stereo boards also have a **panoramic potentiometer (pan pot)**. This control allows you to shift a sound source from the left channel to the right (or vice versa), in order to place it in proper position on the “stereo stage.” Stereo recordings are already balanced, but if you find that the balance doesn’t suit you, the pan pot allows you to make adjustments for better balance.

**Monitor speakers** are hooked up, one to each of the two channels of a stereo board, to allow you to hear material being broadcast. If the program channels are patched to the transmitter, you can listen to the programming on the program monitor speakers. The audition monitor speakers can be used to audition material for possible future use or to listen to material being recorded for later broadcast. The amplifiers for the monitor speakers must be of higher power than the program amplifiers to boost the signal to the level needed to drive the loudspeakers. Each set of speakers has its own **monitor pot**, which raises and lowers the volume of sound in the control room. A **monitor select** or **delegation switch** allows you to selectively monitor program and audition outputs.

**Cue speakers** allow you to cue or audition recorded material. These speakers are mounted a distance away from the monitor speakers to prevent possible confusion.

Finally, a **headphone jack** allows you to listen to either program or audition without having sound emanate from the monitor or cue speakers; both speakers automatically cut off when any mic in the room is opened. This feature allows you to talk over music on the air or to listen to the balance between voice and music without using the monitor speaker, which, of course, would create feedback. You also use headphones to cue records when working combo.

## Audio Storage Systems

### Tape Carts, CD and DAT Players, and Digital Cartridge Machines

Unless working at a tapeless station, DJs must cue up and play music recorded on carts, DAT cassettes, and CDs, and play commercials and station promotions recorded on carts.

*Cuing and Playing Carts* Cuing and playing audiotape cartridges, known as **carts** or **tape carts**, can be learned in a few minutes. A cart contains a looped audiotape that automatically rewinds as it plays. Each tape contains only one audio item—one song, one commercial, or one station ID, for example. To play a cart, you insert it into the slot in the cart machine (or playback machine), and a red light comes on highlighting the word *stop*. But don't be fooled! The light tells you only that the cart is *inside* the machine; if it wasn't properly cued before being inserted, it won't perform as expected! When you're ready to play it, you press a button, usually square, to start the tape. This button may be on the cart player itself, or it may have been remoted to the board. In the latter case, the button will be adjacent to the pot used to control the cart player's volume. After the tape has played, allow it to run until it stops automatically; it will then be recued and ready for the next playing. If you stop the tape before it recues, you'll get dead air (a noticeable period of silence) at the start of the next playing.

Many campus radio stations lack sufficient cart machines for you to play a number of carts in succession while allowing each to play through and recue. You'll have to remove carts before they've recued, stack them, and recue them at a later time.

*Cuing and Playing CDs* Some of the music at your radio station may be on **compact discs**. CDs are small, and are encoded with digitally recorded music on one side only. In digital recording, sound is translated by a computer into on/off pulses. When a CD is played, a laser beam "reads" the pulses and converts the digital signal to an analog signal. The absence of contact with the disc's surface eliminates surface noise. The disc spins at speeds ranging from

200 to 500 revolutions per minute (rpm) and gets up to speed almost instantly.

If you're familiar with personal CD players, learning to operate a professional model requires understanding only a few additional features. Although professional CD players vary somewhat in features offered and in the layout of controls, they all include controls that allow you to open the disc compartment, load the disc, close the compartment, select the cut you want to play, and, when ready, start the disc. Some CD players have a "spin wheel" that you turn clockwise to get to a higher-numbered cut and counterclockwise for a lower-numbered cut. Buttons that enable you to do the same thing are usually labeled "scan up" and "scan down." Labeled displays show the cut being played, the elapsed and remaining time for the track, and the elapsed and remaining time for the disc. So far, this description of a CD player sounds much like the one you may have at home, but professional CD players have added features, such as one that allows you to cue music, not just to the beginning of a cut, but to milliseconds, to the very frame you're looking for. This allows you to easily preview and review any portion of a song you want to listen to.

*Digital Audiotape Cassette Players* DAT player operations, like those of CDs, can be learned in a few minutes. As with CDs, **digital audiotape (DAT)** cassettes are quite simple to cue and play. The cassette is about two-thirds the size of a standard cassette and holds up to two hours of music. Included on the tape are codes for the beginning and end of each cut, as well as codes to make it easy to find the cut you want to play. A series of buttons, numbered 0 to 9, allow you to select the cut you want by simply pressing numbers—for example, press 2 and 3, and cut number 23 will be cued up in about thirty seconds. Other controls are push buttons that dub the cut to a hard disk or put the chosen selection on the air.

*Digital Cartridge Machines* **Digital cartridge machines (DCM)** feature simple cartlike operation and require little or no training. One of the most popular of these machines is the DigiCart, made by 360 Systems. The DigiCart/II can store up to sixteen hours of full bandwidth stereo audio material. It also accepts removable Bernoulli digital audio disks housed in rugged heavy-duty

**Figure 6.5**

The DigiCart/II Digital Audio Hard Disk Recorder. (Courtesy of Steve Cunningham and 360 Systems)



plastic. To operate the DigiCart, you simply enter an index number on a remote control keyboard, and hit the green start button.

An earlier type of digital cartridge machine, such as that made by Dynamax, uses 3½-inch floppy disks. A two-megabyte (MB) disk will hold from one minute, fourteen seconds (1:14) to 2:28 in mono, and from thirty seconds to 1:14 in stereo. The amount of storage varies according to the quality of the frequency response selected by the operator. Two-megabyte disks most often are used for commercials, jingles, station IDs, and short promotional pieces. Music is stored on 13-MB floppies, which can hold stereo selections ranging from 3:45 to 7:30. Mono material can range from 7:30 to 15:00 in length. Compact discs are transferred to floppies by the recorder unit, and are put on the air by the player unit. This unit has only three front-panel buttons: cue, start, and stop. To put a musical selection on the air, you insert the floppy disk, press cue, then press start to play the music.

**Figure 6.6**

The player and recorder of a Dynamax DCR1000 digital cartridge machine (DCM). (Courtesy of Fidelipac Corporation)



## Turntables

As an announcer for a small-market music station, you may spend part of your time cueing and playing records. Even if a station plays only CDs or music stored on disk drives, a part of your workday may be spent dubbing selections from the station's vinyl library to disk. You may also be assigned the job of first "cleaning up" the vinyl versions by putting them through an audio processor to remove scratches or hisses. Therefore, you must know how to cue up and play both 45- and 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ -rpm records.<sup>10</sup>

**Components** Most broadcast turntables have six components: a rotating table connected to the motor; a pickup arm (or tone arm), a pickup cartridge with stylus, an off-on switch, a speed-selector switch, and an attachment for playing large-holed 45-rpm discs.

The **rotating table (turntable)** is usually made of metal and may be covered by a felt or rubber pad. The pad is not attached to the metal, and some announcers cue the record, hold the pad, turn on the power, and release the pad (with the record on it) when it's time to play the music. This technique is called **slip starting**. If you

<sup>10</sup>A recent poll found that music station executives were unanimous in agreeing that students of announcing should continue to learn turntable operations, even though turntables are rapidly disappearing from radio stations.

feel friction of the pad against the turntable, you shouldn't slip-start records on that particular turntable at all.

A direct-drive turntable is, in effect, an electric motor. Motors are composed of a stationary part, called the *stator*; and a rotating part, called the *rotor*. The rotating table is the rotor on direct-drive turntables.

The **pickup arms**, or **tone arms**, used for broadcasting are counterbalanced and damped to prevent damage to records. The tone arm usually is adjusted to put from 1 to 3 grams of pressure on the grooves of the record; and viscous damping, which uses fluid silicone in a hydraulic mechanism, prevents the arm from making sharp or sudden movements. The pickup cartridges for turntables are of a plug-in style. Styluses are elliptical in shape.

All turntables are equipped with an off-on switch for controlling power to the turntable. Records can be played by pressing this switch to on instead of slip-starting them. Turntables have a speed-selector switch, offering a choice of 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  or 45 rpm. Many turntables have a recessed metal hub in the center. By turning this hub, you can raise it to accommodate large-holed 45-rpm discs. Some turntables require an adapter that fits over the center spindle.

*Cuing* Records have dead grooves before the sound begins, so they must be cued—in radio jargon, the term for this is “cuing up.” This procedure involves the following steps:

1. Place the disc on a turntable.
2. Use a control on the audio console to activate the cue box or cue speaker.
3. Place the stylus on the record's surface in the groove just before the desired cut.
4. Disengage the drive mechanism so that the table spins freely.
5. Spin the table clockwise until you hear the start of the sound on the cue speaker.
6. Stop the table and turn the record counterclockwise.
7. When you hear the music that is being played backward stop, continue spinning the record a short distance into the dead air grooves. Turntables are not standardized, but on most you will go back one-quarter of a turn before the music begins.
8. Engage the drive mechanism at the proper operating speed.
9. To play the cut, open the volume control and turn on the power switch.

The purpose of turning the record back to a point in the dead grooves is to allow the turntable to reach its operating speed before the sound begins. All turntables need a little time to reach operating speed; before then, sound is distorted. This “wowing” is as unwelcome as several seconds of dead air. A little practice with a particular turntable should enable you to cue records flawlessly.

## Automated Radio Stations

Automated stations are exactly what you’d expect them to be: stations that operate with few employees (in some cases, with *none*), and use computers and other high-tech equipment to get their program services on the air.

Automated stations are of two types—the first is an actual station, in that it houses the equipment that collects or generates program elements, stores them, and is overseen by station employees who program a computer to intersperse program elements. The second is linked to a programming service and receives its entire broadcast material from a satellite or over ISDN lines. Such a station functions only as a relay between the service and its listeners—in other words, it isn’t a station at all as we commonly define a radio station. Many satellite stations have no operator in attendance. The FCC in 1995 permitted some automated stations to function as “unattended operations,” freeing them to broadcast without station personnel on the premises. FCC regulations require stations to monitor and log transmitter operations and to switch transmitter power for evening operations, but some automated stations contract specialized companies to perform these services. Most automated stations are AM stations, because they usually have smaller audiences than FM stations, and therefore have less income from advertising to spend on personnel and production.

Automation provides several advantages for station owners:

- Stations can be operated with fewer employees.
- Owners of both AM and FM stations can use one staff to program both stations.

- A small station can have a “big city” sound.
- DJs can do their day’s announcing work in less than an hour, which allows them to more easily sustain energetic delivery.

Opponents of automated radio are offended by the sacrifice of immediacy, long thought to be radio’s most valuable characteristic. Opponents also claim that automated radio sounds “canned,” and that even the most sophisticated equipment and the most skilled operators can’t make an automated station sound live. Overweighing these aesthetic considerations for many opponents of automated radio is one based on economics: automated radio means fewer station employees.

Although some stations that became automated many years ago have returned to live programming or signed up with a syndicated satellite service, automated radio will be with us for some time, so you should become familiar with its essentials. Because several automated systems are in use today, you’ll have to learn the details of a particular system on the job. This brief overview is designed simply to provide you with an idea of how a typical automated station works and to expose you to some of the terms used in automated radio.

Most automated systems rely on two components: a **controller** (a computer, sometimes called the **brain**) programmed by an operator; and mass-storage hard disks that store music, voiced DJ comments on the music either before or after each “set,” commercials, public-service announcements, voice-track program openers, station jingles, time announcements, news headlines, weather reports, and network access announcements.<sup>11</sup> Such systems also include an automatic logging device and an internal clock programmed to give accurate time signals that can be used to join and leave a parent network’s hourly newscasts.

The controller’s chief function is to intersperse music with other program elements. An adult contemporary station might program its computer to select from any number of music styles: one containing music from the current charts, a second playing golden hits from the past, a third containing up-tempo music to be played at the

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<sup>11</sup>Older automated stations may function with three elements: the controller; a bank of tape carts with commercials and other brief messages, and either CDs or large reel-to-reel tapes that store and play the music.

start of each hour after station identification, and a fourth made up of the music director's favorites. Nearly all automated stations have a rigid format that repeats hourly.

As an announcer for an automated station, you'll be expected to spend part of your workday programming the controller and performing a variety of tasks at other times. These tasks include recording music introductions, weather reports, commercials, and newscasts, and providing preventive maintenance for the equipment. However, unless you have a background in electronics, this maintenance may be limited to nontechnical chores. If your automated station operates older equipment, you may find yourself cleaning tape heads, loading cart machines, replacing outdated carted commercials with new ones, and dubbing music from vinyl discs to carts, DAT cassettes, or CDs.

To conclude this discussion of technological developments that are rapidly transforming radio stations into tapeless operations, two points should be made: First, as indicated earlier, no amount of reading about equipment and procedures can teach you to be competent—you need hands-on courses in radio production to help you develop the requisite skills. Second, because radio technology continues to develop at a rapid pace, you should make an effort to keep up with its constantly evolving world.



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Comparing the Audio Quality of Microphones**

If appropriate equipment is available, make an audio recording of your voice reading copy into a dynamic, a condenser, and a ribbon mic. Compare the results and determine which type of instrument gives your voice its most pleasing sound.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Surveying Field Equipment**

Arrange to interview someone who operates technical equipment: television cameras, video recorders, audio consoles, television switchers, character generators, or videotape editing consoles. Ask questions such as: Where did you learn to do what you do? What should a person study to prepare for this work? What special challenges does your job present? Also, ask interviewees to describe some of the newer equipment they work with. How have advances in broadcast technology altered everyday work? Share your findings with your class.



# 7

## Performance

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Audience Rapport
- Overcoming Microphone and Camera Fright
  - Lack of Experience
  - Lack of Preparation
  - Fear of Failure
  - Lack of Self-esteem
  - Lack of Mental Preparation
  - Dislike of One's Voice or Appearance
- Microphone Consciousness
- Camera Consciousness
  - Hitting Marks
  - On-Camera Movement
  - Holding Props
  - Holding Scripts
  - Using Peripheral Vision
  - Clothing and Makeup
  - Working with Cue Cards
  - Working with Prompters
- Instructions and Cues
  - Achieving Good Working Relationships
  - Taking a Level
  - Hand Signals
- SPOTLIGHT: Breaking into the Announcing Field
- Performance Skills
  - Preparing for a Performance
  - Achieving a Conversational Style
  - Reading Telephone Numbers
  - Developing a Sense of Time
  - Other Tips for Improving Your Performance

- Ad-lib Announcing
  - Know What You're Talking About
  - Be Interested in What You're Saying
  - Be Eager to Communicate with Your Listener
  - Develop an Attractive Personality
- Evaluating Performances

All your preparation for announcing will culminate in performance, and it's on the basis of your performing ability that you'll be judged by your audience and your employer. Of course, you must develop other abilities and qualities, such as competence as a journalist, drawing power as a music announcer, and dexterity in the operation of basic items of broadcast equipment. All the same, your before-camera or on-air work will ultimately determine your success.

This chapter concentrates on several performance skills that you must develop. It addresses the topics of microphone and camera fright, microphone and camera consciousness, clothing and makeup for television, the use of prompters, and miscellaneous tips for performers.<sup>1</sup>

## Audience Rapport

Before turning to a discussion of performance skills, another factor must be considered: audience rapport. Rick Houlberg, professor of broadcasting arts at San Francisco State University, made this pertinent comment after concluding a study of viewer preferences concerning newscasters:

After all the preparation, clothing, hard work, and luck, something more is needed for the on-air broadcaster to be successful. We know what that something is, although we haven't been able to fully describe or study it. This something made us believe Walter Cronkite and send birthday presents to soap opera characters; this something

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<sup>1</sup>Additional information on performance may be found in Chapter 1, "Announcing for the Electronic Media"; Chapter 2, "The Announcer as Communicator"; Chapter 3, "Voice Analysis and Improvement"; Chapter 4, "Pronunciation and Articulation"; Chapter 8, "Commercials and Public-Service Announcements"; Chapter 9, "Interview and Talk Programs"; Chapter 12, "Music Announcing"; and Chapter 13, "Sports Announcing."

makes us choose one television newscaster over another; this something keeps us listening to one rock radio DJ despite a play list which is almost exactly the same as the four other available rock stations. This something is a connection made between the on-air performer and the audience.<sup>2</sup>

In his research, Houlberg found that most respondents chose the television newscaster they watched for these reasons: “He or she made their problems seem easier”; “They would like to know more about the newscaster off the air”; “The newscaster is almost like their everyday friends”; and “He or she made them feel contented.” Of course, audience rapport is not everything. News anchors and reporters must also qualify as journalists and be objective, reliable, honest, and have knowledge of the local market.

The messages here are clear: after achieving professional competency and while maintaining the integrity expected of news personnel, broadcast performers must project an attractive and friendly personality to the audience. *Attractive* in this sense doesn't refer to physical appearance, for Houlberg found that neither physical appearance nor gender was significantly important to his respondents. Synonyms for attractive are *appealing*, *engaging*, and *charming*. A sensitive performer can use these qualities to build audience rapport—a relationship of mutual trust or emotional affinity. It's not likely that every student can be taught these qualities, for they come from within. Being aware of them can, however, help you channel your inner feelings of respect for your audience, concern for people, and dedication to your profession into more effective communication. Audience rapport is a state of mind. It relies heavily on your integrity. It's a reflection of who you are and what you care about.

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## Overcoming Microphone and Camera Fright

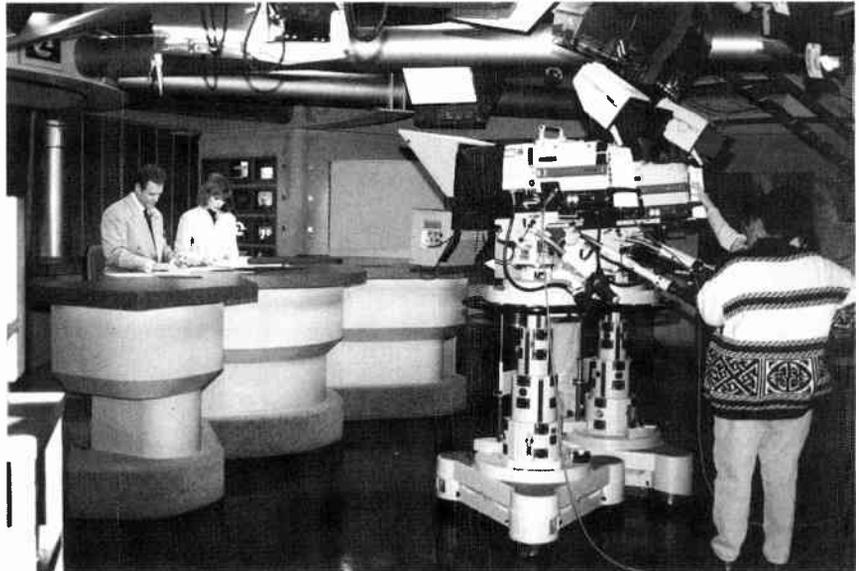
Many inexperienced announcers have an almost uncontrollable fear of performing before a microphone or camera. A few students will

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<sup>2</sup>These comments were made by Professor Houlberg after he had conducted a study of 258 respondents in Ohio. The complete report is in *Journal of Broadcasting*, Fall 1984. Houlberg cites other studies supporting his conclusions.

**Figure 7.1**

Frank Somerville and Tori Campbell, co-anchors of the News at Noon, make last-minute preparations while waiting for a cue to open the show. (Courtesy of Frank Somerville and Tori Campbell and KTVU, Oakland, California)



relish every performance opportunity and will delight in performance playbacks. For most of us, though, it's normal to have butterflies before and during a performance and to feel disappointment on seeing and hearing the results during taped playbacks.

The good news is that some tension not only is to be expected but can actually help your performance. **Mic fright**, as this phenomenon is traditionally called, results in the release of adrenalin into the bloodstream, which causes one to become more alert and more energetic. A little mic fright can be an asset to a performer. A performer who's keyed up generates more positive energy than one who is routinely working through a piece of copy in an unfeeling manner.

The bad news is that *excessive nervousness* can seriously impair a performance. Extreme mic fright can lead to any combination of these symptoms: physical tension, shallow breathing, constricted throat, dry mouth, and (at an extreme) upset stomach and shaking knees and hands. During performance, these conditions can cause the speaker's voice to go up in pitch or to break, or can make the speaker run out of breath in the middle of a sentence, lose concentration, read or speak at an excessive rate of speed, or adopt a subdued attitude. Mic fright can also result in a completely

dry mouth. At its greatest extreme, mic fright leaves some speakers entirely unable to communicate.

The **vocal folds** (often called **vocal cords**), which are central to good vocal tones, tighten up during times of moderate to extreme nervousness. The tighter the folds, the less they vibrate, which results in a lowered resonance and a strident sound to the voice. Hot liquids can help relax the vocal folds. Hot tea, bouillon, coffee, or even hot water can help you achieve a better speaking voice. (This advice remains true even when nervousness is not a problem.) Make certain that the beverage of your choice is not too hot, however, and avoid carbonated beverages and any beverage containing milk.

Generally speaking, mic or camera fright is caused by the conditions described in the following subsections.

### **Lack of Experience**

Nothing but time and regular performances will overcome inexperience. Performances need not occur on the air or in a class session. Perform a variety of written and ad-libbed or impromptu assignments and record them on an audio or video recorder. To speak “ad lib” is to perform without a script but with some preparation; “impromptu” means to speak without preparation or rehearsal. A talk-show host may start an on-air session with unscripted comments about a new book or an important news development, having first thought through the general concepts to be mentioned; these comments are *ad-lib* speech. An on-the-scene television reporter may, after having delivered a report, speak in answer to questions from an anchor; this is *impromptu* speaking. Both modes of unscripted performance should be practiced.

### **Lack of Preparation**

It's impossible to prepare for impromptu announcing such as a news report live from the field or the badinage that's expected of you as a talk-show host, but it *is* possible to *practice* impromptu performance. To gain confidence and to develop a smooth delivery, practice by talking aloud to yourself. Walk through your living quarters and describe what you see; when driving, talk about what you see along the way. Sharpen your ability to hold your friends' attention as you relate anecdotes or discuss matters of mutual interest.

You can, of course, practice reading scripts. Though time pressures may at times prevent professional announcers from rehearsing, you are under no such strictures. If you want to improve your performances, you must prepare thoroughly.

## **Fear of Failure**

Most of us are more afraid of failing—of making fools of ourselves—than we are of physical dangers. You must conquer this fear and realize that you can progress only by daring to try a variety of approaches in your announcing work. To remain safely within a comfortable shell and perform in a laid-back, low-key manner is to sacrifice any chance of major improvement. If you're enrolled in a broadcast announcing class, keep in mind that you and your classmates are all in the pressure cooker together. Mature students will applaud and encourage one another's efforts to improve.

You can improve almost any performance by speaking with conviction. That is, if you believe in your message and if you sincerely want to communicate it to others, your conviction may push aside your fear of failure. Professional announcers don't always have the luxury of believing in what they're paid to say, but as a student you'll usually be free to choose messages that are of interest or importance to you. Take advantage of this opportunity and choose your topics wisely.

As you perform, try to concentrate on your message. Forget about self and forget about audience. Assume that you're speaking to one or two people whom you respect and with whom you want to communicate. If you truly wish to get your message across, you can overcome your concern about failure.

## **Lack of Self-esteem**

Some of us simply believe that we're not important enough to take up the time and attention of others. This is an incredibly debilitating attitude that has nothing to recommend it. Modesty may be a virtue, but self-effacement is not.

Each of us is a unique creation. You are the only person just like you who has ever lived. Because you're unique, you have something special to offer. If you respect yourself, you'll perform at an acceptable level; if you respect your listeners, you'll find something worthwhile to say to them; if you respect your subject matter, you'll

find ways to get it across. *Self*, *listeners*, and *topic* are interrelated variables that must mesh if you're to communicate successfully. Successful communication will inevitably increase your self-confidence and boost your self-esteem. Enhanced self-esteem will bring about further improvement in performances. Better performances will raise self-esteem—and so on. Believing that what you have to say is worthy of the interest and time of others is the start of a new and healthier attitude toward yourself.

But let's face it: if you're presenting dull material in a spiritless manner, you have no right to expect the rapt attention of your listeners. If you conduct a boring interview with a boring guest, you can hardly believe that what you're doing is important. This brings us back to conviction—the belief that what you have to offer is important and valid. To raise your self-esteem, be certain that what you offer your listeners is worthy of their attention.

### **Lack of Mental Preparation**

During the minutes before a performance, remove yourself (physically if possible, but at least mentally) from the confusion of a typical production situation. Find a way to relax, to gather your thoughts, to concentrate on the upcoming performance. Think over what you're to say or read. Think about mood, about appropriate pace, about the importance of the message, about any potential problems of diction, pronunciation, and so on. Perform physical relaxation exercises. If possible, sit in a comfortable chair. Begin to relax physically—starting with your head, then your neck, your shoulders, and hands. After you've attempted to relax your entire body, imagine that the tension or stress is being discharged from the ends of your fingers. If you try, you can actually feel the tension leaving your body. At this point, think again about your assignment, and keep your message and your objectives clearly in mind as you prepare to perform.

### **Dislike of One's Voice or Appearance**

Students of announcing often dislike the way they sound and look on tape. This response isn't surprising, because we neither see nor hear ourselves as others do. Most people don't believe that their voice sounds like what comes back to them from an audio recorder. The reason is simple: we hear ourselves speak through *both air and*

*bone conduction.* The sound waves that emanate from our mouths are what others hear; the speaker alone hears the physical vibrations that go through the bones of the head to the tympanic apparatus of the ear. The combination of sounds conducted through air and bone is what we think we sound like to others. Only when we hear ourselves through air conduction alone, as from an audiotape player, do we truly hear ourselves as others hear us.

As for appearance, we're used to seeing ourselves head on, as in a mirror. Even when posing for photographs, we typically look straight into the camera lens. We're not nearly as accustomed to seeing ourselves in profile or in one-quarter or three-quarter shots. Television spares us nothing; replays show us how we look to others, but because we're not accustomed to these views, we usually like them less. Television can also distort one's appearance to some extent. Most of us look heavier on television than in real life.

If you truly understand that audio and video recordings are surprises only to yourself, and that others accept your sound and appearance on tape just as they accept you in person, you're well on your way toward overcoming mic or camera fright.

In summary, you can keep your nervousness within bounds if you

- Prepare thoroughly
- Practice at every opportunity
- Believe in what you're saying
- Concentrate on your message
- Stop analyzing your feelings and emotions
- Think of your listener
- Perform relaxation exercises
- Accept yourself as you are
- Believe that you can and will succeed
- Understand that many of your colleagues are fighting the same battle

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## Microphone Consciousness

Microphones are marvelous instruments, but they can do their job only when they're properly used. Improper use sometimes is

**Figure 7.2**

Sports reporter Fred Inglis addresses the camera as he ad-libs a report on a breaking story from the newsroom. Fred received his master's degree in broadcast communications arts from San Francisco State University. (Courtesy of Fred Inglis and KTVU, Oakland, California)



caused by inexperience or ignorance but is more often due to a lack of **microphone consciousness**. To be mic conscious is to be always aware that the misuse of a microphone will result in a flawed or failed performance. Typical examples of faulty microphone consciousness include these:

- Failing to clip on a lavalier mic before beginning a performance
- Attaching a lavalier mic improperly—too far away from the mouth or under clothing that muffles the sound
- Clapping with your hands near a lavalier mic
- Making unwanted noises near an open mic, such as drumming fingers on a table near a desk mic
- Moving away from a mounted mic or moving out of range of a boom mic
- Failing to move a hand-held mic properly between you and a guest you are interviewing
- Positioning yourself and a guest improperly in relation to a desk mic
- Making sudden and extreme changes in your voice volume
- Moving in and out in relation to a mounted mic
- Failing to understand and properly relate to the pickup patterns of microphones

- Wearing jewelry that clanks when moved
- Walking away from the set after a performance without remembering to unclip a lavalier mic

One problem is so common that it deserves separate attention. The sound of paper being bent, turned over, or shuffled is the mark of an amateur. Learn to handle scripts in such a way as to avoid rattling paper. Never work from a script that's stapled or held together with a paper clip. Never turn script pages over as you move from one page to another; always slide the pages to one side as you finish with them. All scripts should be typed on only one side of the paper. When working with practice material from this or other texts, type copies on 8½-by-11-inch paper, with double or even triple spacing. Ordinarily, the cheaper the paper, the softer it is and the less it will rattle. Work with the softest paper you can find.

Despite continual improvement, lavalier condenser mics must be used carefully to prevent their picking up unwanted noise. A script that is thumbed or rattled three inches away from the lavalier will sound at least as loud as a voice coming from a foot or more away. Clothing that brushes against the surface of the mic will sound like a forest fire. Nervous toying with the cable will transmit scratching and rumbling sounds directly into the microphone. If you tend to produce a popping sound as you pronounce *p*, *t*, or *k* or excessive sibilance with *s* or *sh*, you may benefit from placing a windscreen over the face of the microphone.<sup>3</sup> Several manufacturers supply open-cell polyurethane foam windscreens that only slightly affect the frequency response by eliminating some of the highs. Figure 4.5 (p. 115) shows an AKG microphone with a windscreen.

During rehearsals and on the air, always assume that your microphone is open (and when performing for television, that the camera is on). Watch what you say and do. Always assume that profanity and backbiting comments about others will be heard by someone, possibly with devastating consequences!

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<sup>3</sup>See the discussions of popping and excessive sibilance in Chapter 3, "Voice Analysis and Improvement," and Chapter 4, "Pronunciation and Articulation." And note the comment in Chapter 6 on the use of "de-essers" to cut high frequencies, such as those made by the sibilant sounds.

## Camera Consciousness

Just as a microphone initiates the process of sending your voice to listeners, a camera is the first element in the transmission of your physical image. **Camera consciousness** begins with understanding the needs and limitations of cameras and recognizing the problems faced by camera operators and those controlling robot cameras. The discussion that follows covers only those technical aspects that are relevant to you as a performer.

A television camera picks up reflected light in much the same way the human eye does. Like the eye, a camera has a lens, an iris (or diaphragm), and a surface on which images are focused. In a camera a photosensitive surface in the pickup tube performs like the retina in the eye. The lens focuses the picture, the iris opens or closes to control the amount of light entering the system, and the photosensitive surface converts the light patterns into electrical impulses.

Unlike the human eye, the television camera has a zoom feature that allows it to handle anything from a wide shot to an extreme close-up. To the human eye, a person standing ten feet away will always be on a medium shot, so to speak. Humans have the advantage of being able to rapidly move their heads approximately 180 degrees horizontally and focus on one object at the start and on another at the end of the head movement without any sensation of blurring. A television camera can't do the same.

Keep these elementary facts about cameras in mind as you consider the aspects of television performance discussed under the following headings.

### Hitting Marks

**Hitting marks** means moving to an exact spot in a studio or in the field marked by a piece of tape or chalk. During preparation for all but the most routine television productions, the director will "block" the movements of performers. **Blocking** is the term used in theater, film, and television for planning the movements to be executed during the show by performers. When a specific movement is called for, it's important to move exactly as required and to stop in the predetermined position. Precision in hitting marks is critical for at least three reasons:

1. The amount of light entering a camera lens determines the f-stop setting of the iris; the f-stop setting in turn determines the depth of field—the extent of the area in front of the camera in which everything is in focus. (Objects closer or farther away will be blurred.) The greater the amount of light entering the lens, the smaller the iris opening and the greater the depth of field. Because zoom lenses have a great deal of glass through which the light must pass, because prompting devices cut down further on light entering the lens system, and because studio lighting is kept to the lowest possible level for the comfort of performers, the iris is generally quite open, and this setting reduces depth of field considerably. To put it plainly, if you don't hit your marks, you may be out of focus.
2. Another reason for hitting marks precisely is that the camera operator is responsible for the composition of the picture. Where you should stand for the best composition will have been determined earlier, and you must follow through in order to enable the camera operator to do a professional job.
3. A third reason for being meticulous about hitting marks is that studios often feature area lighting, which means that not all parts of the set are illuminated equally. If you miss your mark, you may be outside the area specifically prepared for your presentation.

**Robotic cameras**—cameras that move to predetermined positions and are not moved physically by individual human operators—require announcers to be even more careful in hitting marks. Robot cameras move to preprogrammed positions, and their lenses are prefocused. Although an operator sitting in a control booth can change the position and focus of each robot camera, that operator controls three or more cameras, and the complexities of this task make precision in hitting marks extremely important to the technical quality of the show.

## On-Camera Movement

*Standing* When standing on camera, you must stand still and avoid rocking from side to side. Weaving or rocking from one foot to the other can be distracting on a long shot and disastrous on a close-up. In a television studio a monitor is placed where you can see it so



**Figure 7.3**

Reporter/anchor Diane Dwyer demonstrates how rocking from side to side on camera appears on a medium shot, where it is not bothersome, and how it looks on a close-up, where the shot is badly framed. (Courtesy of Diane Dwyer and KTVU, Oakland, California)

that you'll know whether the camera has you on a wide, medium, or close-up shot and you'll know if you're moving out of the picture. In the field you most likely won't have a monitor or any way of knowing whether you're moving out of the frame.

Practice standing with a minimum of movement. To reduce a tendency to rock, stand with your feet slightly apart and with one foot turned out to form a 15- to -20-degree angle with the other foot; the turned foot should be four or five inches in front of the other. Standing in this manner should make it all but impossible to rock.

**Sitting** You'll find it easier to avoid excessive random movement when seated, but remember that most movements appear exaggerated on television. If you find that you habitually move your upper

torso and head in rapid or wide-ranging motions, work to reduce such movement—without at the same time seriously lowering your natural energy level. Sideways movement can be particularly annoying, especially on close-ups. Movement toward and away from the camera can take you in and out of focus.

*Telegraphing Movement* When rising or sitting down and when moving from one part of the studio (or exterior location) to another, you must move somewhat more slowly than you ordinarily would, and you must telegraph your movement. To **telegraph a movement** is to begin it with a slow and slight motion followed by a pause before following through with the intended movement. Camera operators are trained to follow even fast-moving athletes, but you shouldn't test their skill unnecessarily. A little thoughtfulness on your part can guarantee that you'll not cross them up.

Don't sit down or stand up on camera unless the movement was planned in advance or is signaled by the floor director. When the camera is on a head shot of a standing performer and the performer suddenly sits, the head drops right out of the picture. When the camera is on a head shot of a seated performer who suddenly stands, the result is even worse; the viewer is treated to the infamous crotch shot. In Figure 7.4, Frank Somerville shows how this movement looks on television. If you must stand up when no such movement was planned, telegraphing is imperative—it will give the director time to zoom out to a wider and safer shot.

*Cheating to the Camera* To **cheat to the camera** is to position yourself so as to sustain the impression that you're talking to another person (as in an interview) while still presenting a favorable appearance on screen. When a performer is speaking to a guest or a cohost, viewers want to see the faces of both persons and to believe that the two are speaking to one another rather than to the audience. So, to avoid presenting only their profiles as they speak, interviewer and guest position themselves at about a 25-degree angle from one another—thereby **opening up to the camera**—while continuing to speak as though they were facing one another directly.

When standing or sitting with another person—as when conducting an interview—position yourself nearer the other person than you ordinarily would. We are all surrounded by an invisible



**Figure 7.4**

News anchor Frank Somerville shows what happens when he suddenly stands on camera without being cued to do so and without telegraphing his movement. (Courtesy of Frank Somerville and KTVU, Oakland, California)

area we consider our own personal space. When talking with others, we usually sit or stand at a comfortable distance from them. Television, however, is no respecter of this psychological space. The intimacy of television is best exploited when both interviewer and guest can be seen in a medium shot. Sitting or standing too far from another performer forces the director to settle for close-ups of individuals, or wide-angle “two-shots” (two people in the picture). In unrehearsed programs, the director wants to have an acceptable cover shot, a shot that can be used regardless of which person is speaking. The farther apart the performers, the smaller they’ll appear on the television screen. So, if the only two-shot available is a long shot, the director is forced to settle for a view that makes viewers feel they’re watching from a distance, and intimacy is lost.

*Addressing the Camera* When directly addressing the camera (the viewer, actually), look straight into the lens and focus your gaze about a foot behind the glass, for that’s where your viewer is. When searching for a thought or a word, many of us tend to raise our eyes toward the ceiling as we pause for inspiration. This tendency is distracting and unflattering; if you have such a habit, work to overcome it.

Make certain you don’t try to hold a smile on your face while waiting for the director to go to black, to another camera, to a taped

segment, or to a commercial. Try to make small and natural movements while you wait. Don't continue to stare at the camera unless you've been told to do so. If appropriate to the type of performance being given, look down at your script, pick up a pencil and make marks on your script, or, when sitting beside another person—interviewee or co-anchor—start a conversation. Just remember that the mic may still be on. In Figure 7.5, Nerissa Azurin demonstrates the look that results when a director stays on a shot too long and the performer attempts to hold a smile. Television performers jokingly refer to this as the **egg-on-face look**.

In a studio production, you can expect to work with from two to four cameras; three are standard. From time to time you'll have to change your attention from one camera to another on cue. The cueing sequence begins when the floor director points both hands to the **taking camera** (the camera that's on, indicated by an illuminated red light called a **tally light**). On a signal from the director, the floor director rapidly moves one or both hands to point to the camera to which you're to turn. When you perform as a news anchor, you first notice the cue, glance down at your script, and then raise your head in the direction of the second camera. In Figure 7.6, Janet Zappala shows how to make a clean movement from one camera to another as she's cued by the floor director.

Don't stare at the camera. Just as staring at a person with whom you're speaking can make that person uncomfortable, staring at the camera lens can have the same effect on viewers. As you speak (read), let your head make small, subtle movements. These should be natural movements motivated by the words you're speaking. Be careful to avoid a machinelike pattern, one in which you automatically nod your head to emphasize every syllable. Make your movements small, motivated by the mood and meaning of what you are saying, and natural to you and your personality.

When addressing the camera, it's important to communicate through pitch patterns, rate of delivery, and nonverbal movements a level of energy appropriate to the nature of the story. If you exaggerate any of these factors beyond what the story justifies, you'll come across as an actor who's *playing the role* of a news reporter. Believable vocal variation and facial expressions and head, hand, and torso movements can add much to your communicative abilities.

Examine your appearance closely when viewing playbacks. In addition to watching for such obvious physical problems as poor

**Figure 7.5**

Nerissa Azurin, a bit impatient to get out of the lime-light, wears the egg-on-face look as she waits for the director to go to a commercial break. (Courtesy of Nerissa Azurin)



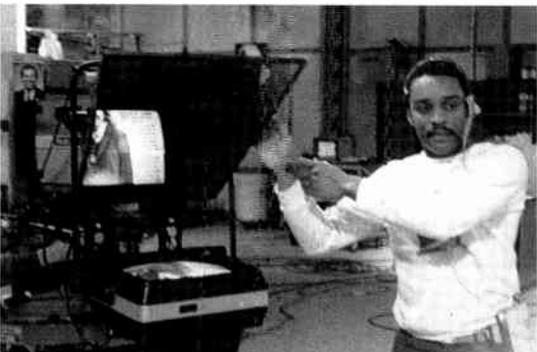
posture, look at your mouth on a close-up. See if you've developed an unattractive and distracting habit of speaking out of the side of your mouth—in other words, speaking with one side of your mouth noticeably lower than the other. If so, practice straightening out your mouth while performing before a mirror—or, better still, when videotaping performances. A lifelong habit of speaking with a crooked mouth may be difficult to overcome, but correcting it will enhance your chances of having a successful career as a television announcer.

## Holding Props

A **prop**, short for *property*, is an object that a performer holds, displays, or points to. Typical props are goods used in demonstration commercials, the food and utensils used in cooking shows, and books displayed by talk-show hosts.

Hold maps, sketches, books, products, or other props with a steady hand. Chances are the director will want an extreme close-up of the object, and even a slight movement can take it out of focus or off camera. Position the prop so that the taking camera has a good view of it. Glance at the floor monitor, and then position the prop correctly.

When pointing to an object or a portion of it, move your hand, with the index finger extended, slowly and evenly toward the spot to be highlighted. Hold that hand as steady as possible. Don't make quick motions here and there—the camera can't follow them. Al-



**Figure 7.6**

Floor director Joseph Smith uses hand signals to alert anchor Janet Zappala to an upcoming switch from one camera to another. This allows her to gracefully alter her eye contact to follow the changing camera angles. (Courtesy of KGO-TV, San Francisco)

ways rely on a monitor to check both your positioning and your hand movements.

When holding any object that has a reflective surface, such as the dust cover of a book, check your monitor to make sure you're holding it at a correct angle. Studio lights reflected from any glossy object can totally wash out its details. If the object being held is reflecting light, tilt it forward or backward to correct the problem. In Figure 7.7, Laura Zimmerman shows the wrong and the right way to hold a prop with a reflective surface on camera.

Few of us can easily speak fluently while using our hands to demonstrate. When demonstrating a product or a procedure on camera, don't feel compelled to keep up a nonstop narration. Constant chatter, especially when marred by hesitancy and repetitions, isn't good communication. Because television is a visual medium, action alone may sometimes work best. Because, however, commentary is at times helpful or even necessary, you should practice and perfect the skill of simultaneously speaking and demonstrating.

## Holding Scripts

Scripts are used in live television primarily by news anchors. Scripts usually serve as a backup to a prompting device. If the prompter fails or the person feeding it falls behind or rushes ahead of your delivery, you can refer to your script. At some stations, however, you won't have a prompter and must work entirely from hand-held scripts. (Working with a prompter is discussed in a later section.)

When working with a script, hold it with both hands, above the desk and tilted toward you at a comfortable angle for reading. You should hold the script above desk level for three important reasons: (1) to reduce the degree of up-and-down motion of your head as you look down to the script and then up to the camera; (2) to more easily keep the script in front of you as you look from camera to camera, thereby eliminating diagonal head movements; and (3) to avoid bending your head down to read a script that is flat on the surface of the desk, which restricts the air flow and thereby impairs voice quality.



**Figure 7.7**

News anchor Laura Zimmerman shows the wrong way (left) and the right way to hold a reflective object on camera. (Courtesy of Laura Zimmerman and KTVU, Oakland, California)

## Using Peripheral Vision

A **periphery** is a boundary. If you look straight ahead, you'll find that the left and right boundaries of your vision extend in an arc of about 150 degrees. This is the range of your peripheral vision, and you should be able to pick up movements, such as hand signals, given to you within this area. Actually, on-air you'll need to use only about a 45-degree arc of your peripheral vision, because floor directors will give you signals as near as possible to the camera you're addressing. When receiving signals, don't allow your head or even your eyes to turn toward the signaler. In Figure 7.8, Cheryl Fong shows how even a slight movement of the eyes to pick up a cue can look on camera.

**Figure 7.8**

It is important to use peripheral vision. Reporter Cheryl Fong shows what happens when a performer on a close-up glances away for a cue. (Courtesy of Cheryl Fong)



## Clothing and Makeup

When performing on television, plan your clothing carefully. If your station's system uses chroma-keying, you should avoid wearing any shade of the color used for the mattes (blue or green in most instances). **Chroma-keying** is a process that allows a picture from one camera to be keyed in to a portion of the picture from another camera. If blue is the color of the chroma-key backdrops (mattes), and you were to wear a blue shirt or blouse, the second picture would appear in the area of your blue clothing whenever a chroma-key matte was used.<sup>4</sup>

Avoid, too, any article of clothing that has small checks or narrow stripes. The television cameras can't handle fine, high-contrast patterns, and a wavy, shimmering look, called the **moiré effect** (pronounced mwä-rä'), results. Also avoid black-and-white clothing. Pastel colors are best for nearly all broadcast purposes and are complimentary to people of all skin shades. Performers with extremely dark faces should wear clothing somewhat darker

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<sup>4</sup>An informative and more extensive discussion of makeup and clothing for television may be found in Herbert Zettl's *Television Production Handbook*, 6th ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1997).

than that worn by people with light skin tones. The principle to follow is to avoid excessive contrast between your face and your clothing and to avoid clothing of the same shade and color as your skin.

Jewelry can cause video problems, as can sequins. Studio lights reflected directly into the camera lens cause **flaring**—light reflected from a highly polished object causes signal overload, which results in a flash on the television screen. This effect may be used to assert the glamour of a particular guest, but it's very distracting if created regularly by a program host.

If your vision needs correction, contact lenses will usually give you your best on-camera appearance. If you prefer to wear glasses, have their lenses treated with an antiglare coating. The frames you choose are an important aspect of your appearance, so look for frames that are flattering and suit your on-air personality. Generally speaking, frames should not be so unusual as to call attention to themselves. Eyeglass frames made of metal may cause flaring, so choose plastic frames.

Makeup for television performers is usually quite simple and quickly applied. Makeup can help reduce skin shine, eliminate “five-o'clock shadow,” improve skin color, and hide minor blemishes. It's seldom intended to drastically change the appearance of a television performer. Close-ups too readily reveal attempts to change basic facial features. If your complexion is sallow, be careful to cover your entire face, neck, and ears with makeup, because the contrast between the near-white of uncovered skin and almost any color of makeup is noticeable. If your complexion is quite dark, you'll not have the same problem of contrast, but you should experiment with a variety of shades of makeup, including eyeliner and, for women, rouge and lipstick. Dark skin should be toned down to avoid unflattering highlights; find a pancake hue that works well with the bright lights and the technical requirements of television. Some men, even when freshly shaven, show a dark cast in the beard and mustache area. Although pancake makeup helps cover five-o'clock shadow, a special beard stick eliminates the problem in nearly all cases.

Always have powder or pancake makeup near you. Most sets are brightly lit, and the heat from lighting instruments may cause you to perspire. Check frequently to make sure you're not perspiring; if you are, apply powder when you're off camera.

## Working with Cue Cards

Cue cards are used at most television stations for short announcements to be made by an on-air performer; to list items to be mentioned, such as the names and professions of program guests; or to supply some bit of information to the performer, such as a telephone number or a reminder to mention an upcoming segment of the show. For lengthy messages that on-air announcers are to read, nearly all television stations use electronic prompters.

Some college departments of broadcasting don't own prompting devices, and students who must deliver lengthy messages word for word must rely on memorization or cue cards. Memorization involves a greater risk of failure. The pressure of performing before one's peers along with the normal distractions of the television studio—bright lights in one's face, time cues, signals from a floor director to change cameras—makes concentration on a memorized script quite difficult. For most learners cue cards are the best option.

Cue cards are generally made in one of two configurations. If the message is brief enough, the cue card will be a single sheet of poster board measuring twenty-eight by forty-four inches. The script is written on the card with a black felt-tip marker. During rehearsals and performance, a floor director holds the card to the right of the camera lens and moves the card slowly upward as the performer reads it so that the line being spoken is always alongside the lens. Although standard poster board is twenty-eight inches wide, a wide right margin is generally left so that the reader/performer can minimize left-to-right head movement.

Smaller cue cards are used for longer messages. These are generally wider than twenty-four inches and no more than twelve to fifteen inches high. Although less information fits on each of these smaller cards—a thirty-second commercial will require several of them—they help the performer maintain better eye contact with the viewer than is possible with the larger cards. Cards should be held as close to the lens as possible; the best placement is just below the lens, because this allows the performer to look directly at the viewer. If the script calls for a switch from one camera to another, either the cards must be duplicated, with one set held at each camera, or they must be divided according to the lines that are to be addressed to each camera.

When working with cue cards—especially with multiple ones—

it's imperative that you practice with the person or persons who'll be holding them during your performance. Even a slight hesitation in changing the cards can cause you to stop in mid-sentence. As you read from cue cards, practice looking as directly as possible into the lens, using your peripheral vision to its greatest degree. It isn't easy, but with practice you can develop this skill.

## Working with Prompters

Television stations use prompting devices to enable performers to maintain eye contact with viewers. Some prompters are entirely electronic; scripts are typed on a word processor, stored, and transmitted to a display terminal. Older prompters combine mechanical and electronic components; script pages are fed onto a moving belt and are run under the lens of a fixed camera. With both systems the image appears on a black-and-white monitor attached to each television camera; a mirror reflects this image onto a sheet of glass mounted at a 45-degree angle in front of the camera lens. The performer sees the script while looking directly at the lens. The speed of the moving script is regulated to match the reading speed of the performer. Both systems require **hard copy**—a script printed on sheets of 8½-by-11-inch paper—for use by producers, directors, news anchors, and others. The script may be typed on an electronic keyboard and then duplicated in the number of copies required for production or it may be typed directly onto **copy sets**, multipart forms that yield several copies. (A camera-mounted prompter is shown in Figure 7.9 on page 217.)

Prompters are used most extensively on television newscasts. On talk, interview, game, variety, and other programs that are predominantly ad-libbed, prompters are used only for short messages that must be delivered verbatim (word for word) and, in some operations, to pass on information such as the nature of an upcoming program segment.

When delivering a television commercial or a commentary, you'll seldom have a script in your hands or on a desk in front of you. Nearly all such performances are taped, and can be redone if the prompter malfunctions. During a live newscast, on the other hand, you must have a complete script to turn to in case the prompter ceases to work or gets out of phase with your reading.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>See also the discussion of prompters in Chapter 11, "Television News."

## Instructions and Cues

Some radio announcers and nearly all television performers work as members of teams and must therefore develop harmonious relationships and efficient means of communicating. DJs and others who work solo obviously don't have the same kinds of communication needs. Because you can't be certain that you'll always work independently, you should learn to coordinate your efforts with those of others.

Television performers receive instructions and cues from floor directors and producers. Floor directors use either oral or visual means of communicating. Oral instructions are preferred whenever possible, as during a commercial break. Television producers communicate by way of an **interruptible foldback (IFB)**, a small speaker that fits in a performer's ear. In general, instructions from floor directors are confined to details such as cuing, indicating an upcoming program break, and signaling the improper use of equipment or of lights.

On-air radio talk-show hosts, as well as voice-over announcers working in recording studios, receive instructions from an engineer or a producer. These instructions may be given orally over an intercom, through a headset, or as hand signals.

Producers of commercials usually concern themselves with matters of interpretation and timing, whereas news producers are alert to changes of plan, such as dropping a news story. Regardless of who issues the instructions, it's your responsibility to carry them out promptly and effectively.

## Achieving Good Working Relationships

Several considerations are involved in developing good working relationships. For example, you may find yourself disagreeing with a director on interpretation of lines and want to express your point of view. Sounds reasonable, but there are acceptable and unacceptable ways of doing this. To openly and directly challenge a director's instructions is to defy established authority and bring into question the director's competence. Needless to say, unless you're in such demand that you can get away with any degree of rudeness, you may soon be without a job! At the same time, as an announcer you're not expected to act like a mindless automaton. Ample oppor-

tunity exists to discuss your ideas and concepts with producers or directors, but you must choose the right time, and adopt an appropriate and nonthreatening manner.

When rehearsing or when making a number of takes of a performance under the coaching of a producer or a director (for example, when recording the narrative for a documentary or voicing commercials), do your best to implement suggestions. If your director welcomes it, you may discuss alternative ways to deliver lines, but always remember that the producer's word is final. One effective way to express your opinion is to say, "What if I tried it this way?" This approach is tactful and nonthreatening and will most likely be productive.

During rehearsals, avoid continually explaining why you did something this or that way or why you made a mistake. No one is really interested, and alibis and explanations only delay the project.

Always remain alert for cues and instructions. Sometimes you'll wait an eternity for a problem, usually a technical one, to be ironed out. This is no time for daydreaming and certainly no time to leave your position. When the problem is corrected, you'll be needed—at once.

Always treat every member of the production team with respect. No one is unimportant, and your success—and that of the production—depends on the degree of commitment and the quality of performance of every member.

## Taking a Level

Before nearly every television performance you'll be asked to **take a level**. You'll speak in a normal voice so that the audio engineer can adjust the volume control associated with your microphone. Radio announcers, including most DJs and newscasters, must take their own levels because they most often will do their own engineering. Announcers who perform voice-over commercials or narration nearly always work with audio engineers who adjust volume level as you read copy into the mic.

Before taping or going on the air, the engineer must know the volume levels of all audio inputs. In the simplest production this means the volume level of the announcer; in elaborate productions it might include the levels of several voices, music, and sound effects. The engineer's job is to mix or blend audio inputs in the

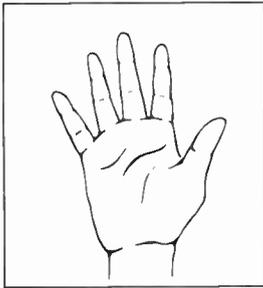
proper proportions and with optimum quality. When taking a level, an engineer can tell you if you're off mic, if your volume is too loud or too soft, or if you're popping or creating excessive sibilance. **Popping** is an air blast when plosives are sounded; **plosives** are the consonants *p, b, t, d, k,* and *g*. **Sibilance** is the hissing sound made when the letter *s*, and sometimes *sh* or *z*, is sounded.<sup>6</sup> You can't sound your best if you're misusing your mic. An audio engineer can help you make the most effective use of your voice, but you must cooperate. When you're asked to take a level, it's imperative that you *read from the actual script* you'll use (or, if ad-libbing, that you speak at exactly the same volume you will use during the performance), that you position yourself in relation to the mic exactly as you will during the show, and that you continue reading or ad-libbing until the engineer is satisfied with the result.

In taking a level, follow this procedure:

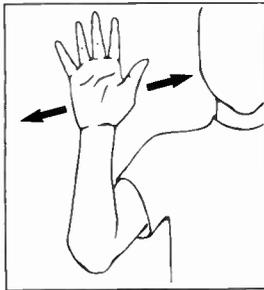
1. As you sit or stand before a mic or after a lavalier mic has been clipped on, remain silent. Unnecessary chatter is distracting and potentially embarrassing if your mic is open.
2. Wait patiently and alertly for a signal to take a level; you'll probably receive an oral signal from a floor director (television) or an engineer over an intercom (recording studio). If you must depend on a visual signal, keep watching the engineer.
3. On receiving the signal, move into the exact position and posture you'll use during the performance and read or speak exactly as you will later on.
4. When working with a script, read from that script with all of the vitality, emotion, and other qualities you intend to use in actual performance. Don't hold back, thinking that it's wise to save yourself for "the real thing."
5. As you read or speak, remain alert for any hand signals from the floor director or engineer that might indicate "louder," "softer," or "move closer to (or away from) the mic."
6. As you make any suggested adjustments continue to speak until you receive the signal that everything is satisfactory.

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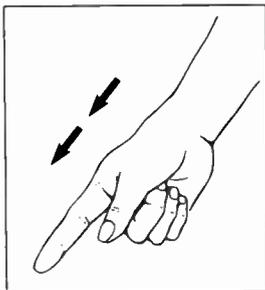
<sup>6</sup>Sibilance is a necessary part of spoken English, and to completely avoid sibilant sounds would be to speak with a lisp. The problem many speakers have when using a mic is not sibilance, but *excessive* sibilance.



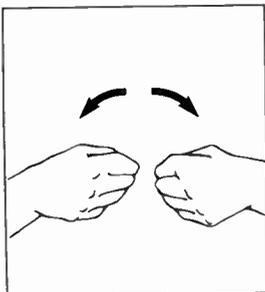
attention



stand by



cue



break

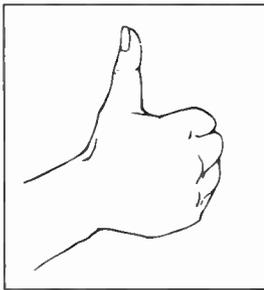
## Hand Signals

Hand signals were developed in the early days of radio because soundproof glass partitions separated directors and engineers from performers. As radio turned more and more to recorded music, nearly all music announcers came to do their own engineering. Today, most radio stations don't even have a control room adjacent to the announce booth or studio, and hand signals are unnecessary. However, hand signals are still used in a few radio applications. Directors of live sports broadcasts use a limited number of signals to cue sportscasters when coming back from commercial breaks. A few popular morning drive-time disc jockeys, especially those who work with sound effects and much "production," work in an on-air studio/control room complex with engineering support. Radio talk-show hosts generally work with a producer/phone screener, who may use some hand signals. But most hand signals are used mainly as a means of communication between members of a television production team, so students of announcing should understand and be able to use them.

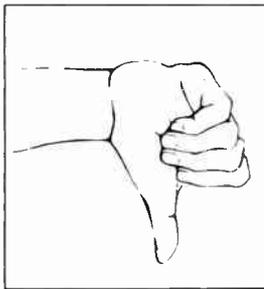
Most of the signals that follow are standard throughout the industry, but be prepared for variations.

- The *attention signal*, a simple waving of the hand, usually precedes the stand-by signal. It's given by the television floor director, sometimes called the stage manager.
- The *stand-by signal* is made by holding the hand slightly above the head, palm toward the announcer. The stand-by signal is given at any time when the announcer can't judge the precise moment at which to pick up a cue.
- The *cue signal* is made by rapidly lowering the hand from the stand-by position, with the index finger extended and pointing directly at the person being cued. The cue signal nearly always follows the stand-by signal; neither signal is normally given alone. At some television stations the cue signal is thrown toward the camera that is going on the air.

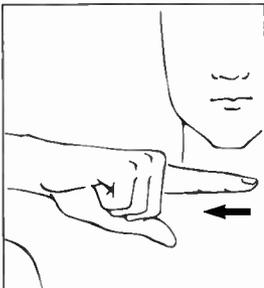
The attention, stand-by, and cue signals are mainly used in television newscasts and talk shows. At the start of the show or when returning from a commercial break or taped package, the attention signal is given near the lens of the camera to be called up. After the stand-by signal is given, the cue is thrown and the announcer begins addressing the indicated camera.



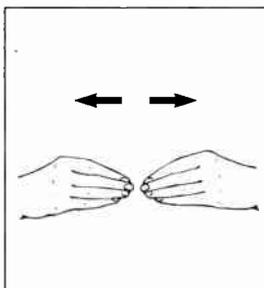
introduce report



drop report



cut

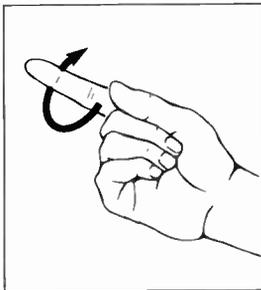


Slowdown or stretch

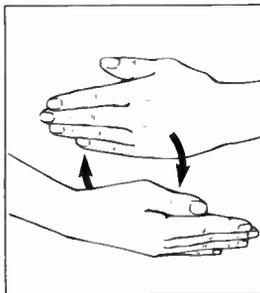
- The *switch-camera signal* tells you to look from the taking camera to the camera to which you've been waved. The floor director will have progressed from the stand-by signal to the switch-camera signal by moving one or both hands from the first to the second camera. An earlier section of this chapter, "Addressing the Camera," tells how best to make this transition when working with a script.
- The *break signal*, used chiefly on interview and talk programs, tells you to wrap up the present segment for a commercial break. The signal is made by holding the hands as though they were grasping a brick or a stick of wood and then making a breaking motion.
- The *introduce-report signal* consists of a thumbs-up sign given to a news anchor to indicate that a planned report from the field is ready to go on the air. The *drop-report signal* is a thumbs-down sign that indicates that the report is not to be introduced. Reports may be dropped because of technical difficulties or because of time pressures.

It's natural to want to acknowledge that you've received and understand a hand signal. Experienced performers working with professional crews don't send back a signal indicating "message received, will comply." At some television stations, however, and especially when new, unrehearsed, or unusually complex programs are being produced, performers are asked to acknowledge hand signals. In some instances this acknowledgment is conveyed by an unobtrusive hand or finger movement, in others it may involve a larger gesture. Follow the practice preferred by the director or producer of the show.

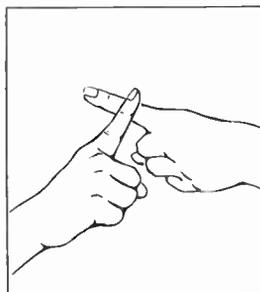
- The *cut signal* is made by drawing the index finger across the throat. This signals an emergency; on receiving it, stop speaking at once. After stopping your performance, wait for oral or visual signals before beginning again.
- The *slowdown or stretch signal* is given by a television floor director or an audio engineer or director. It's made by pulling the hands apart, as though pulling taffy. Because slow down and stretch mean somewhat different things, you must rely on the context in which the signal is given to know how to interpret it. When you're reading from a script, the signal means to slow the



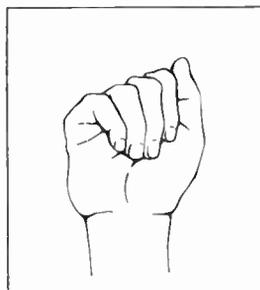
speed up



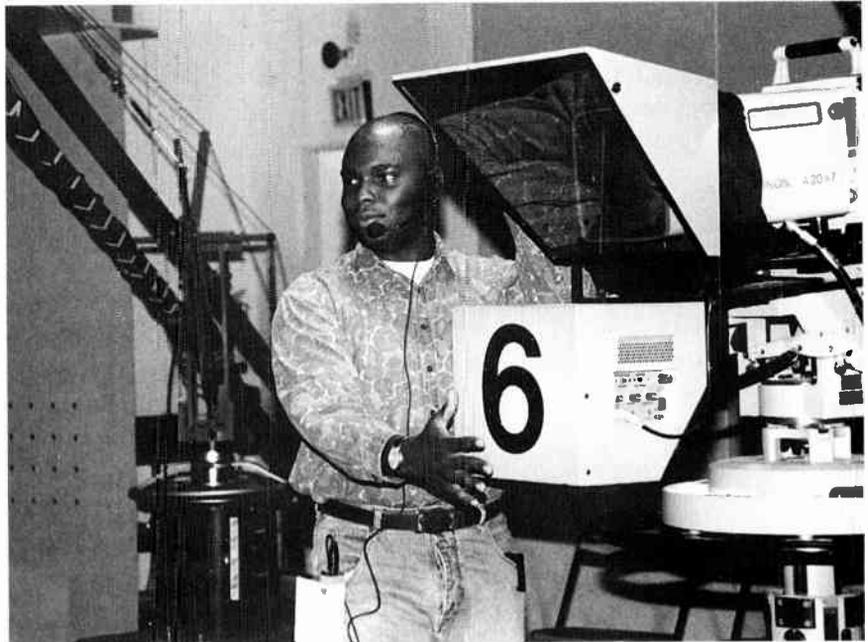
wrap up



30 seconds



15 seconds

**Figure 7.9**

Floor Director Anthony Brock gives the stand-by-to-switch-camera signal. (Courtesy of Anthony Brock and KTVU, Oakland, California)

pace of your delivery; when you're ad-libbing, it means to stretch (in other words, to keep talking until a further signal is given).

- The *speed-up signal* is given by holding the hand before the body, index finger extended, and then rotating the hand. On receiving this signal, you should increase the pace of your delivery. The signal is imprecise; it doesn't tell you how rapidly you should speak, or for how long. Later directions or signals will give you this information. You must be careful not to confuse this signal with the wrap-up sign.
- The *wrap-up signal* is made by holding both hands in front of the torso and then rotating them about eight inches apart so that first one hand and then the other is on top. On receiving this signal, you should bring the program or the segment to a close as soon as possible in a smooth and natural way.

As a program nears its conclusion or as a segment of a program nears a station break, it's important for you to know the exact num-

**Figure 7.10**

Floor director Patsy Wheeler gives a hand signal to the news anchor during a live newscast. (Courtesy WBZ-TV, Boston. Photo by Sarah Hood)



ber of minutes or seconds remaining. Time signals are no longer used in radio or recording studios, but are important in television. They are as follows:

- *three-minute signal*—three fingers held up and waved slowly
- *two-minute signal*—two fingers held up and waved slowly
- *one-minute signal*—the index finger held up and waved slowly
- *thirty-second signal*—the right and left arms crossed, or the index finger of one hand crossed with the index finger of the other
- *fifteen-second signal*—a clenched fist held upright and near the head
- *ten-to-zero signal*—all fingers on both hands held up and then lowered one at a time as the seconds are counted down



## SPOTLIGHT

### Breaking into the Announcing Field

Denny Delk has loved radio as long as he can remember. His mother, when reading bedtime stories, used her voice to add sound effects. As early as age four, he tried to emulate her. He started playing with a tape recorder when he was thirteen, varying sounds by speeding up and slowing down his recorded voice and trying out vocalized sound effects. Today, Delk does voice work for commercials, cartoons, and promos and narration for industrials and documentaries.

Delk enjoys voice work more than any other mode of performance. "Radio, as has been said many times, is the theater of the mind," he says. "You can do anything you want to do. You can be anyone you want to be. You can make the imagination of the listener work by the way you treat the microphone, by the things the producer does with you, by the way you react with people—you can't raise an eyebrow; you can't give a sidelong glance—you have to do those things with your voice. And it's fun to be able to play that way."

Originally from Oklahoma, Delk got his start at a small-town radio station. A sign on the door read, "dollar a holler," meaning that each commercial message broadcast on the station cost only one dollar. It was a small beginning, but he loved radio. He later moved on to other jobs in broadcasting, all of them related to communication with an audience: camera operator, television director, studio engineer, sound technician for a television station, newspaper reporter, concert promoter, disc jockey, and radio talk-show host—all before becoming a voice-over announcer.

An English major who performed in many stage plays during his college days, Delk has worked in theater everywhere he's lived. He does improvisational comedy with the National Theater of the Deranged. He calls this "lazy man's theater—no need to memorize." Delk is convinced that theater performance helps a voice-over actor become a more complete performer. He urges students to become involved in college or community theater. Even behind-the-scenes work can teach you what communicating with an audience is all about.

Delk offers advice to aspiring announcers:

- Your first challenge in marketing yourself is to get agents and producers to listen to your audition tape. Most likely, they're already working with a stable of regulars—outstanding voice-over people, with all types of personalities and ages—and you have to make them want to listen to your tape.
- The packaging of your tape can create a strong impression. Delk prefers to use standard audio cassette tapes. Sooner or later, individual auditions will be duplicated on CD ROMs—they already are by talent agencies—but at present

cassettes are both inexpensive and they keep your performance readily retrievable by agents. Delk includes visual material because when agents listen to a tape there's absolutely nothing to do *but* listen. He encloses eight panels of humorous cartoons on a ten-by-twenty-inch sheet. The cartoons relate to both announcing and his personality, and they catch the eyes of those who hire people to do voice work.

- *Never* include your photo for voice-over work. Your appearance has nothing to do with the job you're auditioning for. Casting agents and producers will expect you—or want you—to sound like you look. Don't give them a chance to say "No, this person doesn't look right for the part." Force them to judge you *only* by the sound of your voice and your interpretive abilities, which are the only things that are relevant.
- Delk uses three separate "packages": one each for straight announcing, cartoon and character voice work, and industrial narration. Creating separate portfolio packages allows you to tailor each one to a distinct style and market.
- After sending an audition tape, follow with a card and a note that says "Hope you had a chance to listen." *Never* call the person. They don't have the time, and you don't really have anything to say. If you ask for an opinion of the tape, you've put that person in a potentially awkward position.
- Put on your tape as many different voices or attitudes as you can *do well*. Don't include any that are marginal or questionable. If you can't determine on your own what you do well, ask a qualified person, such as your instructor, for help.
- Your tape must never be longer than three minutes—two and one-half minutes is better. For industrial work or other tapes of voice-over narration, you may do a longer tape.
- You must have an attention getter at the front. Use your best-sounding effort at the start. If you place it later, the agent may never hear it.
- Don't do complete spots—ten seconds is enough to establish any identity.
- Show a variety of *attitudes* (better than *accents*): soft sell, snooty, seductive, downtrodden, and so on. Don't put them together in a haphazard or random order. Work for variety. Follow a soft sell with a hard sell—break up the pieces. This approach makes each segment more impressive than if it stood alone or if it were surrounded by similar readings.
- Don't ask to have your tape returned. Audiotapes are inexpensive, and you want the tape to be sitting on producers' shelves. When the person they usually use is unavailable, perhaps they'll remember your tape and listen to it again—and then they may call you.
- Even if a producer likes your tape, you'll still have to audition for a job. They'll want to know if you're as good as your tape.



First, if you're working with a script, study and mark it. Underline words to be stressed. Write, in phonetics, the correct pronunciation of difficult words or names. Note any words that might be mistaken for others; for example, the following words are sometimes confused because of similar spellings:

though—through  
county—country  
uniformed—uninformed  
united—untied  
mediation—meditation  
complaint—compliant  
impudent—imprudent  
outage—outrage

To eliminate the possibility of reading such words incorrectly, mark your copy. You might write *tho* and *thru* for the first pair of words and use hyphens for the others: *coun-ty*, *coun-try*; *uni-formed*, *un-in-formed*; *u-nited*, *un-tied*, and so on.

The final ten minutes before a performance are critical. Try to separate yourself from any distracting activities and concentrate on your upcoming performance. If you're excessively nervous, try to relax; if you're apathetic, try to psych yourself up to an appropriate degree of energy.

If you're to ad-lib your performance, go over its objectives and determine how you'll structure your ideas within the allotted time. How much time will you give to your opening? How much will you give to your conclusion? How much time remains for the body of your presentation?

Note the placement of microphones and, for a television presentation, the cameras. Note where you'll sit or stand and decide where you'll hold or place your script (if any). For television, check out the lighting and determine exactly where you'll stand or sit and how far you may be able to move in each direction without moving into shadows. If necessary, check with the floor director to be sure you know which camera will be called up to open the scene, and be sure you know about any critical or unusual camera shots.

If you're to hold or demonstrate an object, decide exactly where and how you'll hold it and to which camera you'll present it.

Finally, remind yourself to control any tendency you have to speak too rapidly and if you make an error to correct it as naturally and unobtrusively as possible and continue. If you stumble, move

on and put the error behind you because dwelling on it will divide your attention and make further stumbles almost inevitable. Above all, do *not* stop to ask if you may begin again unless such a possibility has been agreed to in advance. Even if your performance will never actually leave the classroom or studio, always adopt the attitude that it's going out live over the airwaves.

## Achieving a Conversational Style

A conversational style is one that's natural to you, is appropriate to the intimacy of the electronic media, and sounds as though you're talking rather than reading from a script. Affected, stilted, and pretentious speakers who clearly enunciate every syllable of every word and who speak loudly and with repetitious changes in inflection perform at one extreme of spoken English. Those who mumble, who barely move their lips, and whose energy in speaking is marked by a scarcely audible volume level are at the opposite extreme. Good conversational delivery is somewhere between. It avoids both overarticulation and slurring and is marked by variety in pitch (inflection) and volume level. It uses changes in pitch and volume to stress words that help get meaning across. Much of our daily conversation with friends is natural and effective because it's designed to communicate ideas, points of view, or convictions. We automatically find the simplest and best words to make a point, and we naturally stress key words to get our points across. Because we use it every day, conversational speech should be easy to apply when speaking for the electronic media. It's rarely a problem when speaking impromptu or ad-lib, but can become a problem working from a script. You can best achieve a conversational style by remembering a few simple principles.

First, don't hesitate to smile or laugh when appropriate. Don't be afraid to pause as you silently grope for an idea or a word. Pauses are perfectly natural. Fear of pausing can lead either to *ers*' and *uhs*' (**vocalized pauses**) or to spouting inanities as you try to fight your way back to where you left off.

Conversational quality is totally destroyed by reading the word *a* as AY instead of UH. Read the following sentence and pronounce the article as AY:



## CHECKLIST

### Preparing to Perform

1. Study the script: mark it for correct pronunciation.
2. Use the final ten minutes before your performance to separate yourself from all distractions, to calm your nerves, and to “psych up” your energy level.
3. Note the placement of microphones in the studio, where you’ll sit, and how you’ll hold your script. For video performances, check lighting, the range within which you may move without retreating into shadows, which cameras will be used, and about any unusual camera shots.
4. Practice holding and demonstrating any objects that will be part of your performance; find out to which camera you’ll be presenting the object.
5. Remind yourself to speak slowly and to continue adeptly with your broadcast if you should stumble.

A good way for a person to make a fortune is to open a savings account in a bank.

Now read the sentence again, substituting the sound UH for AY. Don’t stress any of the UHs. Note how stilted the sentence sounded the first time you read it and how much more natural and conversational it was when you used UH for the article *a*.

The article *the* is sometimes pronounced *THEE* and sometimes *THUH*. The general rule is to say *THEE* before a word beginning with a vowel sound and *THUH* before a word beginning with a consonant:

SCRIPT: The appetite is the best gauge of the health of the average person.

*Read as:* **THEE** appetite is **THUH** best gauge of **THUH** health of **THEE** average person. (Note, however, that when saying “*thee*,” you should soften the *EE* sound.) At times this general rule is broken for purposes of emphasis, as in, “It’s **THEE** best buy of **THUH** year!”

To transfer the conversational quality you already use when speaking with friends to the reading of a script, make tape recordings of impromptu discussions between you and one or more of your friends. Note on playbacks how you and other speakers use variations in pitch, volume, and tempo to stress important points. Note how speakers use pauses and how energy increases and decreases according to the significance of the point being made. Record yourself reading a script. Compare your deliveries in unscripted and scripted speech. It may take some time to transfer your conversational quality to the reading of scripts, but it’s essential to achieving your optimal on-air conversational style.

## Reading Telephone Numbers

When you read a telephone number that includes an area code, read it with a pause after each part, and always say “area code” before you give the code:

SCRIPT: Phone (332) 575-6666.

*Read as:* Phone area code three-three-two / five-seven-five / six-six-six-six.

When reading a telephone number that includes zeros, you should, in most instances, use the word *zero*, and never *oh* or *ought*.

SCRIPT: Phone 924-0087.

*Read as:* Phone nine-two-four / zero-zero-eight-seven.

However, when you repeat a number, you can vary the way you say it:

SCRIPT: Phone 344-8200; that’s 344-8200.

*Read as:* Phone three-four-four / eight-two-zero-zero; that's three-four-four / eighty-two hundred.

Some sponsors have special numbers that must be read in a certain way. Part or all of the number may spell out a word, as in 332-SAVE. Often such numbers are given twice—once with the word(s) and then in the all-number version. Toll-free telephone numbers should be read with the beginning given as “one-eight-hundred” or “one-eight-eight-eight.”

## Developing a Sense of Time

Announcers must develop a keen sense of time, for split-second timing is a part of every radio and television broadcast. The live portion of a radio commercial must be delivered in exactly the allotted time. DJs at some popular music stations provide ad-libbed introductions to songs that must end exactly when the vocal portion begins. Newscasters must work with precision when playing a carted actuality or a musical ID to avoid unwanted pauses or overlaps.

In television you'll receive time signals from a floor manager or floor director. In a newscast or an interview-talk show, you'll often receive a countdown as you introduce videotaped stories. The floor director will first hold up the correct number of fingers and then, on instructions from the director, will lower the fingers one at a time. When the countdown is completed, the director will have gone to tape.

At other times during a program you may receive a hand signal meaning that you have ten seconds in which to wrap up, or that three minutes, then two minutes, then one minute remain in the program or in a segment of it. It's important that you develop a sense of how long these periods of time are. Smooth transitions and unhurried endings require accurate timing. To develop this sense, you should practice extensively, using a stopwatch. Without looking at the watch, start it and then stop it when you think that a given number of seconds has passed. At first, you'll typically think that a minute has passed when the actual elapsed time is closer to thirty or forty seconds. With practice, you should become quite accurate at estimating elapsed times. Practice speaking and reading lead-ins and program closings and match your words to a predetermined number of seconds.

## Other Tips for Improving Your Performance

First, there's no substitute for practice. Theoretical knowledge of broadcasting is important, and such knowledge will enhance your development, but you must practice to become truly professional. You need not confine your practice to class assignments. You can practice nearly anywhere, and you can practice without a single item of equipment. When reading newspapers, magazines, and books, isolate yourself from others and read at least some of the printed material aloud.

Second, invest in a few basic items of equipment. Most practical is a good-quality, battery-operated cassette audio recorder. Use it to practice any type of announcing that appeals to you—news, interviewing, sports play-by-play, music announcing, or commercial delivery. Before investing in a tape recorder, try it out. A recorder that can't accurately record and play back your voice is of little use to you. Be sure the recorder can accept an external microphone. A good-quality microphone might be your second purchase. For television practice, invest in a camcorder and a tripod; if possible, buy a camera that has a jack for an external mic, either hand held or lavaliere.

To prepare for work at a highly computerized station, buy a Mac or PC and use it for all your school reports, personal and business letters, and other writings. The computer need not be new, nor need it be "state of the art." A factory refurbished older model will allow you to become computer literate if you aren't already.

Third, become honestly self-critical. As you listen to playbacks, imagine the voice you hear is that of another person. Listen for communicative values. Listen for voice quality, precise diction, and correct pronunciation. Experiment. Try various styles of delivery, levels of energy, and rates of delivery. Don't try these things in imitation of another performer; rather, you should experiment to find ways of bringing out the best that's in *you*.

When performing in a newscast, commercial, or interview, don't do takeoffs unless the assignment calls for you to do so. You may amuse yourself and others by doing a parody of your material, but it really affords you no useful practice unless, of course, you intend to make a career of doing spoofs and takeoffs. This warning doesn't rule out humorous commercials or humor-oriented interviews, as long as they are realistically related to your growth as an announcer.

You can practice television delivery with or without equipment. In most cases, unless you are working to improve your facial expressions, performing before a mirror will only distract you. Instead, place some object on a wall (a drawing of a television lens will serve you well), and use it to practice eye contact. Although there's no perfect substitute for performing before a camera, an audio recorder can help you with television practice. If possible, volunteer as talent on other people's projects. Perhaps you can even get on-camera experience at a local cable station that provides public access.

Finally, save your recordings and review them from time to time to measure your progress. When you compare performances made four or five months apart, your improvement will be both impressive and encouraging—*if you've practiced!*

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## Ad-lib Announcing

The term **ad lib** is short for the Latin *ad libitum*, meaning “in an unrestrained manner; freely, spontaneously.” In broadcasting, to ad-lib means to improvise and deliver extemporaneously. Related adjectives are *impromptu*, meaning speaking on the spur of the moment with no prior preparation, and *extemporaneous*, meaning prepared in advance but delivered without notes or a script.

As an announcer, you'll often work without a script. Then all your acquired skills of phonation, articulation, and interpretation can't guarantee effective communication. Only your ability as a compelling communicator will earn you listeners. Much of the broadcast day consists of unscripted shows. Field reporters, DJs, telephone talk-show hosts, interviewers, game-show hosts, and panel moderators are among those who seldom see a script and must conduct their programs spontaneously. Field reporters often work from notes and work with a complete script only when they return to the station to prepare a “package.”

Ad-lib announcing can be practiced, but it probably can't be taught. The formula for success is easy to state but difficult to achieve: *Know what you're talking about, be interested in what you're saying, be eager to communicate with your listener, and try to develop an attractive personality. In interviews, show a genuine interest in your subjects and their views.*

Announcers working without scripts can be more spontaneous than script readers. At the same time, they run a greater risk of boring their listeners. Scripts are usually tightly written; an ad-lib or impromptu announcer can wander from point to point. Scripts have specific objectives; ad-lib announcers are free to ramble without a clear purpose. Scripts are often polished and tightened during recording sessions; an announcer's impromptu comments can't be taken back once they're spoken. Scripts may call for interruptions when necessary; interviewers may inadvertently throw in a question just as their guest is about to make an important point in response to the *last* question.

Despite all these potential pitfalls, ad-lib, impromptu, and extemporaneous announcing are crafts that must be practiced and perfected by anyone who wants to become a professional announcer. Keeping this in mind, practice unscripted announcing at every opportunity, using a tape recorder for self-evaluation. The following tips should be helpful.

### **Know What You're Talking About**

We expect a sportscaster to have a thorough knowledge of sports and a DJ to know music. But problems arise when an announcer has to speak on an unfamiliar topic. As a special-assignment reporter, for instance, you may give a live report from the scene of a breaking story and then be asked by an anchor to elaborate on certain details. Or you may be assigned to an interview with a person about whom you know little and about whose special interests you know nothing at all. Suppose, for example, you're to interview a medical researcher about an important discovery. How would you prepare? Most talk-radio stations and nearly all major-market television stations maintain computers that are linked to information banks. Online inquiries quickly provide reams of information on almost any topic or famous person.

To be a competent talk-show host, you wouldn't rely entirely on computer data banks—you'd be a voracious reader of newspapers, newsmagazines, current fiction and nonfiction bestsellers, and general-interest periodicals. At a large station you'd have the help of a research assistant who'd gather information about a particular guest or topic. (Chapter 9 discusses the role of radio and television talk-show hosts.)

## Be Interested in What You're Saying

If you listen carefully to radio or television announcers, you can't help but notice that some seem to have no interest in what they're saying. Among the guilty are certain weather, traffic, and business reporters, usually on radio, who make frequent reports throughout the day. It's easy to fall into a routine delivery pattern, to speak too rapidly, and to show no interest in what one is saying.

## Be Eager to Communicate with Your Listener

Only if you really want to communicate to others should you consider radio or television announcing in the first place. If you want to speak merely for and to yourself, buy a tape recorder and have fun "doing your own thing."



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Ad-lib Announcing**

The exercises that follow require an audio recorder. Most exercises can be adapted to video recording, and can be taped with a tripod-mounted camcorder.

Don't look at the topics that follow until you're fully prepared to begin practicing. To prepare, get a stopwatch or a clock or watch with a sweep second hand and find an isolated area that's free from distractions. Cue up a tape on an audio recorder. Then choose a number from one to twenty. Without looking at any other topics, read the item corresponding to the number you've chosen. Start your stopwatch. Give yourself exactly one minute to formulate your thoughts. Make notes, if desired. When the minute is up, reset the stopwatch, and start it and the tape recorder simultaneously. Begin your ad-lib performance and try to speak fluently on your topic for a predetermined time—one minute for

your first few efforts and two minutes after you've gained experience. Decide on the length of your performance before you look at your topic. Eliminate the number of each topic when you use it so that you'll have a fresh challenge each time you practice.

As you form your thoughts, try to think of (1) an appropriate opening, (2) material for the body of your remarks, and (3) a closing statement. Don't stop your commentary because of stumbles, hesitations, or other problems. Don't put your recorder on pause while collecting your thoughts. This exercise is valueless unless you work your way through your ad-libs in "real time." In order to improve, you must have firsthand knowledge of your shortcomings; the only way to gather this knowledge is to follow these instructions to the letter, regardless of initial failures. Keep all of your taped performances so you can review them and measure your progress.

Some of the ad-lib topics that follow suggest a humorous approach; others demand a more sober delivery. All topics are general, and anyone should be able to find something to say about each. These topics serve well for initial practice, but eventually you must graduate to more current and realistic topics. As a broadcast announcer you'll be asked to speak on current events as reflected in newscasts and newspapers. To truly test your ad-libbing abilities with important topics, make a list of the week's headlines. A typical week will yield topics as diverse as disarmament proposals, Third World indebtedness, hunger in some parts of the planet, labor negotiations in your community or area, breakthroughs in medicine, important Supreme Court decisions, newly proposed legislation on various issues, election results and their implications, speedups or slowdowns of the economy, and news on the greenhouse effect. List each topic on a separate slip of paper and follow the same instructions for ad-libbing, but don't limit yourself to arbitrary time constraints.

1. Give reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this proposal: "Upon graduating from high school, all students should be required to serve for one year in the Peace Corps or perform some type of community service."
2. Discuss the most influential book you have ever read.
3. Describe your memories of some important holiday during your childhood.
4. Name the most important college course you have taken and give reasons for your choice.
5. Describe your most influential relative.
6. Describe your most embarrassing experience.
7. If you could change one law, what would it be, how would you change it, and why?
8. Discuss your first memories of school.
9. What do you hope to be doing in ten years?
10. Describe your most memorable vacation.
11. Talk about your most memorable pet.
12. Attack or defend this statement: "Final examinations should be abolished in favor of several quizzes and a term paper."
13. What turns you on?
14. What turns you off?
15. Talk about your recurring nightmares.
16. How should the government deal with terrorists?
17. What should the government do to be more effective in combating illegal drugs?
18. Describe how you feel about graffiti on buses and public buildings and, if you disapprove, what you think should be done.
19. Describe the characteristics or qualities of a broadcast announcer whose work you admire.
20. What are your strengths and weaknesses?



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Improving Ad-lib Announcing Skills**

1. Know what you're talking about—research specific topics, read widely to keep up on broader topics.
2. Be interested in what you're saying—keep the material fresh every time you report.
3. Be eager to communicate with your listener—your announcing must reach real people on the other end.
4. Develop an attractive personality—be yourself and be genuinely interested in others.

## **Develop an Attractive Personality**

Most people whom others consider attractive have learned to be truly themselves, are eager to show their interest in others, and have wide intellectual curiosity. Wit, wisdom, and charm are also characteristics of those with appeal; these qualities are greatly appreciated but hard to come by.

## **Evaluating Performances**

Critical self-evaluation is the mark of the true professional in any of the performing arts. Here *critical* doesn't mean *disparaging*—it means careful, objective, and exact evaluation. Self-evaluation also requires that you develop a mature attitude toward your own performance. A superior performance doesn't make you a superior person any more than a wretched performance makes you a wretched person. Learn to distinguish between yourself as a *person* and your *performance* on any given assignment. Growth and

improvement depend on your ability to learn from your mistakes, rather than be disheartened by them.

Of the two following checklists, use the first to measure vocal performance for both radio and television and the second to evaluate the physical aspects of television performance.



## CHECKLIST

### Evaluating Radio and Television Performances

1. **Pitch**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too low \_\_\_\_\_ Too high \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Pitch variety**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too little \_\_\_\_\_ Too much \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Volume**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too weak \_\_\_\_\_ Too loud \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Tempo**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too slow \_\_\_\_\_ Too fast \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Tempo variety**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too little \_\_\_\_\_  
Inappropriate variations \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Vitality**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Too little \_\_\_\_\_ Too much \_\_\_\_\_
7. **Articulation**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Underarticulated \_\_\_\_\_  
Overarticulated \_\_\_\_\_
8. **Voice quality**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Nasal \_\_\_\_\_ Husky \_\_\_\_\_  
Thin \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_
9. **Sibilance**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Excessive \_\_\_\_\_
10. **Plosives**  
Good \_\_\_\_\_ Popping \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Use of microphone**

Good \_\_\_\_\_

Note any problems \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**12. Note any mispronounced words.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**13. Give performance an overall evaluation.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**14. Note specific areas to work on.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



### CHECKLIST

## Evaluating Television Performances

1. **Eye contact**  
 Good \_\_\_\_\_ Needs work \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Use of peripheral vision**  
 Good \_\_\_\_\_ Needs work \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Posture**  
 Good \_\_\_\_\_ Needs work \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Standing on camera**  
 Steady \_\_\_\_\_ Rocking \_\_\_\_\_
5. **Moving on camera**  
 Telegraphed movement? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Moved smoothly? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sat correctly? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Were transitions smooth when switching  
 cameras? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Were props held correctly for cameras? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was pointing clear and even? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was eye contact with camera maintained  
 while using cue cards? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Were cues correctly responded to? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Was dress appropriate? \_\_\_\_\_
6. **Facial animation**  
 Appropriate? \_\_\_\_\_ Too much? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Too little? \_\_\_\_\_
7. **Note specific areas to work on.**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
8. **Note areas that showed improvement.**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# 8



## Commercials and Public-Service Announcements

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- In-House Production of Radio Spots
- The Announcer's Role
- Analyzing and Marking Commercial Copy
  - Analyzing Structure
  - Analyzing Mood
  - Marking Commercial Copy
- Recording a Commercial in a Studio
  - Working with Commercials During an On-Air Shift
- SPOTLIGHT: Tips from a Voice-Over Pro
  - Character Voices
- Radio Public-Service Announcements
- Television Commercials

Advertising is the lifeblood of American commercial broadcasting. Radio and television would be far different if there were no commercials. Advertising supports nearly ten thousand American radio and more than fifteen hundred television stations; it also is the major financial support for most cable channels other than so-called “premium channels,” such as Home Box Office, Showtime, and the Disney Channel.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Approximately eighteen hundred noncommercial radio stations operate in the United States.

Commercial stations offer the public hundreds of hours of information and entertainment daily. Although commercials often are maligned, they sometimes are amusing, frequently provide useful information, help fuel our economy, and offer work for writers, producers, directors, audio engineers, sales personnel—and announcers. At times, commercials surprise us with their creative use of new technologies. Some commercials are so creative and engaging that reels of both radio and television commercials are bought and enjoyed by thousands. The annual CLIO Awards broadcasts, on which awards are given to television commercials judged to be outstanding, are eagerly anticipated by sizable television audiences.

Public-service announcements (PSAs) resemble commercials in some respects. Both are informational in nature, and both are considered nonentertainment. Radio commercials generally are longer than PSAs; commercials may be thirty to sixty seconds in length, whereas most PSAs are brief mentions of a nonprofit cause on the “community billboard” segment of a day’s programming. Radio commercials and PSAs differ considerably from those on television, so the challenges presented by the two media will be discussed separately. Note, however, that the suggestions for analyzing and marking copy apply to both.

Announcers at most commercial radio stations—whatever their announcing specialization—often combine on-air announcing duties with production of radio commercials (also referred to as **spots**).<sup>2</sup> The first section of this chapter explores the announcer’s work with respect to radio commercials, the second discusses public-service announcements (PSAs), and the last provides information on delivering television commercials.

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## In-House Production of Radio Spots

In major markets, most of the commercials radio stations run are supplied by advertising agencies. By contrast, in smaller markets, advertising agencies may supply only 10 percent of the commercials broadcast; the other 90 percent are written and produced by

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<sup>2</sup>Major-market television announcers may also make commercials, especially as voice-over work.

**Figure 8.1**

Radio news anchor Bob Price marks his script during his on-air shift. He uses the moments when recorded packages are being broadcast to check his script for pronunciation challenges and to underline words he wants to emphasize. (Courtesy of Bob Price and KCBS, San Francisco)



station staff for local merchants. Here are common practices in smaller markets:

- A station sales representative (or an announcer in some cases) sells time to a client and obtains essential information about the nature of the business and specific objectives of the spot. The station representative enters the details on a standard information form and later transfers these data to a **fact sheet** to be turned over to a sales manager. Few small radio stations employ full-time continuity writers, so they usually assign script development to management personnel, time sellers, announcers, or production specialists. When the spot has been written, it's turned over to a producer, often an announcer, who works from the script to produce a commercial. The producer adds such embellishments as a music bed (recorded instrumental music), sound effects, voices, and other available elements that seem appropri-

ate. On-air announcers almost always provide the voiced portion of such spots. At larger stations, full-time account executives sell time and write and produce commercials, often using station announcers as talent.

- A local merchant comes to the station to deliver a commercial and is recorded for later editing, which may include adding special audio effects, music, and sound effects. The final version is transferred to a storage disk or a tape cart.
- A local merchant is taped on location at that person's place of business, often an auto dealership or furniture store. Post-production includes the same possibilities as those listed for in-studio recordings.

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## The Announcer's Role

Most radio announcers deliver commercials as part of a job that includes other duties, such as music announcing (DJ work), traffic reporting, sportscasting, or performance as talk-show hosts. Some staff announcers, particularly DJs on highly rated stations, receive extra payment beyond their salaries—performance fees—if they can perform well as commercial announcers. Many staff announcers earn additional money by doing freelance work at professional recording studios. These announcers are represented by talent agencies and are hired through them by advertising agencies.

More than 90 percent of commercials broadcast by radio stations are on hard disk systems, tape carts, digital cartridge machines, or DAT cassettes. As an announcer, you may have to read some commercials live, however, and your work will leave you little time to study the copy. As a professional, you'll be expected to sight-read without stumbling or misreading. Sight-reading in an authoritative and convincing manner is difficult, so you should take advantage of any and all spare moments to look over the copy you're given to read—even if this means arriving for work earlier than scheduled. Remember, when you review the copy prior to reading it on the air, read it aloud!

Many commercials written and produced for local clients are straightforward catalogs of items, prices, phone numbers, and other basic information, which give you little opportunity to “show-boat.” Your challenge is to read unfamiliar copy in such a way as to

capture and hold the attention of listeners while delivering a message that “sells” a product or service. In many respects, reading straight informational copy effectively is the greatest announcing challenge of all.

A key to success in delivering commercials is taking time to **woodshed** your copy—woodshedding is a long-standing radio term that means *reading, rehearsing aloud, and marking copy*. You’ll record most of your commercials before they’re broadcast, and this will grant you several moments to analyze and mark your copy before recording it. However, the sheer volume of commercials for a wide range of products and services will present you daily with multiple challenges to sound fresh, interested, and convincing as you interpret your scripts. Working for variety in delivery to give each commercial a unique sound without abandoning your distinctive style and individuality is a formidable challenge, to be sure. Your best option under such circumstances is to adopt a mental attitude that allows you to concentrate completely on the spot before you at any specific moment. Imagine that the spot you’re working on is the only spot that exists. Don’t think about commercials you’ve already done or those ahead of you, or you’ll be overwhelmed. Take it one step at a time.

If you’re fortunate enough to work for a classical music station, a low-key FM station, or any station that limits commercials in number, your opportunities to be effective are greatly improved. Take advantage of such ideal working conditions to spend relatively more time woodshedding. The results will benefit you, your station, your client, and your listeners.

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## Analyzing and Marking Commercial Copy

Chapter 2 presented analyses of several types of broadcast copy, including commercials. Because commercials are much shorter than other types of broadcast material, they present a unique challenge. Both structure and mood must be effectively communicated in sixty seconds or less. You’ll be better able to do this if you’ve analyzed and marked your copy.

## Analyzing Structure

An important consideration is the *structure* of a commercial. Most outstanding commercials are both subtle and complex. Chapter 2 provided many points in the analysis of structure; the discussion here adds one more consideration: the **rule of three**. This long-recognized principle says that the sharpness and punch of one's comments are diluted by going beyond three words or phrases in a given sequence. Let's analyze two commercials that demonstrate the rule of three.

AGENCY: Ketchum Advertising, San Francisco

CLIENT: The Potato Board

PRODUCT: Potatoes

TITLE: "Versatile"

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Here's another message from the Potato Board. Don't we Americans love food? Fast food . . . slow food . . . all kinds? But, above all, don't we love that good food—the potato? Today, the potato stands alone as the number one vegetable of versatility. And our friends at the Potato Board remind us that Americans crave potatoes in any and every form, for every meal. Why, Americans love potatoes as appetizers, in soups and salads, as entrees and side dishes, and . . . yes . . . even as desserts. The Potato Board says any way you serve the all-American potato, you'll be getting an economical vegetable that has lots of nutrition, but not—I repeat not—lots of calories. So, whether you serve potatoes scalloped, hashed, or mashed . . .

sliced or diced . . . French fried, boiled, or baked, in all their delicious versatility, the Potato Board says potatoes are America's favorite vegetable. Well, aren't they in your house?

Note that in this commercial the first grouping of three comes early: "Fast food . . . slow food . . . all kinds?" Also note that the first three sentences form a complete expository unit and should be read so as to give a sense of a beginning, a middle, and an ending—though not so obvious an ending as to make what follows seem tacked on.

The next set of three is less obvious. Here are the three parts of this segment of the Potato Board commercial:

1. "Why, Americans love potatoes as appetizers"
2. "in soups and salads"
3. "as entrees and side dishes"

What follows seems to be a fourth element—"and . . . yes . . . even as desserts,"—but the ellipses indicate that this is to be set apart from the preceding sequence of three by a pause. These words become a group of three in themselves if you pause slightly between each word—"even . . . as . . . desserts." In analyzing and marking this copy, avoid the mistake of seeing "appetizers," "soups," "salads," "entrees," "side dishes," and "desserts" as six points that receive equal stress.

The final set of three consists of the phrases "scalloped, hashed, or mashed," "sliced or diced," and "French fried, boiled, or baked." Two of the three phrases in this sequence consist of three units each.

Now consider another outstanding commercial, one that requires a British accent. This Schweppes commercial has a Monty Python quality, and you should enjoy it as an exercise in mock disdain. Be sure to avoid a Cockney dialect—it calls for your best Oxonian accent.

AGENCY: Ammirati & Puris, Inc.

CLIENT: Schweppes

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: (BRITISH) I have before me a bottle of Schweppes Bitter Lemon. The soft drink loved by half of England. We British love the way it looks: a fine, sophisticated mist, with morsels of crushed whole lemon. We love the way it sounds: (BOTTLE OPENS) a particularly masterful rendering of Schweppes' cheeky little bubbles. And we especially love the way it tastes: (POURS) refreshingly brisk, cultivatedly crisp, and thoroughly Schweppervescent. It's no wonder that Bitter Lemon is adored by half of England. Now, what about the other half, you might ask? The half that doesn't adore Bitter Lemon? Well, let me assure you, they're all whining children, grubby little urchins whose opinion is completely and totally insignificant. They are youthful upstarts and, as such, absolutely incapable of appreciating anything as forthrightly crisp as Bitter Lemon. The frightfully grown-up soft drink from Schweppes. The Great British Bubbly.

The first 60 percent of this commercial is to be read in a precise, dignified, and restrained manner. Then, beginning with "Now, what about the other half," you must begin to build in emotion, intensity, volume, and rate of delivery. As you reach the end of the third-to-last sentence, begin decelerating on "as forthrightly crisp as Bitter Lemon." The last two sentences should see you returning to the dignified mood with which you began.

Note how this copy applies the rule of three. The first group is

1. "We British love the way it looks"
2. "We love the way it sounds"
3. "We especially love the way it tastes"

**Figure 8.2**

Every aspect must be perfect: Producer Cindy Mills times a “take” during the recording of a radio commercial. They will keep working through a dozen takes before they get sound and timing that are broadcast quality. (Courtesy of Allen and Dorward Advertising, San Francisco)



Near the middle is this sequence of three:

1. “refreshingly brisk”
2. “cultivatedly crisp”
3. “thoroughly Schweppervescent”

Then, finally, the children are

1. “whining children”
2. “grubby little urchins”
3. “youthful upstarts”

In analyzing copy, always look for *structure* as revealed by the *parts*.

## Analyzing Mood

Read the following two commercials and the brief analyses that follow them and then practice them aloud. Work at projecting clearly differentiated moods.

AGENCY: Yamashiro Associates

CLIENT: Webster’s Department Stores

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Webster's has you in mind!

MUSIC: UP-TEMPO INSTRUMENTAL, UP AND UNDER

ANNCR: Webster's announces the sale of the year! Up to one-half off on thousands of items! Arrow and Van Heusen men's shirts. 50 percent off. All shoes in stock, one-third off. One dollar above our cost for men's three-piece, all-wool suits. Save dollars on neckties, belts, socks, and sport shirts. In the women's department, one-third to one-half off on designer pants, blouses, and blazers. Entire dress inventory reduced by 50 percent. Even homewares are going at all-time low prices. Rag rugs from India—were \$69, now only \$39. Bath and beach towels, all prices cut in half. Fifty-piece stainless tableware, down by one-third. All radios, portable TVs, and home recorders, just dollars above our cost. Now's the time to take advantage of low, low prices, while enjoying the traditional high value of Webster's! Three stores to serve you. Sorry, at these prices, no free delivery and no layaways. Come see us today. Webster's has you in mind! Webster's, where you'll save dollars, with no sacrifice of quality!

AGENCY: Ketchum Advertising

CLIENT: Lindsay Olives

LENGTH: 60 seconds

MUSIC: FRIENDLY MUSIC IN BACKGROUND

ANNCR: (FRIENDLY OLIVE) Hi! Hi! How are ya? Good. I'm Ted. I'm a friendly olive. In fact, most of my true-blue friends are olives, too. Yeah, yeah, sure they are. Now, my friends are all mature—strictly high-quality guys. That's why they're Lindsay Olives. We were all very close friends on our branch. We did everything together: soaked up the sun, talked to the girl olives, read the classics. Yeah. Honest. We read the classics. I told you we were high-quality olives. Well, one day the Lindsay picker came for the final inspection. He took all my friends, but rejected me. He said I had a bruise. Yeah, a bruise. I don't know how I got it—but I got it. We all argued, but the inspector wouldn't take a flawed olive for Lindsay. Well, I was quite upset. Upset! 'Cause I knew some day I'd end up like this in some obscure can of olives, and all my pals would be Lindsays.

ANNCR: (FEMALE VOICE) An olive is just an olive, unless it's a Lindsay.

ANNCR: (FRIENDLY OLIVE) Hey, you look friendly. Let's have lunch sometime.

Note the striking difference of mood in these two examples. The first, for Webster's, is designed to hold attention through vitality and the illusion of importance. Every effort is made to encourage direct and rapid action from the listener. The second commercial, for Lindsay Olives, is light, humorous, and wistful. Each piece contains 182 words and must be read rather rapidly. Be careful to avoid turning the Lindsay Olive spot into a hard-sell commercial.

## Marking Commercial Copy

After analysis of structure and mood comes **copy marking**. As a DJ or news anchor recording commercials prior to your air shift, you'll have little time for marking copy, but you should do so whenever possible. As a **freelance announcer** working in a recording studio, you'll be expected to mark your copy both before and during each recording session.

The following copy for Middlesex Bank was marked by a freelance voice-over announcer after he arrived at the recording studio. Read it aloud according to the marks made for pauses and stresses. One virgule (/) means a brief pause; two virgules (//) mean a longer pause. One line under a word means stress; two lines indicate fairly heavy stress. Note, though, that this is a **soft-sell commercial**; even your heaviest stress should be consistent with the mood and style of the piece. (SFX is the abbreviation for sound effects; UP means the volume is raised; VO is the abbreviation for voice-over.)

AGENCY: Ingalls Associates, Inc.

CLIENT: Middlesex Bank

SUBJECT: Home Improvement Loans

LENGTH: 60 seconds

SFX: CHILLING WIND SOUNDS UP AND UNDER

VO: This harsh and untimely interruption of summer/ is brought to you by/ Middlesex Bank. As a reminder that this summer is no time to forget about/ next winter.

SFX: STORM SOUNDS UP AND UNDER

VO: The heating. Those storm windows. That leaking ventilation system. If your house could use a little winterizing, summer is the time to do it. Because right now, the prices are right. And /right now, Middlesex Bank is standing by, ready with a home improvement loan. //We interrupt this interruption of winter/ with summer.

SFX: SEGUE FROM STORM TO SPLASHES OF SWIMMING POOL

VO: As a reminder, that with gas prices the way they are, you might even consider turning your house into a 'summer place . . . //by putting in a swimming pool. No matter what part of your home you'd like to improve, we've got a Home Improvement Loan to help you do it. We're Middlesex. The Little/ Big Bank.

Now read the following commercial and note how it was marked during a recording session. (Note also how this commercial follows the rule of three.)

AGENCY: Allen and Dorward

CLIENT: New Century Beverage Company

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Wherever you go in San Francisco (SFX: FOG HORNS), the executive bistros (MUSIC: CONTEMPORARY)/ in the bustling financial district, the elegant homes of Pacific Heights and Sea Cliff, or the lavish rooms of the major hotels, you'll hear the inviting sound of Schweppervescence.// (SFX: HISS AND POUR) That curiously refreshing sound when the mixer meets the ice, is an irresistible call to pleasure./ And whether you're pouring Schweppes Tonic Water, Club Soda, or Ginger Ale, the sound is the same.// (SFX: HISS AND POUR) But each has a taste all its own. You'll find the unchanging quality of Schweppervescence immediately apparent in the company of kindred spirits or/ straightaway. That curiously refreshing sensation

found only in Schweppes that makes your drink so extraordinary. San Franciscans are not alone in their refreshing appreciation of Schweppes, for Schweppes Mixers are accepted around the world by those with a taste for quality. The great taste of Schweppes Mixers cannot be silenced. (SFX: HISS AND POUR) Tonic Water, Club Soda, Ginger Ale. Listen to the sound of Schweppes. Call for Schweppes. Curiously refreshing since 1783. (SFX: FADE OUT HISS)

## Recording a Commercial in a Studio

As a voice-over commercial announcer, you'll be hired through your agent by an advertising agency. In most cases the agency will rent a commercial recording studio, along with the services of an audio engineer. They usually will fax your script to you, so you'll have time to study it. At the studio, a producer, or sometimes the writer, will discuss the spot in general terms—the general mood, the characterization expected of you, and so forth. You'll have a few minutes to further study, analyze, and mark your copy. Be sure to bring pencils and erasers.

Despite the analyzing and marking you do just before the recording session, be prepared to make changes during the ten, twenty, or more takes you may make before the producer is satisfied. A typical recording setup for a radio commercial requires from three to five persons: one or two announcers, an agency producer, an audio engineer, and, at times, the writer of the commercial. Music is recorded in advance and added by the engineer.

As each take is recorded, the producer or writer gives instructions to the announcer on changes to be made to eliminate awkward phrases, to delete or alter sentences with too many sibilant sounds (“That’s because Bonnie’s citrus scouts search the finest orange groves”), to change the emphasis of words or phrases, and, most often, to delete words or short phrases to conform to time limits. The producer or writer may also offer suggestions for interpreting the

**Figure 8.3**

Advertising agencies make frequent use of freelance performers. Here Peter Scott reads a script for a radio commercial. (Courtesy of Peter Scott)



copy. The producer will inform an announcer who's going too fast or too slow, mispronouncing a word, or slurring or having some other articulation problem. The writer (if the writer isn't also the producer) will decide what words to change or cut. As the announcer, you're expected to follow all instructions without comment or argument.

Not all agency representatives are competent in coaching performers. Some will give you vague instructions such as "give me more," "bright and perky," or "try it another way." As a freelance voice-over performer, you'll work with many different producers, and only some will be able to give you clear and helpful directions. At times you may want to offer suggestions. To do so is appropriate if you're confident that the producer feels secure and is open to your ideas. Remember, though, that even constructive suggestions from you are considered unwelcome by some agency writers and producers. Feel your way carefully as you attempt to sense when it's safe to offer suggestions for changes in commercial copy.

Not all aspects of commercial recording are standardized, but you'll soon learn what's expected of you. In some instances, for example, if you stumble or slur a word, you're expected to pause, say "pickup," pause again, and begin reading from the beginning of the

sentence in which you stumbled.<sup>3</sup> This practice makes it easy for the audio engineer to edit the recording. In other operations, particularly when you're being recorded on tape, the tape will be stopped and recued, and you'll begin again at the very opening of the spot.

## Working with Commercials During an On-Air Shift

As an announcer on a music, news, or talk-radio station, most of your commercial announcing will occur *before* your regular on-air shift as you work in a small production studio to engineer, deliver the lines of the commercials, mix your voice track over a music bed, and record the mixed spot on a hard disk or on audiotape. Later, during your shift, you'll play these and other commercials in the order given by your station's **traffic** or **continuity** department, which is responsible for scheduling commercials. A large station will maintain a log, most likely stored on a hard disk, that shows on a display screen the commercials, jingles, station IDs, and promos to be played during your shift, and the times at which each is to be broadcast. The commercials themselves are stored on another hard disk and can be summoned up by using the computerized workstation next to your audio console.

In a technologically less up-to-date station you might have a printed log and a **copy book**, sometimes called a **continuity book**. The traffic department will prepare seven such books weekly, one for each day of the week. Each book will contain in order of presentation commercial copy for spots that are taped or are on mass-storage hard disks. You merely keep track of the sequential placement of the commercials by entering a mark on the program log as you punch up each commercial and send each out over the air at times stipulated in the log. A turn of the page brings you to the next commercial.

If you work at a station that still works with both carted and live commercials, the on-air procedures are more complex.<sup>4</sup> The commercial copy for your entire shift will have been logged by the

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<sup>3</sup>The term **pickup** is used in at least two other ways in voice-over work. A **pickup session** is a recording session where specific lines, recorded at an earlier session, have been judged unusable and must be recorded again. Pick up also refers to picking up one's cue—in other words, speaking more closely on the heels of a line delivered by another performer.

<sup>4</sup>See also the discussion of commercial production, selecting, and playing that opens Chapter 6, "Broadcast Equipment."

**Figure 8.4**

Newscaster Ron Reynolds edits a radio commercial he has just recorded. A computer screen shows him a “picture” of his voice track, and a track ball helps him locate and delete unwanted sounds of breathing or to replace sentences in which he “stumbled.” (Courtesy of Ron Reynolds and KCBS, San Francisco)



traffic department, and you’ll have a copy of that log. The traffic department—sometimes consisting only of a sales manager—is responsible for scheduling commercials. The log indicates the order of the commercials, whether a given commercial is recorded or is to be read live, the cart number for carted commercials, and the time each commercial is to be broadcast. If your station has a tight format, the times will be precise; if the format is casual and relaxed, the times will be approximate.

Stations where limited budgets dictate fewer staff members often maintain only one copy book. Commercials are inserted alphabetically by sponsor name. The program log contains an entry such as “live #4, Malagani Tires” or “cart #23, Red Boy Pizza.” The first of these examples indicates that you should look up the Malagani copy, commercial number 4, in the alphabetically arranged copy book and read it at the appropriate time. The second indicates that, because you’re working combo, you should locate cart number 23 and play it at the correct time.

Commercials with a script and a recorded portion are often **cart with live tag**. This phrase means that the commercial begins with the playing of the cart, which may be only a jingle or music with recorded speech, and the station announcer comes in at the end to

provide a tag that gives local or extra information, such as the current price or a local phone number. In other practices, the recorded portion of such commercials may begin with a brief jingle and then fade under while the announcer reads the entire sales pitch. **Donut commercials** are similar: a jingle opens the spot, the music fades down for a pitch by the announcer, and then the music fades up just as the announcer completes the message. The term *donut* arose because music begins and ends such a commercial, with the announcer filling in the middle. Both types of commercials usually are recorded by staff announcers and are dubbed to a hard disk or to tape carts.

Commercials that are part live and part recorded require split-second timing. Here is a script for a cart with live tag:

CLIENT: Bellach's Furniture  
 LENGTH: 60 seconds  
 TYPE: Cart with live tag  
 CART #: L-66  
 BEGIN: 8/12  
 JINGLE: (5)  
 VOICE: "Chicago's newest shopping mall"  
 CART CLOSE  
 AND TAG CUE  
 VOICE: "Open Tuesdays 'til nine."  
 SFX: (1)  
 TAG IN AT: (45)  
 LIVE TAG: Visit the home furnishings display at Bellach's. Fine leather sofas and lounge chairs are on sale at 25% off! Bedroom sets by Heritage now marked down a full 30%! Lamps, end tables, occasional chairs, and desks—all on sale at prices you have to see to believe! Bellach's, at the Stonestown Mall!

How do you work from this script? First, you must understand the symbols used. The numbers following CART # identify the particular cart to be played. BEGIN: 8/12 gives the starting date for air play. JINGLE: (5) identifies the specific musical identification cart to be played. CART CLOSE means that the recorded portion of the spot concludes at this point. TAG CUE and VOICE indicate that the last line of the recorded portion is “Open Tuesdays ’til nine.” SFX: (1) identifies the sound effects cut to be played. TAG IN AT: (45) tells you to begin the closing live tag forty-five seconds into the commercial, which gives you fifteen seconds to read the tag. In practicing this commercial, use a stopwatch and work until you’re able to read the tag in exactly fifteen seconds.

**Donut** commercials require the most accurate timing of all because they provide just enough seconds to read the copy before the musical background fades back up. A typical donut begins with music—often with lyrics. At a specific second the volume is lowered for you to read your copy. At exactly the time indicated on the script, the volume of the music is raised to full, and the song or jingle is repeated until the end of the commercial. If you read too rapidly, you’ll finish while the background music is playing at reduced volume. If you read too slowly or stumble and have to repeat a portion of your script, the music will return to full volume while you’re still reading. It’s common practice to reduce chances of flawed delivery by recording entire donut commercials in a production studio during preshift hours.

Most radio production and announce booths are equipped with a mounted stopwatch or an electronic digital clock that can be programmed to show either elapsed time or remaining time. Time is important, whether reading live or recorded commercials. Use a stopwatch or clock each time you practice. Time is what radio stations sell, and clients expect precisely what they pay for.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Tips from a Voice-over Pro

Samantha Paris is one of the busiest professionals in the world of voice-over. From her home in Northern California, minutes away from San Francisco, she earns a living doing what she loves: performing for radio and television commercials, dubbing voices for cartoons, narrating corporate/industrial and documentary films, providing characters for CD-ROM and interactive games, teaching voice-over performance to students, and, on occasion, looping a voice for a theatrical feature film.

When she's not performing, she spends her time doing the other things she loves within this industry: teaching, directing, casting, and running her two businesses: Voicetrax San Francisco, Inc., and Samantha Paris Casting. Both are housed in the same location in Sausalito and have grown rapidly since they opened in 1991. Voicetrax is the most comprehensive voice-over training facility in the country and offers ongoing workshops and seminars throughout the year, seven days a week, with cutting-edge instruction from top San Francisco and Los Angeles producers, agents, and directors. Samantha Paris Casting was born when producers began calling to ask her help in finding the right voices for their projects, including commercials for radio and television, CD-ROM projects, audio tours, and interactive kiosks.

Now entering her twenty-second year in the industry, Samantha attributes her success to years of hard work. She began taking voice-over lessons four evenings a week at age fifteen. While the rest of her high school peers were socializing after school, Paris was immersed in her lessons and spent hours each week practicing. This early training has carried her through many high-pressure situations: how to size up a piece of copy in seconds; how to make instant decisions about character and moods; and how to adapt her voice quality and personality for any situation. At age seventeen—two years after she began her training—she started auditioning for both voice-over work and on-camera performance, auditioning for television commercials, television series, and feature films.

Although she was quite successful, she confronted one major obstacle—the pain of rejections. “For every job I landed, there were twenty that I didn’t get. I was constantly focusing on those and feeling like I wasn’t enough.” At age twenty-three she decided to take a break and become a voice-over agent. After six months of directing other actors and promoting their voices, she quickly realized that not only were there many enormously talented actors out there but that she was one of them! Not landing a role had nothing to do with a *lack* of talent, it was just a matter of who the producer or client would *select*. Paris returned to her acting career and focused solely on voice-over. She became one of



Voice-over actress and teacher Samantha Paris demonstrates how to convey specific mood when interpreting commercial copy. Note that she uses nonverbal communication, even though her audience cannot see her. (Courtesy of Samantha Paris)

the nation's top voice-over artists. "There were lots and lots of tears back then," she says, "but you can't give up. If you want it badly enough, you've just got to believe that you're good, and you can't give up. . . . Sometimes it's painful, but you've just got to stay with it and keep the faith. When you first begin studying, you can't be looking down the road and wonder, 'Well, how long is it going to take?' You have to love what you're doing and just enjoy the journey."

This is the philosophy Samantha instills in the students and professionals who come to Voicetrax. Here are some suggestions she offers to help performers achieve their highest potential:

- **Read, read, read aloud.** Use anything from actual scripts to newspaper articles, or if you're interested in character work for cartoons and CD-ROM, start by putting voices to the comics in newspapers. Don't record and play back your performances on your own. Concentrate on your work and rely on quali-

fied teachers and coaches to judge your taped performances. We all sound pretty bad to our own ears.

- Always have a clear picture of who you are, to whom you're talking, and where you are. Make sure that each listener feels that you're talking only to her or him.
- Choose an *attitude* before you choose a *character*. Characterization comes only after all other decisions as to purpose, place, mood, nature of listener, and so forth have been made. The decision about attitude must be precise: *motherly* is not the same as *caring*; *caring* is not the same as *neighborly*; *neighborly* is not the same as *friendly*.
- It isn't nearly enough to decide that in your performance you will be, for example, a middle-aged mother. You have to go deeper than that. As a mother, how do you feel about the child you are addressing? Are you talking to one child or two? How old are the children? How old are you? What is the setting in which you speak to the children?
- When you're given a technical direction such as, "I want you to really punch that word," make sure that your attempt to carry out the instruction fits your attitude and character. Make it believable.
- Techniques eventually come into play. For example, you can emphasize by intonation, by pauses before and after the words of importance, by a break in delivery, or by a change in rhythm or volume. However, before you even think about such techniques, make sure to establish your attitude, your objectives, and your character.

## Character Voices

Despite the exceptions noted in the Chapter 4 Spotlight discussion, Standard American has been the accepted manner of speaking by both men and women announcers since the beginning of radio broadcasting in the United States. However, broadcasters have also used foreign accents, regional dialects, and character voices in some dramas and in a great many commercials. If you have a good ear for speech sounds and find that you're able to perform competently while using a character voice, you may want to develop dialect specializations, especially if you intend to become a freelance performer of commercials.

Many commercials, especially those produced for Saturday morning television shows, are done as cartoons with voice-overs. Voices used in cartoon spots include pretend animal voices (such as

**TABLE 8.1 Nonstandard Styles of Speech Used in Commercials**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Example</b>
Rapid delivery	Pitch “artists,” speaking at more than two hundred words a minute; can be loud (“used-car sales associates”) or soft-spoken
Unusually low- or high-pitched voices	Gravel-voiced “he-man,” often heard on commercials for “muscle” cars; “in the cellar,” as in many commercials for financial institutions; children’s voices performed by adults
Unusual voice quality	Breathy, as in spots for perfumes; whispered and breathy, as in some spots for luxury automobiles
Unusual personality type	The whiner, the wimp, the dumbbell, the crab, the nag, the bully
Stage English	Sinister, pretentious, authoritative, often used to convey a feeling of superior quality, as in spots for luxury cars
Regional dialects	Folksy-country, New England, New York, southern, drawled southern, Hoosier (Indianan), western, harsh midwestern, Texan
Foreign accents	German, French, Italian, Mexican, Greek, Russian, other Slavic, Chinese, Japanese, Southeast Asian, Filipino, English (both Cockney and Oxford), Scandinavian, Australian, Arabic, and “Transylvanian” (often associated with Dracula)

that of Garfield), monsters, aliens from other planets, and superheroes and heroines, to name a few.

In addition to foreign accents and regional dialects, commercial copy—especially that written for radio—often asks for a specific type of speech personality, such as the nag, the wimp, or the bully.

Some commercials call for a speaker who can speak at a rapid rate or who has an unusual voice. Nonstandard styles of speech may be grouped by categories: (1) unusually rapid delivery, (2) unusually low or high pitch, (3) unusual voice quality, (4) unusual personality type, (5) stage English, (6) regional dialects, and (7) foreign accents. As Table 8.1 shows, some of these are performed only by men, some only by women, and some by either. These categories are, of course, stereotypes, but that's precisely why they're used—they quickly identify types of persons to an audience that's been conditioned to associate character traits with certain voice qualities.

## Radio Public-Service Announcements

Nearly all commercially licensed broadcast stations provide free time for the reading or playing of recorded **public-service announcements (PSAs)**. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defines a PSA as follows:

A public-service announcement is an announcement for which no charge is made and which promotes programs, activities, or services of federal, state or local governments (e.g., recruiting, sales of bonds, etc.) or the programs, activities or services of nonprofit organizations (e.g., UGF, Red Cross blood donations, etc.), and other announcements regarded as serving community interests, excluding time signals, routine weather announcements and promotional announcements.

Most broadcast stations limit PSAs to organizations that are tax exempt, as defined by the Internal Revenue Service. Despite deregulation, nearly all radio stations continue to carry PSAs. Along with the tradition of community service on the part of broadcasters, station managers know that the goodwill of community members is important to the success of the station.

Some announcements of community interest are paid for by local merchants who realize that supporting important local causes also serves their interests. These are not truly PSAs, because PSAs are broadcast without charge; but, except for the mention of the sponsor, they read like PSAs. Such a sponsored announcement is treated like a commercial and is broadcast at the time of day the sponsor pays for. Here's an announcement paid for by a brake and tire service:

**Figure 8.5**

Commercial copywriter Jim Deasy has checked his script for length, counting words and gauging the pauses needed for effective interpretation. To tailor his story to the amount of time allotted, he must cut three seconds' worth of copy. (Courtesy of Jim Deasy and TLA Productions, San Francisco, California)



### **PRACTICE**

A section of Appendix A reproduces commercials that call for accents and character voices. Use it to test your ability to read such copy effectively, and then focus further on perfecting those “voices” that you do well.

ANNCR: Brandon’s Brake and Tire reminds you that, with the opening of the school year, it’s extra important to keep alert on the road. A child often forgets all the safety rules that are taught by parents and teachers. Drive carefully and cautiously, and be prepared to stop in a hurry if you see a ball bounce into the street—a child may be right behind it. As adults, we need to do some thinking for children. This message is

brought to you by Brandon's Brake and Tire, Clement and 14th Streets, in Madison.

Although PSAs and commercials have much in common, PSAs tend to be shorter—some constituting only a brief mention on a community billboard feature—PSAs seldom are augmented by elaborate production, such as music and sound effects; and PSAs are more likely to be broadcast during off hours, those times of the day that are least attractive to advertisers.

Other important differences lie in the objectives and in the motivational devices used. Many commercials present rational arguments to sell a product or a service, such as a spot for a supermarket that lists the weekend specials. Other commercials are designed to arouse the emotions of fear, greed, or insecurity. Public-service announcements should avoid such tactics. Fear, greed, and insecurity are basic human emotions, and it's rather easy to exploit them. A campaign for famine relief or one to save the whales may indeed appeal to basic human emotions, but the producers of PSAs for such causes traditionally avoid emotional overkill. Because of these considerations, you should give PSAs an unadorned, straightforward delivery in nearly all instances.

At a prosperous large-market station, the PSAs you're to read will be neatly typed, duplicated, and placed in your copy book. You may read some PSAs during a broadcast, but more often, you'll record them, along with commercials, as part of your production duties. In smaller markets, PSAs will come to you in a variety of ways. A staff member assigned to public affairs may type PSAs on 3-by-5-inch index cards. At regular intervals you'll read two or three of the brief messages as a **Community Calendar**. The following is typical:

MISSION HOSPITAL

out: Apr. 5

The Sunrise Unit of Mission Hospital will present the film "Chalk Talk" and a discussion on alcoholism on April 5th, 6:30 P.M., at the hospital. Info: 924-9333

At times, you may have to exercise your ad-libbing skill as you read an announcement based on a fact sheet such as this:

Dixie School  
1818 Morgan Drive  
Outland, MI

Dear Friends:

I'd appreciate having this announcement read on your  
"Community Billboard":

Parental Stress Workshop  
Wednesday, February 24  
Dixie School, Room 23

\*Child Care.

\*Refreshments Thank you!

Janice Decker

Here are some suggestions for practicing the delivery of radio commercials and PSAs:

- Practice reading aloud and recording ten-, twenty-, thirty-, and sixty-second commercials as well as ten-, twenty-, and thirty-second PSAs. Work with a stopwatch and listen carefully to playbacks. Ask yourself: Does this voice please me? Does the delivery hold my attention? Does the meaning come through? Is the rate of delivery too fast or too slow? Is there variety in pitch, rate, and emphasis? And, most important, am I sold on the product or the cause?
- As you practice ad-libbing PSAs from brief fact sheets, try to get the essential information across in ten seconds.
- Produce an audiotape commercial that requires sound effects, music, and dramatization.
- Ask a radio station or advertising agency for copies of taped donut commercials, complete with copies of their scripts, and practice with them until your timing becomes razor sharp.

## Television Commercials

Most television commercials differ from radio commercials in several ways. They're usually briefer than most radio commercials—running from fifteen to thirty seconds—they use music and sound effects more often, and they rarely are performed live. Because television is a visual medium, most advertisers want to show their products or services. As a result, the majority of television commercials feature voice-over narration. The face of a television commercial announcer seldom appears on the screen, unless that person is a famous actor, singer, or dancer. Even in commercials that show an announcer, the appearance is usually confined to a few moments of introduction at the beginning.

These comments don't apply to two types of television commercials: those on shopping channels, such as QVC, and program-length commercials known as infomercials. Hosts on **shopping channels** make lengthy pitches for products shown to viewers, and they mix their sales presentations with interviews and information on the quantity of pictured items that remain. They also engage in chatty conversations with viewers who call in to say hello or to praise some product they've purchased. Shopping hosts also interview jewelry or clothing designers who appear as guests.

**Infomercials** typically are half-hour sales pitches with two or more announcers who demonstrate such products as exercise machines, hair restorers, cooking equipment, fishing equipment, and beauty aids. Studio audiences sometimes are present during the taping of these programs. Both shopping channel and infomercial announcers speak ad-lib and are expected to know a great deal about the products they promote.

Aside from these lengthy presentations, most television commercials are brief. As a television commercial announcer for pitches of thirty seconds or less, you'll have time to prepare and even to discuss interpretation with a copywriter or agency producer. Recording and re-recording—seemingly without end—will give you a margin of safety.

Television commercials reach the air by processes similar to those for radio commercials. Advertising agencies provide some, almost always on tape. Some are produced by nearby production companies and sent to stations by courier. Others are produced by

**Figure 8.6**

Announcers on shopping channels must ad-lib for extended periods of time about products being offered. Note the keyed-in graphic information that occupies a large portion of the viewer's screen. (Courtesy of the Home Shopping Network)



a station's retail services unit and are played on that station and dubbed and sent to other stations. If you're an announcer specializing in television commercials, you'll most likely receive your assignments through a talent agency. You'll perform in one of these settings: a sound recording studio (for voice-over commercials), a television station studio, a video or film studio, or in the field with an **electronic field production (EFP)** crew.

Many television commercials that appear to be locally produced actually originate in major production centers and are offered to local merchants as cooperative commercials. A **cooperative** commercial is one for which a national advertiser pays the cost of production and then shares the cost of broadcast with a local merchant. The bulk of such a commercial arrives on tape at the local station or local production house, where a closing tag on behalf of the local merchant is added. The following is a script for a cooperative commercial produced by Serta:

AGENCY: Allen and Dorward  
 CLIENT: Breuner's  
 PRODUCT: Serta Mattresses  
 LENGTH: 60 seconds

## Video

MUSIC UNDER: WOMAN TOSSING AND  
 TURNING IN A TRAIN SLEEPING  
 COMPARTMENT  
 ANNOUNCER STANDING NEXT TO SERTA  
 MATTRESS  
 SUPER: SERTA PERFECT SLEEPER  
 SHOTS OF COILS AND TOP SURFACE  
 ART CARD: SERTA LOGO "I WANT MY  
 SERTA"  
 PERFECT SLEEPER HOTEL 50% OFF  
 (DISSOLVE) NO PAYMENTS UNTIL  
 NOVEMBER  
 (DISSOLVE) BREUNER'S FINE HOME  
 FURNISHINGS SINCE 1856

## Audio

SHE: I want my Serta  
 ANNCR (VO): Here's why people want  
 their Serta—why they're spoiled  
 for any other mattress—  
 Only Serta goes beyond just being  
 firm, beyond what others do.  
 We top our support with the extra  
 comfortable Serta surface—a  
 unique difference you can feel in  
 a Serta Perfect Sleeper  
 BREUNER'S ANNCR (VO): Save 50% off  
 original prices on the clearance  
 of all Serta Perfect  
 Sleeper Hotel sleep sets, with no  
 payments 'til November!

If you work as a radio or television announcer, you may pick up extra money by freelancing as a television commercial announcer. Network news anchors and reporters are barred by contract from advertising products, but most other television performers, including announcers on local stations, are free to moonlight (to work at a

second job during spare time, often at night). Television commercial announcing at the national level pays well, but it's a difficult field to enter. A few performers dominate the field, and most performers for national spots live in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, or the Hollywood area.

Locally produced television commercials offer employment to many performers, mostly in voice-over roles. Portable electronic field production equipment, along with character generators, graphics generators, digital video effects (DVE) equipment, and chroma-keying makes it possible for even small local stations to create elaborate and effective commercials. Videotapes can be made on location—at a carpet store, an auto parts dealer, a tire and brake service, or a grocery store. During **postproduction**, station personnel use a **character generator** to add written information, draw images onto the screen with a **graphics generator**, use **DVE equipment** to create and manipulate multi-images—such as changing a picture into a mosaic or swinging a picture through space—or use **chroma-keying** to key two or more pictures onto the same screen. A typical locally produced television commercial will show an announcer at or near the beginning of the spot and then show images of products or services while the announcer continues with voice-over narration.

Voice-over narration for television commercials differs from radio delivery only in that the words must be timed to match the pictures being seen by the viewers. This coordination is achieved through one of three production routines:

1. The announcer reads the script, and in postproduction the pictures are timed to match the words.
2. The visual portion of the commercial is shown on a monitor, and the announcer matches the words to the pictures.
3. The audiotaped performance is edited to match the pictures during postproduction.

In most instances the announcer is long gone before the commercial is completed and perhaps may never see the finished product.

Some television commercials are produced in the field, and the announcer plays a visible role as in showing furniture or automobiles in a lot or showroom. To perform in this type of commercial, you ad-lib from cue cards and make a direct address to the camera. Although on-camera commercial delivery is rare, it's worth practicing. Elsewhere in this book—particularly in the chapters on performance, in-

terviewing, and television news—you'll find many suggestions for improving your on-camera performance. Nearly all these suggestions apply to on-camera commercial announcing. In addition, the following checklist presented in this section has some tips that apply to performing commercials in the classroom or studio.

Some commercials call for a slow, relaxed delivery, others for a hard-sell approach; often sponsors will ask for a particular style of delivery. But appropriately changing pace, volume, and level of energy doesn't mean you must transform yourself totally each time



### ***CHECKLIST***

#### **Making Effective Television Commercials**

1. When practicing on-camera delivery in a performance class, dress as you would if you'd been hired to deliver the commercial.
2. Try to understand and convey the impression the sponsor wants to create.
3. When handling props or pointing to signs or products, make your movements slow, deliberate, and economical.
4. If television equipment is available for practice sessions, try to simulate actual broadcast conditions.
5. Make sure you adhere scrupulously to the time limits of the commercial.
6. When appropriate, look directly into the camera lens, but don't stare.
7. In on-camera performance, including in-class exercises, practice switching smoothly from one camera to another on cue.
8. Don't do a parody or a travesty of a commercial unless the assignment calls for it. There's no way to judge your ability to sell a product or a service if you turn your performance into a lampoon.
9. Communicate!

the style or mood of a commercial changes. Try to reflect your own personality in your delivery of radio and television commercials. If you don't maintain and project your own personality, you run the risk of sounding like an impersonator rather than a communicator.



### ***PRACTICE***

#### **Delivering Radio Commercials and PSAs**

Appendix A offers several commercial and PSA scripts. These materials provide practice with most types of commercials and PSAs heard on radio today. Find additional practice material and write some of your own.



### ***PRACTICE***

#### **Producing Your Own Commercial**

Ask a local merchant—the owner of an independently owned small grocery store, restaurant, flower shop, or gift shop, for example—to help you fulfill a class assignment. Make sure that the merchant understands that you have nothing to sell—be clear about who you are and what you're asking the merchant to do. Take with you a note pad on which to write basic information about items the merchant wants to promote. Write scripts, produce them on videotape, and return to get the merchant's feedback.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Delivering Television Commercials**

Because television commercials usually involve elaborate visual effects, students of announcing have difficulty finding opportunities for realistic practice. Appendix A includes many radio scripts and a few television scripts. Some of the practice commercials call for animation, film inserts, or properties that may not be available. There's no ideal way of working with such commercials, but they're included here because they form a large part of broadcast commercials today and it would be unrealistic to exclude them. You can adapt some of the radio scripts for television performance, but you'll generally be limited to a straight, on-camera presentation.

The following exercises should help you achieve satisfactory results with a minimum of production support:

1. Practice on-camera delivery with some of the simple presentational commercials included in Appendix A. Use demonstration commercials and those incorporating studio cards or one or two slides instead of those that involve elaborate production. Work for exact timing as well as camera presence. Practice with an electronic prompter, if available, or with cue cards.
2. Prepare slides and adapt a thirty-second or sixty-second radio commercial for voice-over presentation. Practice synchronizing your off-camera delivery with the visual images as they appear on the screen.
3. Videotape commercials currently being broadcast. Write out a script of the spoken portions of each commercial. Then, with the sound turned off, run the tape and practice voice-over delivery.
4. Produce a commercial with one person on camera demonstrating a product or a process while you're off camera delivering the voice-over narration.

# 9



## Interview and Talk Programs

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Talk and Interview Shows Today
- Principles of Effective Interviewing
  - Avoiding Abstraction
  - Avoiding Bias
- Tips for Conducting Successful Interviews
  - Preparing for the Interview
  - The Guest
  - Conducting the Interview
- SPOTLIGHT: The Art of Interviewing
- Radio Talk-Show Hosts
  - Preparing for the Shift
  - Performing as a Radio Talk-Show Announcer
  - Legal and Ethical Concerns
  - Challenges and Responsibilities
- Hosting Television Talk Programs
  - Types of Talk Shows

The word *interview* comes from the French and means, roughly, “to see one another.” Interviews fill a great many hours of every broadcast day. Some are brief, such as a ten-second news broadcast **actuality** or **sound bite**.<sup>1</sup> Others are longer and make up the substance of hour-long talk programs. Interviewing eyewitnesses

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<sup>1</sup> *Actuality* is the radio term for a brief statement by someone other than station personnel. *Sound bite* is the television term for the same feature.

at the scene of a fire, an airplane crash, or similar event for a news broadcast is only one aspect of news-gathering by reporters; on the other hand, conducting interviews and discussions with guests is the chief activity of hosts of talk and interview shows. Interviewing for news broadcasts is discussed in Chapters 10 and 11. This chapter is devoted to practices and techniques appropriate to television talk and radio call-in shows.

## Talk and Interview Shows Today

That old song, “What a Difference a Day Makes,” comes to mind when we consider the many changes in talk and interview programs in recent years. The subtitle of this chapter could well be “What a Difference a *Decade* Makes!” Even the radical changes in broadcast and cable programming cannot equal those of talk programs. In 1987, American radio had 238 talk shows. By 1995, the number had increased to more than one thousand.<sup>2</sup> Listeners in most markets today receive several stations that feature all-talk formats or a combination of news and talk. Much of this programming is of local origin, but syndicated talk shows delivered by satellite to stations in all parts of the country include those that feature Rush Limbaugh, G. Gordon Liddy, Pat Buchanan, Howard Stern, Dr. Dean Edell, Jim Eason, and Jerry Brown.

As the number of radio talk shows increased throughout the 1990s, so, too, did the excesses of their hosts. Deregulation of radio and the ending of the Fairness Doctrine and Equal Time Provisions coincided with the so-called sexual revolution to make radio a medium on which, to cite another old tune, “Anything Goes.” The *San Francisco Chronicle* in late 1994 published a report on the nature of radio talk shows:

### The Mouths That Roared

**They vilified the president, smeared the first lady, then led the charge that hounded the Democrats from control of Congress. Who will the radio talk-show hosts turn on next?**

*By Edward Epstein*  
*Chronicle Staff Writer*

<sup>2</sup> These figures are from *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook*, 1996, p. B-590.

Anyone who doubts that conservative talk radio was a central force in forging the Republican juggernaut that seized control of Congress last month should have been in Baltimore when the eager-beaver House GOP freshman class of 1994 gathered recently for a weekend of networking and policy discussion.

At their keynote banquet, whom did the 73 freshmen honor as their inspiration? Ronald Reagan? Speaker-to-be Newt Gingrich?

Guess again. It was Rush Limbaugh, the acerbic motor-mouth of talk radio and high priest to millions of "Dittohead" listeners across America.<sup>3</sup>

Two outcomes of the spread of talk radio shows are undeniable: On the negative side, much of the talk generated by the new breed of talk-show host has been angry and often tasteless; on the positive side, talk shows have revitalized AM radio. When AM radio lost much of its music audience to FM with its vastly better sound quality, AM radio needed a new challenge, and it found it in talk radio.

While AM radio was undergoing its transformation, daytime television also underwent significant change as interview-talk shows proliferated. Previously unheard of hosts, some with no apparent qualifications, had hours of air time. Sally Jessie Raphael, Tempestt, Geraldo, Jenny Jones, Jerry Springer, Ricki Lake, Montel Williams, Leeza, Rolanda, Richard Bey—the list goes on and on. Among the contenders, a few have stood out as both popular and responsible, including Oprah Winfrey, Larry King, Charlie Rose, and Rosie O'Donnell. By the mid-1990s, most television stations had dropped local shows that combined news, traffic, weather reports, and interviews, and turned to syndicated programming. A number of talk-show hosts became noted for their handling of controversial and sometimes shocking topics.

Bill Carter of the *New York Times* described a type of talk show that consumed many hours of daytime television by the late 1990s:

#### **Lowdown TV Talk-Shows Flying High**

A new breed of television talk-show, specializing in salacious subjects and emotional confrontations, has become so successful in drawing audiences that few producers of the programs, executives of the companies that own them or advertisers who support them raise any questions about their content.

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<sup>3</sup>*San Francisco Chronicle*, December 25, 1994, p. 1, *Sunday* feature.



Figure 9.1

Tasteless topics explored on talk shows are relished by Grimm, the alter ego of cartoonist M. Peters. Grimm is ecstatic as his canine mind comes up with a crude pun, as in this cartoon. The real Jerry Springer doesn't "do" dogs, but once had a female "chest shaver" lather, then shave, the hairy chest of a male volunteer. (© 1996 Grimmy, Inc. Distributed by Tribune Media Services, Inc.)

For a successful show, like the ones presided over by Jenny Jones and Ricki Lake, profits can reach \$50 million to \$60 million a year, comparable to what Jay Leno brings NBC with his *Tonight* show.

So, despite a killing in Michigan last week that the authorities have linked to an encounter on "The Jenny Jones Show," few industry executives expect any serious attempt to change the broadcasts.<sup>4</sup>

The contempt reflected in the two reports quoted above shouldn't obscure the fact that the programs they refer to attract large audiences, and are valued by many viewers. In the television documentary, "Signal to Noise Ratio," a husband and wife describe their feelings about television. And, while no claim is made that they represent all television viewers, it's clear from other evidence—including audience ratings—that they're far from alone:

Man: Oh, God, I just *love* talk shows! Y'know, when you're having a rough time in your life, and you watch a talk show, and they're on, discussing something that you relate to—like low self-esteem, or marriage problems, or children—and *you're* dealing with that; you hear what these people are talking about on TV, and . . . uh . . . you feel like you're *them!* . . . TV—it's like it has *arms*, 'cause it just *holds* me; it holds me, and I cannot get up. I won't be able to get up.

<sup>4</sup>"Lowdown TV Talk Shows Flying High," by Bill Carter, *New York Times*, published in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 14, 1995.

Woman: Television is, for me . . . um . . . an escape from everyday chores, everyday duties, work. It's just a time for me to come and say "hello" to my couch, and just become one with my couch, and just relax.

Aside from the Jenny Jones-Jerry Springer-Ricki Lake-type shows, talk and interview programs of substance and integrity continue to draw audiences: on television, *The Newshour With Jim Lehrer*, *Larry King Live*, the Rosie O'Donnell and Oprah Winfrey shows, *Face the Nation*, the *Today* show, *Good Morning America*, *Charlie Rose*, and *Sunday Morning* are examples of responsible and popular interview shows. On radio, *Forum* with Michael Krasny, *Talk of the Nation* with Ray Suarez, *Science Friday*, *Fresh Air* with Terry Gross, *Car Talk*, and single-subject call-in programs about financial advice, home improvement, health concerns, travel, sports, and recreation are available in nearly every market. Such shows may serve you well as models of good communication.

Whether talk-show producers and hosts aim high or aim low, successful interviewers observe several time-tested principles. The suggestions for effective interview and talk performance described in this chapter are not advice on how to go for the jugular or how to humiliate guests, but rather how to support compelling discussions suitable for the public airwaves.

Some interviews are essentially question-and-answer sessions, often with controversial guests. Many are single-subject interviews on topics such as gun control, health care, or illegal immigration. Other interviews are essentially conversations that may involve bringing out interesting or amusing anecdotes from famous guests. Each type of interview demands a special technique, and technique is determined by purpose.

Every interview should have at least one clearly defined objective, and it's important to determine that purpose before beginning an interview. Some interviews—especially those with outstanding storytellers—are meant to entertain and require a lighthearted approach. When you interview a gifted teller of anecdotes be prepared to let the guest narrate humorous or otherwise entertaining stories with little interruption. In the Spotlight within this chapter, Professor Arthur Hough describes his first on-air interview with a famous movie star. He says that he soon realized that he had one job to do, to *listen and respond*. He adds, "Of course there is a lot

**Figure 9.2**

Sports Director Gary Radnich hosts a daily call-in show, simulcast on AM radio and cable television. Gary lists these qualities as requisite for success as a sports-talk host: a passion for sports, a broad, up-to-date knowledge of the field, high (but not forced) energy when on the air, respect for callers' opinions, an ability to listen, and a sense of humor. As is true of most sports announcers, Gary is a former athlete who played basketball at Brigham Young and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. (Courtesy of Gary Radnich and KNBR-AM, and BayTV, San Francisco.)



more to interviewing than effective listening, but it still is at the top of the list of things to do well.”<sup>5</sup>

Establishing the purpose of an interview before starting it is one of the most important decisions you can make as a talk-show host.<sup>6</sup> When you interview a writer who has a book to promote, your aim should be to explore in an engaging way the most interesting, amusing, controversial, or noteworthy parts of the book. You may also provide your audience with enough information about the book to form a decision as to its purchase and at the same time keep the interview from becoming merely a puff piece for the author. Interviews on serious social problems should be geared to providing useful information on critical issues and should be approached with a serious, but not somber, attitude.

Talk programs are important features of American broadcasting. Although television makes almost exclusive use of studio guests for such programs and radio utilizes both guests and telephone callers, the two media are alike in that in each the key to success is the program host's interviewing ability. The intimacy of talk shows makes them naturals for radio and television. Also, they present contemporary issues, are entertaining and informative, offer variety, and often directly involve listeners or viewers. They also are relatively inexpensive to produce; many guests receive

<sup>5</sup>From an unpublished manuscript, *The Perfect Listener*, by Arthur S. Hough, Jr. Reproduced with his permission.

<sup>6</sup>The term *host* is used to identify both female and male interviewers on talk shows. *Hostess* is neither necessary nor appropriate when referring to a female host.

no compensation for their appearances. Others receive transportation, lodging, and per diem pay for meals. Some are required by their performer's union to receive at least minimum scale.

Jobs as talk-show hosts aren't *numerous*, but they *are* rewarding and challenging. You may or may not succeed in having your own talk show, but the skills you develop as you work toward that goal will be useful in a range of announcing specializations. Some of those skills can be practiced; others come with experience. You can practice interviewing, discussing music, sports reporting, commercial delivery, and news reporting—all of which will help you become competent as a talk-show host—but the true measure of your effectiveness will be how well you put it all together on a live broadcast. Talk-show hosts are among the few announcers whose auditions usually coincide with their first air experience in that capacity. You may not be able to practice in an integrated way all the skills you need for the job, but you can study the practices and procedures you would encounter if you were to work as a radio or television talk-show host.

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## Principles of Effective Interviewing

### Avoiding Abstraction

One of the fundamental aspects of interviewing that affects every interviewer's approach is what semanticist S. I. Hayakawa calls the **abstraction ladder**. This phrase refers to the fact that several terms are usually available for the same phenomenon, some precise and some general. Take, for example, *food*, *fruit*, and *apple*. An apple is a specific fruit and it's also a food, so all three terms are accurate. The term *food* is a high-level abstraction, *fruit* is below it on the ladder, and *apple* is quite specific and is, therefore, at the lowest rung on the ladder. Some interview guests consistently speak at a level high on the ladder of abstraction—they consistently use vague and general terms rather than precise ones. It's up to you as the interviewer to “pull” such guests down the ladder of abstraction when appropriate. For example, consider this exchange:

ANNCR: And just what does the administration intend to do about the problems of the inner cities?

GUEST: We're extremely aware of the seriousness of the situation. We feel that the development of human resources in our cities must come before we can expect to overcome the problems of the physical environment.

What this guest is saying in an abstract way is quite simple: we need to find jobs for people before we can hope to clean up and rebuild. The interviewer's challenge is to find a way to get the guest to express this thought in clear, specific language. One approach is to ask directly for clarification of terms:

ANNCR: And just what do you mean by "the development of human resources"?

A later question would steer the guest toward an explanation of the phrase "the problems of the physical environment."

## Avoiding Bias

A second basic consideration for any interviewer is *bias*. When interviewing a person on a controversial or extremely important subject, it's natural to accept without question comments that you agree with. This isn't a problem when the statement is a matter of common knowledge or of record, as in this example:

ANNCR: How do today's students compare with students of twenty years ago?

GUEST: Well, standardized test scores of college-bound seniors have fallen pretty regularly over the past two decades.

On the other hand, a guest may state opinions or theories:

ANNCR: And how do you explain the drop?

GUEST: Television viewing is the primary culprit.

As a *person* with many opinions of your own, you are free to agree or disagree with this statement. As a *responsible interviewer*, however, you have an obligation to ask further questions to bring out any facts that led your guest to the conclusion reached. Probing may reveal that the statement is based on hard fact—or that it's simply an unsubstantiated hunch. In either case, you've provided a service to your audience by nailing down the statement's truth or lack of it. Whatever the outcome, you owe it to your listeners to question undocumented assertions. To put it simply, never allow your personal beliefs to keep you from questioning unsubstantiated statements.

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## Tips for Conducting Successful Interviews

Ernie Kreiling, a syndicated television columnist, has compiled a list of do's and don'ts that are especially helpful to radio or television talk-show interviewers. These suggestions provide an excellent framework for discussing interviewing and are therefore used as subheads in this section. Think about them and work them into your practice where appropriate. It is also helpful to refer to them after each interview.

Note that the tips cover three general areas: preparation for the interview, treatment of guests, and the interviewer's strategy and contributions.

### Preparing for the Interview

*Carefully research the guest's background, accomplishments, attitudes, beliefs, and positions* You'll generally know from one to several days in advance who your guest will be, so you'll have enough time to do some research. If your guest has written a book, and if the interview is to focus on it, you should read the

book, make notes, and read some reviews.<sup>7</sup> Among the many sources of information about well-known persons and important topics are *Who's Who* (in politics, in education, in medicine, and so on), the *Europa Year Book*, the *Book of the States*, and the *Municipal Year Book*. You can find articles by checking the listings in the *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* and the *New York Times Index*. Most radio and television stations, as well as public libraries, have access to computerized data banks that provide information on nearly anyone of importance. If your guest isn't a person of national prominence, you may find background information through local newspapers, libraries, or chambers of commerce. If your guest has been scheduled by a booking agent, you most likely will be provided with a **press kit** containing useful information.

When time and circumstances permit, researching your guest's background is as important as all other factors combined. No amount of style, personality, smooth performance, or perfect timing can compensate for a lack of such knowledge.

*Be sure the topic to be discussed is of interest or importance*  
Although a dull guest can make even the most exciting subject boring, an interview always benefits if the topic itself is truly interesting or important.

When you practice interviewing as a student, don't settle for the most readily obtainable guest. Interviews with parents, siblings, classmates, and others you know well are seldom of interest to anyone, the participants included. A special energy is generated when you interview people who are strangers to you, and an even greater intensity develops when you interview people of real accomplishment.

*Where appropriate, limit the number of topics so that they can be discussed in depth*  
Depending on the intended length of the interview, it's best to explore only as many topics as you can deal with in some depth. The least interesting interviews are those that randomly skim the surface of one topic after another.

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<sup>7</sup>There are exceptions to nearly every broad statement: Larry King claims he *never* reads the books of authors on his highly successful program!

*Don't submit questions in advance, unless you'd lose an important interview by refusing to do so* Hostile guests and some politicians may ask you to submit your questions in advance. This practice is a bad one, because spontaneity demands that guests not rehearse their answers. On the other hand, it is good practice to let an interviewee know the general areas to be covered. To help relax an inexperienced guest, you might even reveal your first question slightly in advance.

There's one exception to this rule: if you're going to ask a guest for his or her most interesting, funniest, or most unusual experience, advance notice will provide time for reflection. Most interviewees draw a blank when asked such a question abruptly, but a little advance notice may make the answer the highlight of the interview.

*Write out, or at least make notes on, the introduction and conclusion* Writing out or outlining the beginning and ending of an interview will free you during air time to focus on its body. Note, however, that unless you're able to read your opening and closing in a totally conversational manner, the shift from reading to ad-lib speaking will be quite noticeable. In most instances the conclusion should include a summary of important or interesting information revealed during the interview; this cannot, of course, be written in advance, but your prepared conclusion can indicate the point at which you'll ad-lib this summary.

*Plan at least a few questions to get the interview started and to fill awkward gaps.* Few sights are more painful than those of interviewers struggling to come up with a question. Plan ahead, but be ready to drop planned questions if they prove unnecessary.

## **The Guest**

*Make your guest feel at home* Introduce your guests to studio and control room personnel when it's convenient. Show your guests the area where the interview will take place and give them an idea of what's going to happen. Such hospitality should help relax your guests and make them more cooperative. With seasoned guests (people used to being interviewed) you can plunge right into the interview. With inexperienced guests it helps to spend a few minutes explaining how you'll conduct the interview and what you expect of them.

*Establish the guest's credentials at the start of the interview*

Station personnel usually select guests they believe are knowledgeable and responsible. The audience, too, should know how and why they're qualified to speak on a particular subject. The significance of a partisan statement about heart transplants differs depending on whether it's made by a heart surgeon, a heart recipient, a representative of a health plan, or a politician. One opinion is not necessarily better or more newsworthy than another, but your audience must be aware of the specific credentials of the speaker in order to assess statements in a meaningful way.

At the same time, confine your introductory comments to the bare essentials and give your guest an opportunity to be heard early in the interview. You can add additional biographical details later.

*Occasionally and indirectly reestablish the guest's name and credentials*

On television, guests are identified periodically with **supers** at the bottom of the screen.<sup>8</sup> It's also customary to mention a guest's name when breaking for a commercial—"We'll be back with author Annie LaMott right after these messages." On radio, of course, reminders must be done orally, and, because listeners can't see the guest, frequent reintroductions are essential. Because the television audience *can* see a guest, reintroductions are unnecessary if the guest is well known. Always end your interview by once again identifying your guest; many people are likely to have tuned in during the interview, and they could anxiously be waiting to hear the name of the person who has so charmed or outraged them.

*Remember that the guest is the star* Rarely is the interviewer of more interest to the audience than the guest. Oscar Levant, a famous pianist, wit, and raconteur, consistently upstaged his guests, and the audience loved it. In general, however, dominating an interview is not only contrary to its purpose of drawing the guest out but also simply rude.

*Remember that the guest is the expert* At times, of course, you'll be an authority on the subject under discussion and will be able to debate it with your guest. In most cases, though, your guest will be the expert.

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<sup>8</sup>**Super** is short for *superimposition*, a picture or notice shown over another picture on the television screen.

*Do not “preinterview” a guest* Your conversation will lose spontaneity if you and your guest discuss the upcoming interview in detail before going on the air. Confine your contact with your guest to a general “ice-breaking” conversation unless your judgment tells you that you must mention one or another critical or sensitive topic you wish to include.

*Avoid entrapment* Some “trash” radio and television interviewers deliberately mislead guests by hiding from them a sensitive or sensational item that the guest would prefer to leave undiscussed, then springing the question during the on-air interview. As mentioned at the opening of this chapter, several such hosts have appeared in the last few years. The term *trash television* (or *trash radio*) has arisen to describe their efforts. Such interviewers put two important concepts in conflict: the belief in freedom of expression versus the concept of a person’s right to privacy. The First Amendment guarantees the right of freedom of expression. No such constitutional guarantee of right to privacy exists for a person who agrees to appear on a talk show, so the integrity of the talk-show host is the only guarantee that a guest’s privacy will be protected.

## Conducting the Interview

*Discuss the subject with the guest* On typical talk shows, hosts aim for a conversation with their guests. They seek to avoid a mere question-and-answer session (**Q & A**). Successful talk-show hosts participate in the discussion, adding information, anecdotes, and insightful comments. Unlike reporters, they do not rapidly fire questions, hoping to obtain sound bites from newsmakers. Questions are essential to an interview, but if you simply move from one question to another without revealing your feelings about the answers, you run the risk of seeming indifferent or unimpressed by what your guest is saying. Feel free to express honest reactions, including laughter when appropriate.

*Try to establish a nonthreatening atmosphere* Don’t cross-examine or otherwise bully guests. Because they may be nervous, it’s your responsibility to put them at ease, no matter how much you may dislike or disagree with them. If you show hostility, unfairness, or lack of common hospitality, both your guests and your audience will resent it.

A few talk-show hosts make a practice of bullying their guests or insulting call-in listeners, and thrive on dissension. These hosts are willing to ask any question, however tasteless, and to make any statement, however outrageous. Remember that viewers or listeners don't see a talk-show host as an actor playing a role; to them your role is the *real you*. If you value your reputation, you'll treat guests with fairness and respect.

*Establish the importance of the topic* Topics that are obviously noteworthy need no special buildup, but others may require brief explanation. People are interested in almost anything that directly affects them, so your interview will increase in significance if you can establish its relevance to your listeners or viewers. One simple way of doing this is to ask your guest early in the session why the issue is important.

*During the interview, listen attentively to the guest's replies and react with appropriate interest* Next to preparation, listening is the most important aspect of interviewing discussed in this section. Listen carefully and follow up important statements with appropriate questions. Also, don't feign interest. If your interest isn't genuine, you're either conducting a bad interview or not listening to your guest's responses.

Another reason for careful listening is to avoid the embarrassment of asking a question that has already been answered. The ultimate penalty for inattention to guests' remarks is to have them say on the air, "Why, I already answered that!"

*In general, base questions on the guest's previous statements* Don't hesitate to dispense with preplanned questions if more interesting ones arise naturally from the discussion. The following dialogue is an exaggerated example of failure to switch to a new topic:

ANNCR: Now, Mayor, your opponent has charged you with a willful and illegal conflict of interest in the city's purchase of the new park. What's your answer?

MAYOR: Well, it hasn't been revealed yet, but I have evidence that my opponent is a parole violator from out of state who served five years as a common purse snatcher!

ANNCR: The News-Democrat claims to have copies of the deeds of sale and is ready to ask for your resignation. Will you tell us your side of the story on the park purchase?

Clinging to a predetermined question when a far more important topic clamors for recognition may result from insensitivity, rigidity, or inattention to your guest's answers. In assessing your taped practice interviews, be on the alert for moments when you've sacrificed interest or effectiveness to a previously determined plan. Have a plan but don't be a slave to it.

*In particular, follow up on important contradictions* Public figures, especially politicians, often make contradictory statements that you can develop into good dialogue. Be wary, however; if you perceive that your guest is going to be evasive, adopt another line of questioning.

*Try to build an interview toward a high point or climax* Hold back an especially interesting or provocative question until near the end of the interview. If your skill allows you to lead up to that question, so much the better. Be on guard, however, against springing an important question too late; it's unacceptable to abruptly cut off the answer to a significant question because you've run out of time.

*Avoid referring to conversations held before air time* Ideally, you'll have an opportunity to chat with your guest before air time. This conversation will help you determine areas of questioning, the general mood you want to establish, and other matters of importance. At the same time, an audience will feel excluded by a question such as "Well, Pat. I'm sure the folks would find interesting

that new hobby you were telling me about just before we went on the air. Will you tell them about it?" Listeners or viewers want to feel in on the interview, not as if most of it has already taken place.

*Seek out a guest's deep convictions* Don't settle for mentally rehearsed platitudes and clichés. Probing usually means that you must reveal something of yourself. Your guest isn't likely to open up unless you do.

*Be tenacious* Don't be put off by evasive answers. Keep probing until you see that you can't get any further. Then drop the line of questioning and turn to something else.

*Don't interrupt with meaningless comments* "I see," "Uh huh," "Oh, yes," and "That's very interesting" add nothing to an interview and actually detract from what your guest is saying. All announcers should cure themselves of the habit of using such vocal reinforcement when they interview. Practice giving *nonverbal* reinforcement and work to eliminate voiced encouragement. At the same time, because a good interview frequently is a conversation, don't be afraid to make meaningful responses that are appropriate to the interchange, such as "I can't believe you didn't know about your nomination." When giving nonverbal responses on television, be careful of shaking or nodding your head—these motions could be interpreted by your viewers as agreement or disagreement with your guests' statements.

Peppering an interview with "Uh huhs" and "I sees" can cause problems beyond annoyance. Some interviews are intended for editing (usually for newscasts or documentaries), and your words will be edited out and replaced with narration. If the tape is cluttered with meaningless "I sees" it may be impossible to edit them all out.

You'll almost always know in advance whether or not an interview will be edited and be able to differentiate between times when interjections are acceptable and times when they're not. The nature of the interview will determine the extent to which you should speak up.

*Point up and emphasize important answers* But don't parrot responses. Here's a good example of how a significant answer is given emphasis:

ANNCR: Senator, if you were offered your party's nomination, would you accept it?

SENATOR: I've given much thought to that possibility, and my present inclination is to accept such a call provided that it's a mandate from the rank and file as well as the party leaders.

ANNCR: Senator, you've just said—for the first time, I believe—that you're willing to run for the presidency. That sounds firm and unconditional. Am I right in drawing that conclusion?

Paraphrasing the senator's answer emphasizes its importance; giving the senator a chance to confirm or deny it will nail it down. On the other hand, avoid the meaningless repetition of answers as in the following:

ANNCR: You've been married five times. If you had your life to live over, would you try to stick with one of your wives?

MILLAR: No, I wouldn't do anything differently.

ANNCR: You wouldn't do anything differently. Well, which of your five partners did you love the most?

MILLAR: I loved every one of them.

ANNCR: You loved every one of them. Does that include spouse number three, with whom you lived for only two days?

***Don't patronize your guest and don't be obsequious*** Avoid phrases such as "I'm sure our viewers would like to know" and "Do you mind if I ask?" Some people are reluctant or hostile, to be sure, but most have come to be interviewed and need no coddling.

**Keep cool** Interviewing is your specialization, and you should feel at ease. Your guest may be a stranger to the interviewing situation and may be awed by the equipment, a bit afraid of you, and worried about saying something wrong. If you fail to remain calm or are distracted, you'll only rattle your guest further.

**Keep control of the interview** Experienced guests, particularly politicians, can take over and use an interview for their own purposes. Keep the questions coming so that guests don't have time to digress from the subject or the opportunity to indulge in speech-making.

**Make logical, smooth transitions to new subjects** Here's a bad example of making a transition—one actually made by a novice talk-show host:

ANNCR: You said a few moments ago that your most memorable experience was the time you nearly drowned. Tell us, are you into any other sports besides swimming?

**Always be ready with your next question, but don't allow it to distract you from the comments your guest is making** Be prepared to alter your plan on the basis of an unexpected answer but don't be caught with no question at all in mind. The problem of thinking ahead to the next question without tuning out the present is solved only with practice and experience.

**Don't ask more than one question at a time** It's poor practice to combine questions into a multipart form, as in this example:

ANNCR: Where did you get your inspiration for "Moonlight on the Ohio," and is it true that "Love Song" was inspired by your first wife?

Such multiple questions create a good chance that you'll end up with a muddled answer.

*Make questions brief and to the point, but don't be rude or brusque* Don't be afraid to ask more detailed questions when circumstances warrant, but avoid rambling questions such as this:

ANNCR: Pat, I remember when you won the Academy Award for Broken Hearts—that was eighty-nine, I believe—and at that time you said you wanted to give up motion-picture directing and do something on the Broadway stage. That's when you got involved in directing a modern-dress version of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and I guess they'll never let you forget that disaster. Well, looking back, is there any one moment you consider to be the turning point in your career? Any moment when you should have done something other than what you did?

PAT: Z-z-z-z-z-z-z . . .

*Don't ask questions that invite yes or no answers* Try instead to draw your guest into an amplified response. The key point here is that your interview will flow better and will have a greater chance of eliciting interesting answers if you concentrate on asking "why," "what," and "how" questions, *rather than* "are you," "did you," or "can you" questions.

Here are a few examples, both good and bad:

ANNCR: Are you working on a book now?

AUTHOR: Yes.

ANNCR: What are you working on now?

AUTHOR: I'm still looking at possibilities. I'm curious about. . . .

ANNCR: How do you decide on a topic for a book?

AUTHOR: I don't think "decide" is the right word—it's more like, "what topic has discovered me?"

Even if the author weren't writing at the time, it would be impossible to respond to the second and third questions with a simple yes or no. If your guest does answer yes or no, and the point is of significance, ask for an explanation of the response.

*Ask questions a layperson would ask* Don't be afraid to ask some questions that are fundamental. Most of your listeners will need basic information on the topic. (However, see the next point.)

*Go a step further and ask interesting questions most laypersons wouldn't think of* Outstanding interviewers bring out information that the audience doesn't know it wants but will find interesting when the response is given.

*Avoid obvious questions* For example, don't ask a famous baseball player, "You were a baseball player, weren't you?"

*Avoid predictable questions* Word some of your questions from a point of view that is opposite to that of your guest. Fresh and unexpected questions are necessary in two common circumstances: when the guest is someone who regularly appears on interview shows and whose opinions are, therefore, widely known; and when the topic has been so thoroughly chewed over by experts and amateurs alike that the audience can anticipate the questions likely to be asked. Because your primary task is to give your audience interesting and useful information, try to break away from the known, the obvious, and the redundant.

*Don't answer the question as you ask it* For example, what could the senator say in response to the following question except "That's right"?

ANNCR: Senator, you voted against the treaty. Just what were your feelings about it? Your statement to the news me-

dia indicated that you believed we were giving up more than we were gaining.

***Don't feel compelled to jump in with a question the second a guest stops talking*** Some interviewers believe that any dead air is unacceptable. One popular talk-show host was notorious for interrupting guests in the middle of amusing anecdotes out of a fear of a moment of silence. Because good interviews are usually *conversations*, pauses are appropriate. Silence, together with an expectant expression, will often encourage a guest to continue in more detail.

A memorable example of a pause more eloquent and moving than spoken words came in the televised court hearing of a boxing champion accused of “throwing” a fight. After the momentous question was asked, at least eight seconds elapsed as the boxer gulped, drew a deep breath, began to answer, paused, blinked several times, and then—in a voice choked with emotion—quietly answered, “Yes sir, I did.” It’s unlikely that such a dramatic exchange will occur on a television interview program, but look for the moment when you, as the interviewer, should just remain silent.

The panic that can set in when you can’t come up with a question can make a bad situation even worse; fright can cause you to think about the *problem*, rather than allow your mind to search for a logical question or comment to continue the interview. When appropriate, ask your guest to elaborate on the statement just made or ask if your guest wants to offer a comment that hasn’t been covered in the interview. The best protection for avoiding such a moment, though, is to *be a careful listener*. *Going blank usually is the result of inattention to what your guest is saying.*

***Don't hesitate to interrupt if your guest uses jargon not in common usage*** The term *jargon* has several negative connotations, but it also has a neutral meaning: “the specialized or technical language of a trade, profession, or fellowship.” When guests use jargon, you may need to ask for clarification so the audience won’t be confused.

ANNCR: And what did you find?

GUEST: There wasn't a single PFD in the boat.

ANNCR: PFD? I'm not sure what that is.

GUEST: A personal flotation device.

ANNCR: What I'd call a life jacket?

GUEST: Yes.

#### Another example:

GUEST: He showed negative life signs.

ANNCR: You mean he was dead?

GUEST: Correct.

During an interview, you'll often find it necessary to make quick decisions about asking for clarification of jargon or in-group terminology. When interviewing a nurse, you may hear "ICU," and you may decide that most of your listeners will know that, especially in a hospital context, this means "intensive care unit." On the other hand, if the nurse speaks of "NIC units," you most likely will decide to ask at once what this term means ("newborn intensive care"). Jim Lehrer of the *NewsHour With Jim Lehrer* and interviewers on that show are excellent judges of the occasional need to stop a guest for clarification of an obscure term or phrase.

*On television, check your notes openly, not furtively* There's no reason to try to hide your notes; their use doesn't in any way detract from a good discussion. Notes can be on a clipboard or small file cards.

*On television, be aware of your posture and your facial expressions* Don't slump, and always be aware that your facial expressions are visible to your viewers. Grimaces, frowns, nervous mannerisms, and the like are seldom appropriate for interview hosts.

*Before ending an interview—especially if you've run out of questions—ask whether the guest has anything to add* Aside from its obvious value when you're unable to come up with another

**Figure 9.3**

The late Harry Caray interviewing a Cubs player before game time. Caray called over 8,000 games for the St. Louis Cardinals, Oakland A's, and Chicago White Sox and Cubs. On learning of Caray's death in 1998, Hall of Fame Sports announcer Jack Buck said, "There's going to be a loud silence." Stan Musial added, "We're going to miss old Harry. He was always the life of the party, the life of baseball." (Courtesy Harry Caray and Chicago Cubs)



question, this practice often gives a guest one last chance to express something interesting or important that didn't come out earlier in the interview.

*Avoid ending an interview with "Well, I see our time is up"* "I see our time is up" is a cliché that merely states the obvious. Look for more subtle ways of indicating this: "I've been speaking with . . ." or "I've enjoyed our conversation. . . ."

*At the conclusion of the interview, thank the guest warmly but briefly* Don't be effusive. Move on quickly to your concluding comments.



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Becoming a Skilled Interviewer**

#### **Preparing for the Interview**

1. Carefully research the guest's background, accomplishments, attitudes, beliefs, and positions.
2. Be sure the topic to be discussed is of interest or importance.
3. Where appropriate, limit the number of topics to be explored so that they can be discussed in depth.
4. Do not submit questions in advance unless you would lose an important interview by refusing to do so.
5. Write out or at least make notes on the introduction and conclusion.
6. Plan at least a few questions to get the interview started and to fill awkward gaps.

#### **The Guest**

7. Make your guest feel at home.
8. Establish the guest's credentials at the start of the interview.
9. Occasionally and indirectly reestablish the guest's name and credentials.
10. Remember that the guest is the star.
11. Remember that the guest is the expert.
12. Do not "preinterview" a guest. The discussion loses spontaneity if you conduct an in-depth prebroadcast interview.
13. Avoid entrapment.

#### **Conducting the Interview**

14. Discuss the subject with the guest. Do not make your interview a mere Q & A session.
15. Try to establish a nonthreatening atmosphere.

16. Early in the interview establish the importance of the topic.
17. During the interview listen attentively to the guest's replies and react with appropriate interest.
18. In general, base questions on the guest's previous statements.
19. In particular, follow up on important contradictions.
20. Build each interview toward a high point or climax.
21. Never refer to conversations held before air time.
22. Seek out a guest's deep convictions.
23. Be tenacious.
24. Don't interrupt with meaningless comments.
25. Point up and emphasize important answers.
26. Don't patronize your guest and do not be obsequious.
27. Keep cool.
28. Keep control of the interview.
29. Make logical, smooth transitions to new subjects.
30. Always be ready with your next question but don't allow it to distract you from the comments your guest is making.
31. Do not ask more than one question at a time.
32. Make questions brief and to the point but do not be rude or brusque.
33. Avoid questions that invite yes or no answers.
34. Ask questions that a layperson would ask.
35. Go a step further and ask interesting questions few laypersons would think of.
36. Avoid obvious questions.
37. Avoid predictable questions.
38. Don't answer the question as you ask it.
39. Don't feel compelled to jump in with a question the second a guest stops talking.
40. Question jargon unless its use is so widespread that you are sure the audience will understand it.
41. On television, check your notes openly, not furtively.
42. On television, be aware of your posture and your facial expressions.

43. Before ending an interview—especially if you have run out of questions—ask the guest whether she has anything to add.
44. Don't end an interview with "Well, I see our time is up." When you must let both guest and listeners know that the program is ending find a less hackneyed way of saying so.
45. At the conclusion of the interview thank the guest warmly but briefly.



## SPOTLIGHT

### The Art of Interviewing by Arthur S. Hough, Jr.

I was a young, "floating intern" at San Francisco's educational television station, KQED, when out of the blue one day, a producer came to me and said, "Robert Taylor, the actor, is showing up unexpectedly today. Could you be ready to interview him by two o'clock?"

"Of course," I said, although I'd never conducted an on-air interview in my life. I raced to the library to study up on Robert Taylor and to my horror found that most of his off-screen life was either completely dull or hotly controversial.

Taylor appeared at two o'clock, huge, handsome, and completely poised. I still had not found a way to conduct the interview, so, as our mics were being clipped on, I said in complete frustration, "Mr. Taylor, I've never done this before, and I'm at a loss as to how to approach you." He gave me the most welcome smile I've ever known and said in his deep voice, "Arthur, don't worry about a thing. I'll carry it."

I can't remember how I got him started, probably with some dumb question like, "What has it been like all these years, to be a Hollywood star and celebrity?" And off he went, like a finely tuned machine. I realized that I really had one job to do, to *listen and respond*. We had a great interview. We talked and laughed, and I made it through to the end just by being there, listening, following, listening, following.

Of course there is a lot more to interviewing than effective listening, but it still is at the top of the list of things to do well. Personal, in-depth interviewing is an art badly done by most interviewers, mainly because they cannot let go

enough to truly listen to their guests. The ace television interviewer, Ted Koppel, has said about himself, "I listen. Most people don't. Something comes along—and whoosh!—it goes right past them."

The considerations that I believe make a brilliant on-the-air interview are steeped in listening:

How do you prepare to listen?

How do you open up your guest to get something worth listening to?

How do you participate and still listen; how do you follow and lead?

How do you make listening an obvious part of your physical style?

How do you get out of it when the time is up?

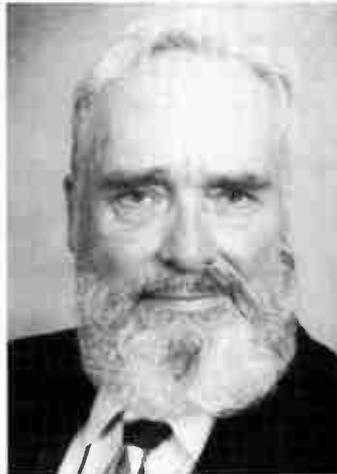
Interviewing on the air takes everything you've already learned about listening and puts it on a professional, expert level. Like skiing, it is fast, exhilarating, full of unexpected soft spots and high lumps, and a constant test of your most delicate balance and skill.

You can learn the principles in minutes, but it may take years to incorporate them into your own personal style. Here are some quick starting rules:

### **Preparation**

Conduct whatever research you can on your guest, but don't conspire with the guest in a preinterview discussion. Preinterviewing kills spontaneity.

Dr. Arthur Hough is an author and professor emeritus of broadcast communication arts at San Francisco State University. He has years of on-air interviewing experience and has taught interviewing technique in a variety of performance courses. He shares some of his thoughts in this Spotlight.



Accumulate questions ahead of time to give yourself some feeling for the structure you want to follow; write down key phrases on cards, but know that in a really sparkling interview, your prepared questions will fade in importance. Don't be rigid. Follow the flow; be flexible.

### **Introduction**

Introduce quickly and let the guest speak up early. Weave in more introductory material later. This is especially true on radio where the audience has no contact at all with your guest until they hear her voice.

Ask your guest to explain whatever you think the audience might not understand—special vocabulary, abbreviations, and “in-talk” as in “When you speak of Otto, do you mean Otto Preminger?”

Avoid trivia, or hackneyed questions such as, “How did you feel when you knew you'd lost the game?”

### **Participation**

Be entirely quiet when the guest is speaking. Do not accompany him or her with little grunts like “Uh-huh,” “I see,” “Okay.” Talk-along interruptions intrude on the audio of the interview and kill crispness.

Keep control, but do not dominate. This is a delicate skill. Learn to interrupt, but not to intrude. When you must, be sure you break into the guest's stream at phrase endings and breath points. Slip in between thoughts and snip him off without intruding. Don't wiggle into the conversation—break in with a strong (but not harsh) voice.

To stop a long monologue, listen closely, pick up the guest's point and grab it. That is, feed back her point and then, without pause, move the guest on, as in, “You had a narrow escape there, but how did you finally find the treasure?”

Break the guest's “tape.” Many guests are obviously well prepared on some topics; they've been interviewed before and have developed an inner tape that they play for you. You must get the guest to *think* rather than *recite*; break in with the pertinent but unexpected question, such as, “It must have taken some courage to do that. Were you frightened?”

Do not kill a good guest run just because you have an agenda. If what you're getting is interesting, let it roll. The audience will hate you for spoiling an interesting chain of thought.

Show evident interest, not perfunctory, distracted, or obsequious attention. Keep eye contact with your guest, but don't just stare.

Participate in the interview, the content, and the feelings. Don't stand off with the objectivity of a scientist with a microscope. Every comment you make should not simply be another question. Feedback that leads to a further or deeper

thought is good. Injecting your own opinion or experience is fine so long as it adds to the guest's contribution and does not compete with it. Don't hog the time.

Get rapport—an easy, even, equal relationship with the guest. Make your contribution friendly, not an interrogation, but don't fall into a style of exaggerated awe. Psychologically join your guest, unless your special purpose is to keep perspective.

Avoid these clichés:

So . . . (in introducing your next remark or question)

Right! . . . (to indicate you understand)

That's very interesting.

Thanks for joining us.

Nice to have you with us.

We'd like to thank you . . .

. . . needs no introduction

### Listening

Feelings follow facts. Feed back content and then go for the *feelings beneath* that *content*. State, as feedback, what feelings you think you are hearing, as in, "It irritates you that people don't understand your position on this."

Follow subtle clues. Listen for the throwaway phrase, the thing NOT said, or said hurriedly, the inconsistencies, the unusual or out-of-place adjective, as in, "You said 'unfortunate' accident. Do you think it could have been avoided?"

### Ending

When your time is up just say so and stop. The time limit is a real and acceptable factor, nothing to be embarrassed about.

End clean: no fuss, no cliché, no speech.

## Radio Talk-Show Hosts

More than five hundred radio stations in the United States describe themselves as talk stations.<sup>9</sup> More than one thousand more are classified as news/talk stations, which schedule at least some talk

<sup>9</sup>Radio and television station formats are listed annually in *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook* (formerly *Broadcasting Yearbook*). The publisher is R. R. Bowker, New Providence, New Jersey.

shows during their broadcast week. Here are some variations of talk formats:

Station A is a public broadcasting station that plays classical music, contemporary music, and rhythm and blues and also carries many discussion programs and news commentaries, mostly provided by National Public Radio (NPR), Monitor Radio, and Public Radio International (PRI).

Station B is a middle-of-the-road station that places much emphasis on the talk of its announcers during morning drive time. It offers five minutes of news on the hour and carries play-by-play coverage of several major sports. It also broadcasts a daily sports call-in and interview show, which, of course, is one form of talk radio.

Station C is a major-market station that features locally produced news during commuting hours, network news at the top of the hour, and locally produced call-in shows at all other times. Most of its call-in shows are general interest, but one daily feature is devoted to medicine and health.

Station D is a medium-market station that features locally produced talk-shows, including two daily general interest call-in programs, restaurant reviews, a home and garden call-in program, regular news reports from a national news service, and a syndicated medical talk program featuring Dr. Dean Edell.

Of these, only Stations C and D are truly talk stations. Stations that have only one talk show each week, that specialize in religious programming, or that focus on farming or sports don't differ significantly from all-talk stations in the procedures they use for production or performance of talk programs.

As an announcer for a talk program, you need to develop two major related skills: conducting interesting and informative interviews (or conversations) with studio guests and conversing engagingly with the full spectrum of strangers who call in on the telephone.

## Preparing for the Shift

At a typical talk-radio station, you may expect to work a two- to four-hour air shift, five or six days a week. If you work on weekends or on the **graveyard shift** (from midnight on), longer hours may be assigned. Most stations, however, choose to limit talk-show an-

nouncers to a maximum of four hours, which is about as long as anyone can be expected to remain sharp, energetic, articulate, and patient. These may seem short working hours, but talk-show announcers work many additional hours a day preparing for their air time.

As a talk-show announcer, you may work with a producer, a **phone screener**, and (at most stations) an engineer. The program director or other designated administrator will suggest guests, will in some cases instruct you to schedule a certain guest, and will evaluate your work frequently. The producer will assist you in selecting and scheduling guests, will handle correspondence, and will act as traffic director for arriving and departing guests. The phone screener will handle all incoming calls during your air shift, will cut off obvious cranks or other undesirables, and will line up calls in order of their calling or according to station policy. The engineer will play recorded commercials and station logos, will cut in the network for news summaries or breaking news events, and will operate the time-delay system.<sup>10</sup> At smaller-market stations, one person may perform the tasks of producing, screening, and audio board operation.

Your first task in preparing for a shift is to develop at least three or four timely, universally interesting, or controversial topics for discussion. Whether or not you have guests, you must open your program with talk that will stimulate listeners' interest and motivate them to phone in to offer their opinions. Naturally, you won't speak about all your prepared topics at the outset of your program. You'll begin with the most logical one and save the others to be used if the first topic bombs. In nearly every instance, your first topic will be of current importance.

In order to be timely and interesting on the air, you must be widely read and conversant with an extremely broad range of topics. There's an absolute limit to the number of times you'll be able to get away with saying, "Never heard of it." Unless you're hired specifically to do a sports or other specialized talk show, you must be a **generalist**. You can expect to find yourself discussing local politics at one moment, conservation at another, and the details of a

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<sup>10</sup>A **time-delay system** records the voices of both callers and program host, and delays their comments for several seconds before broadcast. This is done to avoid accidentally broadcasting indecent or libelous statements. The record-delay medium may be a chip in a digital unit, or a simple audiotape loop.

new and important book at still another. This means that you must read several newspapers and magazines regularly and keep abreast of television, movies, books (both fiction and nonfiction), and other important media. A typical talk-show host will daily read two local newspapers, as well as the *New York Times*, the *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, and the *Christian Science Monitor*. Weekend reading might include the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, as well as two local newspapers; and weekly reading will include *Newsweek*, *Time*, and other magazines to keep current on developments in technology, space exploration, medicine, economics, politics, or other areas of knowledge. The host may also read (mostly by skimming) three to five books a week.

Although having studio guests isn't required, radio talk-show announcers frequently use guests to add variety to programs. Even the most famous and sought-after guests seldom are paid for appearances on talk shows, so they represent a cost-effective source of program material. Most guests agree to appear on a program because they see it as an opportunity to promote a book, a film, or a cause. There's nothing inherently wrong in such a tradeoff, as long as both parties understand the conditions and as long as the announcer stays in control of the show.

Well-known guests are usually on a circuit of appearances on both radio and television talk programs in a number of markets. Such guests know or soon learn that they'll be welcome only as long as they help their hosts deliver an engaging program. If you take time to explain to your guests the nature of your show, the kinds of listeners you're attempting to reach (your **audience demographics**), and any station policies that may be relevant, you should have little trouble in gaining their full cooperation.

When you schedule guests, you'll be expected to inform your station several days in advance. This will give the promotion department time to publicize appearances, generally by sending notice of scheduled guests to local newspapers and by writing promotion copy to be read by other talk-show announcers at your station during their shifts.

Some stations maintain a log to keep control over the appearances of guests. They want to avoid overexposing guests as well as repetitiveness in the type of guest or subject covered. A **debriefing log** contains post-broadcast comments, an evaluation of a guest's performance that usually consists of answers to these questions:

**Figure 9.4**

Many radio stations, and especially those limited to the AM band, have moved away from popular-music formats to all-talk programming. Some of these stations feature news, play-by-play sports, and listener call-in shows. This Puerto Rican talk-show host works with an engineer as she converses with telephone callers. (Gary Gladstone/The Image Bank)



What topics did the guest actually cover?  
Did the material covered match the preshow expectations?  
How well did the guest perform?  
How much interest did the guest generate as measured by phone calls?

### **Performing as a Radio Talk-Show Announcer**

As a talk-show announcer, you'll sit in a small studio immediately adjacent to a control room that houses the engineer and phone screener. You won't use a telephone for your conversations with callers; their voices will be amplified so you can hear them over a special speaker. You'll speak directly into an ordinary mic. A sound-proof separation of studio and control room is absolutely necessary because a time delay is used as a precaution against the broadcast-

ing of profanity and slander. It's imperative that you not be distracted by the sound of your own voice and your guests' voices as they go out over the air approximately seven seconds after the words have been spoken. In addition, the screener will be carrying on conversations with callers who want to talk with you, another potential distraction.

In most cases the studio will have a special telephone console that handles several incoming lines from which you select each caller by punching the appropriate button on the phone base. Calls are fed to this base by the screener after they've been sifted to eliminate cranks; a light illuminating a push button tells you that you have a caller on that particular line. The lines are usually identified by geographical location; for example, line 1 may be the South Side; line 2, Oak Manor; and line 3, Outer Woburn. At many stations, a video display terminal shows the host, the name, and hometown of the next person on the line.

Most radio talk-show hosts give out a fax (**facsimile transmission**) number so that listeners can send hard copies of newspaper stories, letters, or other material. You may also have an e-mail address to mention from time to time but especially at or near the beginning of your show.

At the start of your shift you'll ad-lib your introduction along predetermined lines. You'll state the opening topic for discussion and include an identification of yourself, the station, the length of your program segment, and the guests who'll appear later. You'll repeat the call-in telephone numbers on a regular and frequent basis, and you'll occasionally mention your fax number and your e-mail address.

Stations have many policies for performance; these are not standardized, but they do tend to be similar. Most stations ask talk-show hosts not to talk at the start of the program for more than a certain number of minutes before taking a phone call. A related policy insists that you never talk for more than a certain number of minutes during your segment without taking a call, even when you have a fascinating guest. Your station may ask for more and shorter calls, and if you ask, "More and shorter than what?" the answer may be, "More than you're taking and shorter than you're allowing." The aim of talk radio is maximum listener involvement.

Talk stations cluster their commercial announcements. Unlike a popular-music station, where program segments (songs) last three minutes or less, talk shows can't tolerate constant interruptions. A

**commercial cluster** may consist of three or more commercials. It's mandatory that you, as the organizer and director of your own show, not get so carried away by the ongoing dialogue that you forget to deliver the commercial clusters at the times designated. All commercials must be read or played—after all, the sponsors pay for the programming—and they should be properly spaced to avoid piling up toward the end of your shift. All radio announcers work with a log—called the **program log** by people in programming but referred to as the **billing log** by the sales department—and it's your responsibility to initial all commercial and public-service announcements as they're broadcast. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) no longer requires program logs, but most stations continue to maintain them.

## Legal and Ethical Concerns

Despite deregulation of radio by the FCC, broadcasters continue to be legally responsible for what their stations send over the airwaves. Many stations give talk-show hosts detailed instructions on their legal and ethical responsibilities.

Talk shows are, by their nature, often controversial. Talk-show hosts should not avoid controversy, but they must be aware of what is and is not allowed by their station and the FCC. The fairness doctrine was abolished by the FCC in 1987, but the personal attack rule remains in force.

A **personal attack** is an attack on the honesty, character, integrity, or similar personal quality of an identified person or group made during presentation of views on a controversial issue of public importance. The station must act to notify the person (or group) attacked within one week of the broadcast of the attack. The individual must be told the time and date of the attack and must be offered a tape or a script, together with an opportunity to respond. Exceptions to this requirement are (1) attacks on foreign groups or foreign public figures and (2) attacks by legally qualified candidates for public office and their authorized spokespersons. It isn't the talk-show host's responsibility to decide whether a personal attack has in fact occurred. You should contact the operations manager or program director any time you believe a personal attack may have taken place.

Payola and plugola are illegal practices. **Payola** refers to the undisclosed payment of something of value to a station employee

for the on-air promotion of goods, services, or events. **Plugola** is the promotion by a station of an item or event in which the station or one of its employees has an undisclosed financial interest. Plugola is not illegal *if* the management of the station is aware of the arrangement and *if* appropriate sponsorship information is announced. When FCC rules on payola or plugola are violated, fines or even the loss of a station's license could be the outcome.

## Challenges and Responsibilities

One of your challenges as a radio talk-show announcer will be to motivate new or infrequent callers. To guarantee fresh call-in talent, you must repeat the phone numbers often on the air and tell your listeners from time to time which lines are open. Even if few listeners respond to your invitations, don't beg people to phone in. If the telephone lines are dead and cannot be resuscitated by your best efforts, you may conclude that one of the following problems exists: (1) Your comments are so fascinating that your listeners don't want to interrupt, (2) you're so dull and uninspiring that no one is motivated to call, (3) the transmitter has shorted out.

Occasionally callers may use profane language, mention the names of people other than public figures in a derogatory way, or make defamatory statements. Because your station's license is at stake in such cases, you must develop quick reflexes with the **panic button**, which takes the offending comment off the air and replaces it with a beeping sound or a prerecorded warning about such utterances. It's far better to overreact in questionable situations than to let a caller's comments go beyond the point of safety. You can always apologize if your finger was too quick on the button, but once an offending comment has gone out over the air there's little you can do. You will, of course, be extensively briefed on do's and don'ts.

One of your responsibilities may be to call your audience's attention to other segments of your station's broadcast day. In some cases you'll promote the news, music, contests, sports, or special features such as farm information. In other instances you'll speak favorably of people who have comparable shows on your station—that is, people who might in some ways be considered your competition. Unless there's some station-endorsed mock feud between talk-show announcers, you'll be expected to do a conscientious job of fairly promoting your co-workers.

**Figure 9.5**

David Letterman is an immensely popular late-night television host. Born in Indianapolis, Letterman graduated from Ball State University, where he majored in radio and television. Letterman's skill in interviewing and his wry, irreverent wit earned him a position as Johnny Carson's most frequent substitute. His popularity eventually earned him a show of his own. (Photo by Alan Singer/Courtesy CBS)



## Hosting Television Talk Programs

Television talk shows can be seen at nearly every hour of the broadcast day. At both the network and the local level, talk shows are usually broadcast live, even though some segments may have been taped in advance. Local stations also rely on taped talk programs that have been syndicated for distribution. Network programs are early-morning (*Good Morning America*) and late-night offerings (*Letterman*).

As a television talk-show announcer, you'll face constant demands on your abilities to ad-lib, to cover quickly for slip-ups, to concentrate in the face of multiple distractions, and to help produce a smooth show without scripts or rehearsals.

## Types of Talk Shows

Network and nationally syndicated talk shows are produced by large staffs. Guests are booked well in advance, and transportation and lodging are arranged for them. Staff members thoroughly re-

search each guest's background and provide the program host with copious notes. Other staff members procure photos or tapes. The result is a fast-paced, smoothly produced program with enough variety to please the audience.

Most locally produced television talk shows are put together by small staffs with limited budgets. Small-market stations provide little support for the host. You likely will spend the first several years of your career as a talk-show host at a station with limited resources. Some small stations lack even a floor crew and instead may have two cameras locked in fixed positions and a director sitting at the **switcher**, cutting from one camera to another as appropriate. Working at such a station will allow you to learn every aspect of talk-show performance and production and prepare you for a move to a station in a larger market. Medium-market stations offer more support, but still work with somewhat limited resources. Program quality need not suffer because of modest support, but interview programs require great effort and adaptability from all members of the team.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Interviewing**

Interviews serve several different ends. The exercises that follow relate to interviews on talk-show programs and person-in-the-street features, sometimes called **vox pops**.<sup>11</sup> A practice section suggests interviews for news packages and documentaries.

Before beginning any interview, decide on the interview's *purpose*; this will help you focus on the best approach (guarded or open, light or somber), the approximate length of the interview, and whether you

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<sup>11</sup>**Vox pop** is an abbreviation of the Latin *vox populi*, literally translated as "voice of the people." This term is interchangeable with **MOS**, or "man-on-the-street," which has fallen into disfavor because of its gender bias. Both refer to brief sound bites of randomly selected people expressing opinions on a topic or event in the news.

should stay with one topic or go into two or more areas of discussion. Generally speaking, multiple-topic interviews are appropriate when your guest is a celebrity who can talk on several subjects; single-topic interviews are proper when your guest is a specialist in some area such as pediatrics, investments, or gardening. Vox pop interviews are by necessity single-topic interviews, as are interviews designed for later use in a documentary.

Like most other exercises in this book, those that follow are designed for the simplest possible production, using only a portable audio recorder. Any of these exercises can be adapted to television production.

1. For a multiple-topic interview, select a person you consider unusually interesting. Make sure you do some research about your guest so that you have at least a general idea of what can be discovered and discussed. Notes on areas to be explored are almost a necessity for this type of interview. Plan to interview without stopping your tape recorder for at least ten and preferably twenty minutes.
2. For a single-topic interview, choose a specialist whose field is of great interest to you and interview this person at length without significantly changing the subject. A list of possible questions should help you "stay the course."
3. Choose a topic and conduct vox pop interviews. Here are a few suggested questions:

What's the most useless gadget on the market?

What job would you most like to have?

What's the worst advice you've ever received?

You can also obtain samples of public opinion by asking more serious questions, such as probing people's feelings about an item in the news. Editing the responses and organizing them into packages, with appropriate opening and closing remarks, will complete this exercise.

4. Occasionally it's effective to conduct an interview for which all or most of the questions have been written out in advance. For example, you may want to pin down a guest by asking a string of precisely worded questions, such as these:

Why did you vote against the treaty?

Last May, in your Tulsa speech, didn't you say that you favored the treaty?

On May twentieth, the *Tulsa Record* printed this quote: "I fully support the administration, and therefore I support the proposed treaty." Do you still maintain that you never expressed support for the treaty?

Here's a quote from the *Dallas Advance*, dated May thirtieth: "Senator James stated that, while he had some minor reservations about the treaty, he would support it when it came to a vote." Did the *Advance* also misquote you?

Select an interviewee and a topic that lend themselves to a scripted approach and practice this unusual, but sometimes highly effective, interview technique.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Interviewing for Radio News**

These suggestions are offered to help you practice some of the varied assignments given to radio journalists.

1. Cover news conferences with a portable cassette tape recorder. Record the entire conference and then record interviews with appropriate persons—including the spokesperson, if possible—as well as who favor and who oppose the speaker's position. Edit the statements to create actualities and wraps with the recorded material. Follow the procedures described in Chapter 10, "Radio News," for writing and recording lead-ins, lead-outs, and connecting commentary.
2. Practice interviewing. Conduct a range of interviews that demonstrate different types appropriate for radio newscasts: actualities about a specific hard-news incident, position statements of politicians, vox pop interviews, and features interviews, such as with a zoo keeper about the birth of a rare animal or a city bus driver about the advantages and disadvantages of that vocation.



# 10

## Radio News

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Anchoring Radio News
  - News Sources
  - Preparing for a Shift
  - Writing News
  - Delivering the News
- The Radio Field Reporter
  - Live Reporting
  - Voicers, Actualities, Sceners, and Wraps
- SPOTLIGHT: Philosophies of Radio and Television Journalism
  - Preparing Feature Reports: Minidocs

News on radio ranges from in-depth coverage around the clock, to brief hourly summaries, to no news coverage at all on some stations. Many popular music stations have no news director or reporters, and broadcast news reports only in emergencies. At some talk and music stations, news reports are provided by a national news service such as Associated Press Radio, CNN Audio, National Public Radio, or the UPI Audio Network. At other stations, reports from a wire service are taken directly from a computer terminal, printed, and read without being edited. Announcing at such **rip-and-read** operations requires considerable skill in sight-reading, but no journalism skills. This chapter discusses news operations at radio stations where news is taken seriously and where specialized news personnel are employed full-time.

Nearly every broadcast market now has or can receive signals from one or more radio stations that feature news. Some of these stations have an all-news format, some provide news during morn-

**Figure 10.1**

News anchor and reporter Ed Baxter records promos or “teases” prior to his daily afternoon newscast. Ed received his B.A. degree from California State University, Northridge, in radio/television journalism. He has received awards from the Associated Press, UPI, and the San Francisco Bar Association for his work as a reporter. (Courtesy Ed Baxter and KGO-AM San Francisco)



ing and evening drive times, and some give hourly reports researched and written by a news staff. News operations rely to some extent on news from station field and beat reporters, wire services, audio feeds from news services, off-site employees who may call in stories, a parent network, and **stringers**.<sup>1</sup> Any station that takes news seriously relies most heavily on the efforts of its field reporters, newswriters, and anchors.

All-news stations, such as those owned and operated by CBS, offer far more than news. Typical features are stock market and other business reports, sports reports, traffic and weather information, and a community billboard. Some stations also feature special-interest programs such as cooking programs featuring local chefs or food and wine specialists or a call-for-action consumer complaint program. Some special-interest programs are performed by station news personnel; others rely on outside specialists, with a station announcer serving as host.

As you read this discussion of performance and production aspects of radio news broadcasting at the local-station level, keep in

<sup>1</sup> A *stringer* is a part-time reporter who is paid only for the stories that are chosen and used by a station's news department.

mind that only larger stations have the resources to provide the support described.

## Anchoring Radio News

As a radio news anchor, you'll prepare much of the copy you read. There are many advantages to this. First, in writing the copy, you gain familiarity with the story, and this results in better interpretation and clearer communication. Second, as you write copy, you can contact sources to gather more details or learn the correct pronunciation of any names or words that might otherwise cause trouble during delivery. Third, if you rewrite wire-service copy, you'll be able to correct typos that crop up in them from time to time. Finally, investigating stories and writing your own copy will help you develop into a journalist rather than a mere reader of news scripts.

In preparing a news script, you'll work with a news editor who determines what news stories will be broadcast and establishes the order of their delivery. You'll work from a log that shows the sequence of the components that make up the newscast. Most news-oriented stations follow a cyclical format—called a **clock**, or **newswheel**—repeated on an hourly basis. Some news clocks divide a drive-time hour into forty or more segments. A typical clock, or newswheel, is shown in Figure 10.2. Table 10.1 shows the meanings of newswheel terms. A typical format begins each hour with five minutes of network news, provides national and world news headlines at or near the half-hour, and has features such as sports, weather, traffic, stock market reports, and local headlines at regularly established intervals. Commercials are also scheduled at stipulated times.

## News Sources

When preparing copy for a news shift, you may expect to work with news from several sources. Some stories will be generated by station reporters, others will come from news providers. Here are resources typically available to radio news personnel:

- Audio reports, both live and taped, from station, field, and special assignment reporters



**TABLE 10.1 Terms Used on a Newswheel**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Net news	Network news
Heads	News headlines
Local	Local news stories
Spot	Commercial
Traffic	Traffic reports
Sports	Sports briefs from station's sports reporter
Weather	Weather report from station's meteorologist
Business	Business report from station's business reporter
Live line, gossip, etc.	Special features done by news anchors, just for fun
National	National news reported by local anchors
Consumer/medical	A consumer report from station's consumer reporter or a medical report by an MD or other medical specialist

scores and stories, and weather reports—news directors select and receive only those categories of stories that interest them. News stories in selected categories are printed directly on paper or stored in a station's computer and printed after a decision has been made as to whether or not to use them. In this way an all-news station, a rock station, and a classical music station can choose assortments of news stories appropriate to their differing formats.

Another feature of AP NewsPower allows a station's news-writer to summon up a story paragraph by paragraph. At the push of a button, the paragraph from the news service moves to one side of the video display terminal, permitting the operator to paraphrase or to add a local angle by typing the story on the unoccupied portion of the screen. The push of another button directs the com-

puter to print the rewritten story. At some radio stations, on-air newscasters read their scripts directly from a video display terminal. For editing at a radio station, NewsPower includes integrated pronunciation lookup and insertion and thesaurus lookup and replacement.

AP NewsPower sends timely features throughout the year, including special reports on income tax tips and a year-end review. NewsPower also sends complete newscasts, developing news stories, and bulletins.

The Associated Press also maintains the APTV wire, a service mainly used by television stations but also subscribed to by the largest radio stations. This service carries some of the same written material as AP NewsPower, as well as in-depth newspaper-style stories. Stations that use APTV receive far more copy on each story than is provided by NewsPower, giving them a wealth of source material to augment their local coverage. Among its offerings are in-depth newspaper-style state and regional news; national and international news; weather bulletins, warnings, and reports; detailed sports stories, including scores of on-going games; detailed business news; entertainment news; and many seasonal features.

The AP Radio Network delivers five-minute audio newscasts at the top and bottom of each hour, twenty-four hours a day, as well as brief sports, business, weather, features, and headlines several times each hour. For music stations, “AP Drive Time” provides a special service for stations that broadcast news only during morning drive time, as well as “AP Headlines,” which is tailored to music stations with a “limited appetite for news and information.” All AP reports can be inserted into locally produced newscasts and thereby provide expanded coverage to stations that cannot afford teams of national and international correspondents.

When using stories from the wire services, you have four options:

1. Read the story as you find it.
2. Leave the story unaltered but add a lead-in of your own.
3. Edit the story to shorten it, sharpen it, or give it a local angle.
4. Completely rewrite the story.

Whatever you decide, the story must be entered in the running sequence of the newscast. At some stations you’ll make a copy for the files and insert the original in a loose-leaf book from which you’ll work during your shift.

Most radio stations that feature news ask reporters to work the **beat check** (also called the **phone beat**, or the **phone check**). This consists of making phone calls to agencies and persons who are most likely to provide news items regularly. A typical beat list includes phone numbers and names of contacts for all nearby police, sheriff, disaster, fire, and weather departments; federal agencies such as the FBI, the Secret Service, the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Bureau, civil defense headquarters, and the National Guard; local and nearby jails and prisons; all local hospitals; all nearby airport control towers; and specialized agencies important to listeners in your community (farm bureau, earthquake stations).

When you work the beat check, plan to call each listed agency at the same time each day. Try to establish a personal relationship with the contact there. Discover how each contact prefers to work with you—whether you're allowed to tape the conversation or are permitted only to paraphrase statements. If it fits the news report, give credit to the people who supply your station with news items; most people are pleased to hear their names on the air. At the same time, you must respect requests for anonymity.

A related assignment is taping recorded messages prepared daily by a number of government agencies. By telephoning toll-free numbers in Washington, D.C., you can record feeds from agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, NASA, and both houses of Congress. Similar services are offered by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Through your station's computer you should be able to access government agencies through the Internet and copy to a storage disk or printer newsworthy stories or policy statements. These sources, of course, have their own purposes to serve. Be sure to check controversial information against other sources and clearly mention the source when using any of these feeds.

## Preparing for a Shift

When preparing for a news shift that will keep you on the air for two to four hours, you'll typically write, rewrite, and assemble about two hour's worth of material, including live copy, recorded reports, features, and commercials. While you're performing, a newswriter will be writing and assembling material for the remaining hours of your shift.

The checklist that the news editor prepares for you will include

**Figure 10.3**

Working in the newsroom before going on-air, a radio news announcer must digest evolving news stories from wire services and other sources, write and rewrite copy, edit recorded reports and actualities, and cart tapes. In the CNN Radio newsroom, personnel are involved in receiving news and processing stories into an original radio broadcast. (Courtesy of Turner Broadcasting System)



the stories to be featured, the order in which you should give them, and the **sounds** with which you'll work. Sounds are different from **sounders**, which are short musical IDs or logos that identify a particular feature such as a traffic or sports report. Sounds come in several forms:

An **actuality** is a brief statement made by someone other than station personnel, such as a newsmaker or eyewitness. It's recorded in the field on a battery-operated recorder or at the station by way of a cellular telephone.

In a **wrap**, or wraparound, a reporter records an opening that leads into an actuality, which is followed by the reporter's closing comments. The conclusion may be a brief summary, followed by a tag line such as, "Bill Hillman, KZZZ News."

A **voicer** is a report from a field reporter, usually sent to the station by short-wave radio, a conventional phone, or a cellular phone.

A **scener** is a report on a breaking event. It is usually broadcast live, but may also be taped for incorporation into a later broadcast.

**Raw sound** refers to what may be called "news noise"—protesters chanting or funeral music with no reporter commentary.

Actualities and wraps need **lead-ins** and **lead-outs**, sometimes called **intros** and **outros**. As you prepare for your shift, you listen to the sounds with which you'll work and write introductions and ending statements, as appropriate. In preparing lead-ins and lead-outs, you follow established practice at your station. Practices vary from station to station, but most follow a general pattern.

First, you'll make decisions about editing the actualities, voicers, and wraps with which you'll work, as well as any taped sceners to be repeated after their earlier live presentation. As you listen to each tape, you'll make decisions about the ten, fifteen, thirty, or more seconds you'd like to use on the newscast. Some of these will have been edited and carted by a field reporter, a newswriter, or another newscaster, so you may add them to your on-air material without alteration.

If your shift is during off-peak hours, such as in the middle of the night or on the weekend, you'll most likely rely on tapes prepared by others, because there'll be fewer station personnel to help you prepare or furnish you with updated material.

Most tapes used in newscasts, aside from taped feature reports, are edited electronically rather than manually. The tape excerpts you intend to use must be dubbed to a storage medium. One actuality or taped telephone interview often provides several sounds for a newscast. On your script you'll indicate the words that close each segment of the report so that the announcer who uses the tapes will know the **out cues**.

You'll also write a log that lists the numbers of the carts to be used, the general nature of each actuality, the running time of each, and their out cues, or end cues. Figure 10.4 shows one example of current practice in logging actualities. The log shows that the editor (who was also the reporter) was able to get three brief actualities from one recorded telephone conversation with a forest ranger. The general nature of each actuality is listed under SUBJECT, and the end cues allow the anchor to pick up immediately when the cut ends. When the precise end cue is also spoken earlier in the actuality, the person preparing the log writes **double out** in the END CUE column to indicate that fact. For example, if the phrase "as of now" had been used by the ranger twice in the first actuality, *double out* would have warned the newscaster against picking up the cue prematurely.

In preparing for a newscast, you must have a fairly accurate idea of the number of lines or pages you'll read in the allotted time.

RADIO NEWS ACTUALITY LOG			EDITOR: HEWITT
STORY AND REPORTER: Forest Fire, Hewitt			
CART #	SUBJECT	TIME	END CUE
N-35	Mt. Sakea forest ranger James Cleary---fire has burned over 3,000 acres	:16	"as of now."
N-99	No evidence as to cause. Arson not ruled out. Man seen leaving area at high speed in green sports car.	:11	"in a green sports car."
N-83	Should have it surrounded by tonight, and contained by midday tomorrow---depending on the weather.	:15	"a lot of tired fire-fighters will be able to go home."

**Figure 10.4**

An actuality log prepared by a reporter.

To project the amount of time it will take to read copy, count the number of lines on a typical page of copy and time yourself as you read aloud at your most comfortable and effective speed. If you read at about 180 words a minute, you'll read the following numbers of lines in the given time:

15 seconds = 4 lines  
 30 seconds = 8 lines  
 45 seconds = 12 lines  
 60 seconds = 16 lines

If a page of copy has thirty-two lines, for example, you'll read a page in about two minutes. With such information you can easily project the number of lines of copy needed for a newscast of a specific length.

Of course, a time chart is useful only for developing a sense of the relation between space (the physical copy) and time (the newscast). Experienced reporters have so developed this sense that

they can prepare newscasts without conscious thought of lines per minute or of their reading speed. As you work with a time chart, remember that actualities, commercials, and sounds—as well as your desire to vary your pace of reading to match the moods of the stories—will complicate your timing.

## Writing News

As a radio journalist, you'll be expected to write well and rapidly. To help you develop your writing skills, Chet Casselman, a highly experienced news director and former national president of the Radio-Television News Directors Association, offers the following guidelines.<sup>2</sup> They are, for the most part, equally applicable to writing news for television.

*Write for the ear rather than the eye.* Your audience doesn't see the script but only hears it. Sentences should be relatively short, the vocabulary should be geared to a heterogeneous audience, and



### CHECKLIST

#### Writing Effective News Copy

1. Write for the ear rather than the eye.
2. Avoid confusing words and statements.
3. Avoid redundancy.
4. Use the present tense and the active voice.
5. Avoid initials.
6. Don't give addresses.
7. Use official job titles.
8. Proofread for badly cast sentences.
9. Avoid using *we* to refer to yourself.
10. Don't refer to a suspect's past criminal record.

<sup>2</sup> Chet Casselman, *KSFO News Style Book* (San Francisco: Golden West Broadcasters), pp. 4–7.

potentially confusing statistics should be simplified. Here are some specific rules:

- Say it the simple way. Eliminate unnecessary ages, middle initials, addresses, occupations, unfamiliar or obscure names, precise or involved numbers, incidental information, and anything else that slows down or clutters up the story.
- Convert precise or involved numbers to a simplified form. For example, change 1,572 to “almost sixteen hundred,” 2.6 million to “slightly more than two and a half million,” and 35.7 percent to “nearly 36 percent.” Unless a number is an essential part of the story, it should be dropped.
- Express names of famous people and their relatives carefully to avoid confusion. For instance, “The wife of famous architect Sydney Nolan is dead; Mary Nolan died today in Chicago of heart failure” is much clearer than “Mary Nolan, 67, wife of famous architect Sydney Nolan, died today in Chicago.” (Note, also, that a news story shouldn’t begin with a name unless that name is known to nearly everybody.)
- Avoid indiscriminate use of personal pronouns. Repeat the names of the persons in the story rather than using *he*, *she*, or *they* whenever the slightest chance exists that the reference may be misunderstood.
- Report that a person pleads “innocent” rather than “not guilty.” The latter may be too easily misunderstood as its opposite.
- Avoid the words *latter*, *former*, and *respectively*, which are acceptable in print but unacceptable on the air because listeners have no way of referring to the original comment.
- Avoid hackneyed expressions common to newscasts but seldom heard in everyday conversation. Say *run* instead of *flee*, *looking for* instead of *seeking*, and *killed* or *murdered* instead of *slain*.
- Change direct quotations from first person to third person whenever the change will help listeners understand. It’s clearer to say, “The mayor says she’s going to get to the bottom of the matter” than to say, “The mayor says, and these are her words, ‘I’m going to get to the bottom of the matter,’ end of quote.”
- Always use contractions, unless the two words are needed for emphasis.

**Avoid confusing words and statements.** The following lead-in to a news story is seriously misleading: “We have good news

tonight for some veterans and their families. A House committee has approved a 6 percent cost-of-living increase.” People unfamiliar with the legislative process might assume that the money was as good as in the bank. Confusion can also arise from using a word pronounced the same as one with a different meaning (a homonym); for example, *expatriate* might easily be interpreted by a listener as *expatriot*, with embarrassing consequences.<sup>3</sup>

*Avoid redundancy.* Repeating important facts is advisable, but too frequent repetition is dull. As a bad example, a newscaster might say, “Senator Muncey has called the recent hike in the prime lending rate ‘outrageous,’” and then go to an actuality in which we hear the senator say, “The latest hike in the prime lending rate is, in my opinion, outrageous.” Work always for lead-ins that promote interest but don’t duplicate the story to follow.

*Use the present tense and the active voice.* Because the electronic media can report events as they happen, the present tense is appropriate. It automatically gives news an air of immediacy. The active voice uses verbs that give sentences power. Instead of writing “the passenger ship was rammed by a submarine in Hampton Roads,” write “A submarine rammed a passenger ship in Hampton Roads.”

*Avoid initials.* Use initials only when they’re so well-known that no misunderstanding is possible. A few standard abbreviations are readily identifiable; examples are FBI, U.S., YMCA, and CIA. Most abbreviations should be replaced with a recognizable title, followed later in the story with a qualifying phrase such as “the teachers’ association” or “the service group.”

*Don’t give addresses in news copy.* You may give addresses if they’re famous or essential to the story. “Ten Downing Street,” the home of the British prime minister, is a safe address to broadcast. The address of a murder suspect or an assault victim is not.

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<sup>3</sup>The word *expatriate* can be used to mean one who has renounced his or her native land, but its more common meaning refers to one who has taken up residence in a foreign country.

*Be careful to use official job titles.* Use *firefighters*, *police officers*, *mail carriers*, and *stevedores* rather than *firemen*, *policemen*, *mailmen*, and *longshoremen*.

*Be wary of badly cast sentences.* This example from a wire-service bulletin shows the peril of careless writing:

Detectives found 2½ pounds of oriental and Mexican heroin in a large woman's handbag when the car was stopped in south central Los Angeles

Listeners probably missed the next two news items while trying to decide whether the heroin was found in the handbag of a large woman or in a woman's large handbag.

*When referring to yourself, use I not we.* Such use of *we* is inaccurate and pretentious. No one person can be "we," although monarchs and high church officials have traditionally used *we* this way.

*Don't refer to a suspect's past criminal record.* Unless it is known to be true and is an important aspect of a present case, a suspect's past criminal record should not be mentioned. In most instances, a suspect's criminal record should be reported only after the suspect has been formally charged. Also, don't refer to any history of mental illness or treatment unless the information is essential to the story and has been checked for accuracy. Not only may reporting such information be defamatory; it may also prejudice the public against the person accused of a crime but not charged, tried, and convicted.

A simple and excellent way to check the clarity of your broadcast newswriting was developed by Irving Fang, who calls his system the easy listening formula (ELF).<sup>4</sup> It's applied by counting, in each sentence, every syllable above one per word. For example, the sentence "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog" has an ELF score of 2—1 for the second syllable in *over* and 1 for the second syllable in *lazy*. To find the total ELF score for a script, compute the ELF scores of all the sentences and average them.

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<sup>4</sup> Irving E. Fang, *Television News, Radio News*, 4th rev. ed. (St. Paul: Rada Press, 1985), pp. 42–43.

Fang's investigation of a wide variety of broadcast news scripts showed that the ELF scores of the most highly rated newswriters average below 12. If your sentences score consistently above that figure, you may not be writing well for aural comprehension. Fang points out, however, that no mechanical system of measuring language is infallible. Common sense must be applied at all times in using his formula, because "it is easy to devise a confusing sentence with a low ELF score, just as it is easy to devise a simple sentence with a high ELF score. . . . What the easy listening formula shows is tendency and trend."

## Delivering the News

When you've written and rewritten the copy you'll use during your air shift and when the sounds have been assembled and logged, you're ready to go on the air. As you sit in the on-air studio, you'll have before you the following items:

The **running log**, sometimes called a **run sheet**, follows the established format of your station and indicates the times at which you'll give headlines, features, time checks, commercials, and other newscast elements or the times at which they'll be played. The log may be on sheets of paper, on a computer screen, or on both.

The **continuity book**, which contains notations of recorded commercials you'll play.

Your **news script**, which will be loose sheets or which may appear on a video display screen.

An **elapsed-time clock**, which you can start and stop to help you time the commercials you'll read.

**Switches, or buttons**, that allow you to open and close your announce mic, to open and close the intercom or talk-back mic, and to open a mic in the newsroom for feeding out a news bulletin.

**Tape cart players, DAT (digital audiotape) machines** or the controls of a **computerized storage system** for the playing of actualities, commercials, station IDs, jingles, and such.

One or more lights used to send information to you while you're on the air. (For example, a red light might indicate that the newsroom has a bulletin to be read. A yellow light might tell you that the station's traffic reporter has a traffic alert.)

**Figure 10.5**

Internships are uniquely valuable when integrated with academic studies. William and Mary graduate Julie Dickson is interviewed on her arrival at the University of Houston, where Julie will serve a news internship while a graduate student in the School of Communication. (Courtesy of KUHF-FM, University of Houston)



The on-air studio may be equipped with a comfortable chair with caster legs that enable you to scoot in and out or from side to side. The chair may be designed to promote good posture, but no chair alone can make anyone sit up straight. The quality of your voice is directly affected by your posture; remember to sit comfortably but try to keep your spine as straight as possible. A slumping person can't breathe correctly, and a weakened diaphragm and abdominal muscles can't push air from your lungs through your phonators and articulators with sufficient strength.

Position yourself so you can easily reach the script, the continuity book, and the controls of both the elapsed-time clock and your mic. You'll be checking off commercials, PSAs, and other program elements as they occur, so make sure that you're in a position to reach the running log with your pencil. Unless you have an unusual voice or speech personality, you should position yourself six to ten inches from the mic. If you experience problems with excessive sibilance or popping, or if your voice sounds thin or strident, work with a station engineer to find a better way of using your mic.

When you're on the air with the news, you're the **anchor**. At

times you may be joined in the booth by a feature reporter, a field reporter who's returned from the scene of a news event, or a **co-anchor** (a second newscaster who'll alternate with you in the reading of news stories).

Most news announcers read copy at 175 to 200 words a minute. This speed is considered fast enough to give the appropriate degree of importance to the material, yet slow enough to be easily understood. At a station that carries only infrequent and brief reports, you may be asked to read at a much faster rate. The overall sound of the station will determine reading speed. To prepare for all eventualities, you should practice reading news in at least four different ways:

1. Practice reading the news slowly and casually, as preferred by many low-key stations.
2. Read the news at the rate you believe brings out the best in your voice, interpretive abilities, and personality.
3. Practice at a rate of approximately two hundred words a minute; this is the rate that may be expected of you.
4. Practice reading at your absolute maximum rate, with the realization that you're reading too fast if you stumble, slur words, have trouble maintaining controlled breathing, force your voice into stridency, or lose significant comprehensibility.

As you read, be prepared for mistakes you may make from misreading or stumbling over words, introducing the wrong recorded message, or cuing prematurely. Some argue that mistakes should be covered up rather than acknowledged, but the best practice is to acknowledge mistakes as frankly but unobtrusively as possible. Here's an example of a weak cover-up:

ANNCR: . . . and they'll have your car ready in a half-hour—or an hour and a half, whichever comes sooner.

The script read, "in an hour and a half." The cover-up is improper because it gives false information. Here's another example:

ANNCR: The press secretary delayed and relayed the president's statement on the meeting.

Here the cover-up is both inaccurate and so obvious that it would have been far better to have said, “The press secretary delayed—sorry, relayed—the president’s . . .”

When giving cues to a co-anchor, stop talking after throwing the cue; if you ramble on, you’ll talk over your partner’s opening words. No well-run station will tolerate such sloppiness. In throwing cues, don’t think it amateurish to make your gestures big, clean, and precise. The best professionals never lapse into practices that can impair the program or their own performance.

You may be handling a great deal of paper during your air shift, so develop skill in shifting papers without allowing the sound of rattling paper to be picked up by your mic. You’ll lift script pages from the pile in front of you, move them to one side, and turn script pages in the continuity book. No materials should be stapled together. You should have no need to turn over pages while on the air.

You’ll have many opportunities during a normal shift to talk directly with your producer, co-anchor, or sports, traffic, or weather reporter. Use these opportunities for consultation wisely, but not too often; it’s important that you not lose track of what your audience is hearing at such times. Check details that might prevent errors; tell the producer that you’re going to shorten or dump a story because you’re running late; if in doubt, ask what the next sound is to be. But know at all times what’s going out over the air. More than one anchor has followed a tragic actuality with an inappropriate wisecrack. Also, the wrong package may have been played. If you weren’t listening, you couldn’t possibly correct the mistake.

Be prepared to make constructive use of the minutes you have during your shift when you’re not actually on the air. During breaks of thirty to sixty seconds, bring your logging up to date; check out the next few sounds you’ll introduce or cue; see whether you’re running ahead of, behind, or right on schedule. During longer breaks, you may have to write intros to actualities or voicers that were received and edited while you were on the air.

Three- or four-hour shifts aren’t uncommon at stations that feature news. It takes a healthy speech mechanism to continue to perform well day after day. Hoarseness, sore throat, or similar disorders may quickly signal any misuse of your vocal apparatus. Always have such symptoms checked out by a doctor.

Long before you apply for a position as a news anchor, you should practice performing as you’ll be expected to perform on the

job. Practicing means not only learning to work with all the elements of a contemporary newscast but also reading the news for extended periods. Such practice can't ordinarily occur in a classroom, so look for outside opportunities to perform. College radio stations offer realistic challenges to students preparing for careers as radio news personnel.

## The Radio Field Reporter

Field reporters are responsible for (1) live coverage of events as they occur; (2) recorded actualities, voicers, and wraps; and (3) occasional research for, and production of, **minidocs**, brief documentaries presented as a series, usually over several days. Radio field reporters are sometimes called general-assignment reporters, correspondents, or special-assignment reporters. Their work is similar to that of their television counterparts, with obvious variations because of differences in electronic technology.

### Live Reporting

When you report live, it's your responsibility to create a word picture of a scene, including sights, sounds, smells, tension in the air, and factual details—the extent of a blaze, the names of the victims, or the value of stolen goods. When reporting live, you may be equipped with a cell phone. You'll use it to indicate when you're ready to give your report, and you'll hear your cue to start as the program line is fed to you. Even when you're describing events as they occur (a *live scener*), as opposed to reporting at the conclusion of an event, you may work from notes that you scribbled as you gathered information.

As you give a live report, keep these suggestions in mind:

- Don't report rumors, unless they're essential to the story—and then report them only as rumors.
- Don't make unsubstantiated guesses as to facts such as numbers of people injured or the value of a gutted building.
- Control your emotions. Remember, though, that a bit of genuine excitement in your voice will convey the significance of your report.

- Don't identify yourself at the start of the report because the anchor will already have given your name. Identify yourself at the close of the story, following the policy set down by your station.
- In the event of physical danger—a police siege or a confrontation between rival groups or street gangs—don't become so absorbed in your story that you endanger yourself or your station's equipment.
- Be prepared to discuss the event with the anchor after you've given your report. This means doing sufficient investigation prior to going on the air to enable you to answer questions.

### **Voicers, Actualities, Sceners, and Wraps**

Most of your work as a field reporter won't be broadcast live but will be in the form of **packages**, which consist of wraps, voicers, and edited sceners. When recording in the field, you'll use a cassette tape recorder; when making packages at the station, you'll most likely dub from cassettes to a mass-storage disk or to digital audiotape cassettes (DAT). These will be the sounds introduced by news anchors during their shifts.

**Field voicers** usually are transmitted to the station by cell phone. After making notes, you call the newsroom of your station and notify a reporter or producer that you're ready to file a report. The person who takes your call will prepare to activate a storage medium—hard disk, tape cart, or DAT cassette—and will place an index finger on the start button. You give a brief countdown—"three, two, one"—and start your report; the recorder is activated just after you say, "one." If all goes well, the recording and your report begin at the same time. Voicers made at the station are produced in essentially the same way, although you'll typically perform all of the work without assistance.

Some field reporters must use a conventional telephone to send in voicers. If you're reporting live, your voice is put directly on the air. The process becomes less desirable when you're sending a report with one or more actualities that you've previously recorded. You'll have to speak into the mouthpiece of a conventional or cellular phone, roll your tape, quickly move the telephone's mouth piece down to the speaker of your recorder to send the bulk of your report, and then move the handset up to your mouth to make your closing comments and tag.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Philosophies of Radio and Television Journalism

As a journalist working for a television, radio or cable news station (such as CNN), you'll make important decisions daily. The way you report stories will influence attitudes and actions of your listeners and viewers. Because of this, it's essential that you develop a working philosophy of broadcast journalism. When an important story breaks, it's far too late for you to start making decisions about your responsibilities, values, and philosophy of broadcast journalism.

In a democracy only two theories of the press are worthy of consideration. The first, the **libertarian theory**, is based on the belief that, except for defamation, obscenity, or wartime sedition, there should be no censorship or suppression of news whatsoever. The second theory, which Wilbur Schramm named the **social responsibility theory**, maintains that journalists must exercise judgment as to whether a particular story should be covered or ignored and, if covered, how it should be covered.<sup>5</sup>

The libertarian theory of the press grew out of democratic movements in England near the end of the seventeenth century and received renewed momentum a hundred years later through the writings and speeches of Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, and other American revolutionaries. Essentially, the libertarian theory was a response to centuries of suppression and censorship by church and state. Jefferson believed that the only security a democratic people have is grounded in a fully informed electorate. "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be," wrote Jefferson in 1816. The implementation of this statement is clear: allow full and free publication of all shades of opinion and all items of information; the basic assumption of the libertarians was (and is) that a free people in full possession of the facts will act responsibly.

The social responsibility theory was a response to what many saw as shortcomings in the idealistic libertarian theory. In practice, the public simply wasn't receiving all of the facts necessary to make responsible decisions. In the wake of the civil disorders of the late 1960s, a presidential commission called attention to what was seen as the failure of the press to adequately inform the public. "Disorders are only one aspect of the dilemmas and difficulties of race relations in America. In defining, explaining, and reporting this broader, more complex and

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<sup>5</sup>Wilbur Schramm, *Responsibility in Mass Communication* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957).

ultimately far more fundamental subject, the communications media, ironically, have failed to communicate.”<sup>6</sup>

A libertarian approach to riot coverage was unacceptable to the commission for several reasons: reported facts may have been exceptional rather than typical; disclosing some facts may have caused even more serious incidents; and, although the reported fact indeed may have happened, it may have occurred only because the news media were encouraging certain actions by their very presence. The social responsibility theory of the press asks that journalists report not only the facts, but also *the truth behind the facts*.

The concerns expressed over a libertarian approach to journalism are understandable when one thinks of serious news events such as riots, wars, or insurrections. The social responsibility theory demands that journalists apply their best judgment and weigh their conduct on a daily basis without regard to the nature or scope of the story being covered. Both the libertarian and the social responsibility theories of news coverage ask that reporters be responsible journalists; all reporters should start with good intentions, but a well-meant beginning is not enough. Only a solid education in broadcast and journalistic law, ethics, and investigative reporting can lead to success as a responsible broadcast journalist.

<sup>6</sup> *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York: Bantam, 1968), pp. 382–383.

Although he was but one of many supporters of the Bill of Rights—others were James Madison and George Mason—no one fought harder for its adoption than Thomas Jefferson. His tenacious support of the First Amendment helped gain its passage, thereby guaranteeing Americans freedom of speech, religion, and the press. (Stock Montage)



If you're reporting from one of your station's "bureaus," such as city hall, the court house, or a police station, you'll most likely use a telephone that's been rewired by a station engineer. The handset will have been outfitted with a miniplug that allows the cable from your recorder to bypass the telephone's built-in microphone and pass directly over the line to your station. The signal quality is excellent.

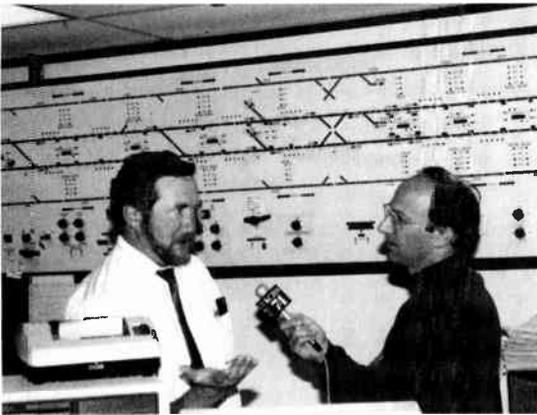
A **wrap** is phoned in essentially the same way as a voicer, except for this difference: When all elements are connected, your tape is cued, your mic switch is on, and the record key is depressed, you give the countdown and begin your introduction to the actuality live. When you finish, you depress the play key and the tape rolls. When the actuality is completed, you hit the record key; this cancels the play key, so the tape stops rolling while you give your closing tag live.

In making wraps at the station, you begin by making and recording telephone calls. If there's a news story on an impending strike, for example, your phone calls may be to the union leader, the speaker for the company or agency being threatened, and a labor negotiator. From the telephone interviews you should be able to make several usable wraps—carted, timed, and ready to be logged.

### Preparing Feature Reports: Minidocs

Radio stations that emphasize news sometimes vary their programming by broadcasting feature reports or short documentaries. These may be a series of three- or four-minute programs, made up of as few as three or as many as seven individual segments, each focusing on a different aspect of a topic. Feature reports deal with people, problems, events, or anything else that's of general interest but lacks the "hard news" character that demands coverage on a regular newscast. Breaking news stories, in fact, frequently inspire feature reports, but features differ from news stories in that they provide much more detail, offer greater perspective, and often express a point of view.

Preparing a series of feature reports begins with the selection of a topic. An editor may occasionally choose a topic for you, but, as a feature reporter, you're expected to come up with promising ideas of your own. It's obvious that your overriding responsibility is to report on issues of general interest. That's the easy part. The more difficult task is finding ways to make your reports appealing. As a reporter on *radio*, a good starting point is with *sounds*. Ask yourself what kinds of sounds can be used to take advantage of your me-



**Figure 10.6**

Special assignment reporter Mike Sugerman interviews municipal railway official Len Olson as he gathers information for a five-part minidoc on public transportation. Each segment runs from 2 minutes, 17 seconds to 2:37. Back at the station, Sugerman listens to the material he recorded in the field, edited, and assembled in the order in which it will be broadcast. He now records his connecting narration. (Courtesy of Mike Sugerman and KCBS)

dium. No report can be considered a success unless it captures and holds the attention of your listeners, and a succession of statements by public officials, for example, isn't likely to be dramatic or even interesting. At the same time, official position statements interspersed with more dramatic actualities, sound effects, and narration can deliver a series that first grabs audience attention and then satisfies audience curiosity through a fast-paced, varied, and aurally stimulating presentation.

Once you've chosen or been assigned a topic, your job will include researching the subject; identifying and interviewing people you believe will contribute the information you need; editing and organizing the taped materials; writing the connective and interpretive narration; voicing the narration; and producing the final mixed versions of the program segments. The steps in creating a series are illustrated in the following example on the topic of **homelessness**.

***Researching the Topic*** Your research plan is essential to the success of the series. Developing a personal system for researching can save hours, reduce the possibility of mistakes, and result in a superior product. You most likely will want to begin your research with an on-line information service. One such service, EBSCO, en-

codes more than three thousand newspapers, nearly all popular magazines, government documents, encyclopedias, and specialized journals. The system operates on the basis of author, title, or key words. In searching for information on the homeless, you type *homeless* on the keyboard, and the display will show how many articles are available.

If you ask only for articles on *homelessness*, the number found will be staggering, so you'll want to narrow it down by city or state, age, socioeconomic group, or some other criterion. As an example of the wealth of information available to you as a researcher, a combining of the key word *homelessness* with the names of specific cities will produce a number of articles for each, including (in a recent search) seven for Hoboken, New Jersey; five for Kansas City; thirty-one for Seattle; twelve for Houston; twenty-nine for Miami; and sixty-two for San Francisco. The title and a few descriptive words about each article can be read and, when selected, complete articles can be printed for your appraisal and possible use. Eventually, you'll select a number of articles and activate a printer to produce hard copy.

Other sources of information include *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*, *Facts on File*, the *New York Times Index*, the U.S. Government's *Statistical Abstract*, and encyclopedias and almanacs. With a few hours of searching, you'll gather some of the basic facts and representative opinions about homelessness.

**Outlining the Series** Having read several articles and compiled some basic statistics about homelessness, you're ready to make some tentative decisions about the series. If you and the news director agree that the topic is important and complex, perhaps five or six segments will be allotted to it. You may decide that your final segment will provide explicit recommendations. You'll also decide on the number of people to be interviewed and their specializations.

Segment 1—Basic facts about homelessness and statistics. To make listeners aware that the problem of homelessness is large and growing, you include many sound bites of homeless people, citizens who are angry about people sleeping in parks or doorways, and some who are genuinely concerned about the safety and welfare of homeless people. You also "tease" a number of questions that you'll address in later broadcasts.

- Segment 2—What a homeless person experiences. Made up of edited comments by several homeless people recorded in a park, under a viaduct, or any other site where they congregate.
- Segment 3—A police view of homeless people. This segment features the edited comments of a police officer as well as one or more police officials. Discusses the problems of sanitation and aggressive panhandling that are caused by some who are homeless.
- Segment 4—Attitudes of neighbors, tourists, and businesspersons. Shows a range of attitudes held by people who are not themselves homeless but who nonetheless are affected by homelessness.
- Segment 5—Causes of homelessness. Includes comments from social workers, psychiatrists, or other authorities on the subject.
- Segment 6—What society should do to help homeless people. Consists of suggestions offered by each of the persons interviewed for the series.

***Recording Interviews*** Because all your interviews will be in the field, you'll need a high-quality, lightweight, battery-operated tape recorder. You'll also need a professional external microphone. Micro-cassette recorders, regardless of their value in other applications, lack the sound quality required for broadcasts.

Before making dates for interviews, speak with the people you've tentatively selected for the program. Tell them that you want ideas and information, but don't invite them to be interviewed until you're satisfied that they're articulate, knowledgeable, and cooperative. You may find that you must look further for your talent. Of course, you won't be able to phone homeless people to screen them or set up appointments, so there's no reason to delay taping them. Obtain their permission to tape, then roll your cassette and start asking questions.

Before each recording session, prepare a list of questions. Be as thorough as possible in your preparation; the audio quality of your program will suffer if you have to record the same person on two or more occasions or in different locations. Ambient noise and acoustics should be as consistent as possible within each program segment.

Tips on interviewing are given in Chapter 9; the following checklist and comments add some suggestions applicable to recording material for feature reports.



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Recording Interviews Successfully**

1. Test your equipment before beginning an interview.
2. Explain your taping and editing procedures to the interviewee.
3. When you're ready to begin, ask the interviewee to remain silent and then start recording.
4. Avoid giving vocal reinforcements such as "Uh-huhs" during the guest's remarks.
5. Keep the recorder running.
6. Limit your recording sessions to a reasonable length.
7. Keep your station's format restrictions in mind.
8. If there is ambient noise, keep the mic close to the interviewee's mouth.

Test your equipment before beginning the interview, no matter how experienced you are. Even professionals sometimes complete interviews only to discover that their batteries were weak, the machine was not recording, the volume level was too high or too low, or the absence of a windscreen on the mic resulted in excessive wind blast. Try to test your equipment under the exact conditions and in the precise location of the interview. At frequent points during your taping, spot check your tape to make sure that your equipment is working properly.

Take time to explain taping and editing procedures to the interviewee. It's important for your guest to know that all your comments and questions will be removed from the tape and replaced by narration recorded in the studio. This means that your guest should make direct, complete statements, not preceded by references to the questions. Here are two responses to the same question, one good, one not so good:

ANNCR: What do you believe should be done to combat homelessness in America?

ANSWER 1: I don't really have the answers. It seems like an almost hopeless situation.

ANSWER 2: To make a dent in homelessness, we need to find out just who the homeless are and how they became homeless.

The second answer will be easier to edit, will provide more precise information than the first answer, and will allow a smoother flow from narration to statement. You can't expect every person you interview to overcome a lifetime of conversational habit, but you can expect reasonable cooperation.

When you're ready to begin the interview, ask the interviewee to remain silent and then start recording. Record about thirty seconds of dead air. This precaution provides you with **ambient sound** for insertion at any point at which you want an undetectable pause. All rooms other than those designed for scientific tests have ambient noise, and no two rooms are acoustically alike. You *could* splice in the ambient sound from another interview, or blank tape, but either of these options would be noticeable to any attentive listener. You'll rarely need the ambient sound you record, but when you do you'll be grateful for having developed the habit of recording it before every interview.

It's also good practice to allow the tape recorder to run for a few seconds after your guest has stopped speaking. Later, when you're editing and writing your script, you may want to do a fade-out at the end of one or another of your guest's comments. If you've abruptly stopped the recorder immediately at the conclusion of your guest's remarks, there's no way to do a fade.

When recording in the field—as for the homelessness series—record every sound you might conceivably want to use later as you edit your tapes and write narration. If you realize you need a particular sound after you've returned to the station, it most likely is too late to return to the field to record what you missed; timelines are so tight that you should gather every sound you may later want to include. When interviewing a person living in an automobile, for

example, record the sound of a car door slamming; record the sound of a dog barking, if that's an appropriate (and genuine) sound relating to a pet-owning homeless person; record traffic sounds, the sounds of buses, streetcars, and trains if they'll add a touch of honest reality; record the songs of birds and of wind whistling through trees if those sounds are actually present in the environment you're mirroring. Radio, being an aural medium, benefits greatly from the ambiance of an environment established through its sounds. At the same time, never resort to the use of faked sound effects in a piece that's offered as reality.

As you interview, avoid giving your guest vocal reinforcement, such as "Uh-huh" or "I see." These will be impossible to edit out when you assemble the program. Nonverbal support—a nod of the head or smile—is sufficient to encourage a guest to continue.

During the interview, try to keep the recorder running. Don't hesitate to stop it, however, if the session's going badly. The reason for an uninterrupted take is that most people are more alert and energized when they believe that what they're saying will be heard later on the air. Constant stopping and starting saps energy and reduces concentration.

Keep your taping sessions to a reasonable length. A ninety-minute interview to be edited as part of a three-minute program segment will cost you hours of production time. Therefore, work for interviews that are long enough to supply you with the material you need but not so long as to saddle you with hours of editing.

As you interview, keep the format of your station's feature reports in mind. If, for example, your station prefers to use both your questions and your guest's answers on the final tape, your interviewing technique should reflect that fact. You'll not have to ask guests to answer your questions in the form of self-contained statements.

Train yourself to detect slurred speech patterns. Some people run words together so habitually and consistently that it's impossible to edit their comments effectively. If you aren't alert to this potential problem, it'll be too late to do much about it when sitting at a tape editing station. When your ears tell you that you're working with a slurrer, do your best to slow the person down. If this attempt fails, ask the guest to repeat single phrases and sentences that seem to be the most important contributions you'll later use in your report.

When recording at any location that has a high level of ambient

sound (machinery, traffic, crowds), hold your mic close to your guest's mouth. As mentioned earlier, authentic background sounds can enhance the realism of your report, but they mustn't be so loud as to interfere with your guest's remarks. If you'll later edit out your questions, you needn't move the mic back and forth between you and your guest. If, on the other hand, you're to retain even some of your questions or comments, then you must develop skill in moving the mic. To avoid mic-handling noise, wrap the cord around your wrist. Such noises are especially troublesome because they can be heard only on playback or by monitoring during the interview, a practice seldom followed by people working solo.

It's essential that you follow station policy in having those interviewed sign release or permission forms. This requirement may not be a problem when interviewing a public official or other person who can be contacted later for signing, but anyone who doesn't have a permanent address—such as a homeless person—must sign a form before you leave the site of the interview.

After completing each interview, make notes on everything that will later help you in editing—name of guest, topics covered, comments of special importance, and so on. And, of course, label each tape!

Your next step will be to do a rough edit of your tapes. You'll audition each tape and dub statements that seem likely for inclusion in your final version to another cassette recorder or to tape carts. If you have access to state-of-the-art equipment, your work can be done entirely on an editing system, such as DigiCart.<sup>7</sup> If not, you may have to dub to quarter-inch reel-to-reel tape and manually edit your tape by cutting and splicing. Cassette recorders of even a few years ago are difficult to cue up and are imprecise for electronic editing.

If time permits, make a typescript of each roughly edited interview, preferably on a word processor that allows you to cut and paste. The written word is far easier to identify, retrieve, manipulate, and edit than are words on an audiotape. When writing the narrative script, you'll find it easier to develop a smooth flow with precise lead-ins when working in print. Making a typescript may actually save time.

Having completed the script, do the fine editing of the rough

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<sup>7</sup>The DigiCart II is described in Chapter 6, "Broadcast Equipment."

dub. As suggested previously, if you lack precision editing equipment you may have to manually cut and splice the tape. Electronic editing on less-than-professional equipment is an option when you have little time to cut and splice, but it has serious drawbacks. Manual editing allows you to remove unwanted pauses, *ers* and *uhs*, or even single words. It also allows you to take a portion of an answer from one part of the interview and join it to an answer from another. A word of caution: It's critical that such editing preserve the sense of your guest's comments and never be used for any purpose other than clarifying your guest's position and making your report as factually honest as it can be.

When editing your tapes, you may find that some statements that looked good in the written script don't come out well in sound. Be prepared to go back to the roughly edited version to look for substitutes or to rewrite your script to make the narrative sound better or clearer.

Finally, record your narration. Often, you'll have to sit in an announce booth or a small production room and do a real-time recording, alternately feeding your voice and the edited and carted actualities to a tape recorder. It's also possible to record your narration without the edited inserts and to mix the entire report later.



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Reading News Copy Cold**

You or your instructor can obtain printouts of up-to-the-minute news copy through the Internet. Among many others, Reuters, Pan Africa News Agency (PANA), Agence France Presse, and Voice of America offer current headlines, complete news scripts, and features. These can be selected and printed for practice in news reading. *Note, though, that some news providers restrict their service to contractual subscribers.*

***PRACTICE*****Rewriting News Copy**

Because much news copy on the Internet is written in newspaper style it can be used for valuable practice in rewriting it for a better news sound.

***PRACTICE*****Performing Commercials  
on the Side**

Some stations have policies that prohibit news reporters or newscasters from reading commercials; most do not. To practice delivery of commercial copy, choose several scripts from Appendix A and read them aloud until you feel confident enough to record your performance. Listen to the tape closely, noting pacing, tone, and pronunciation. Decide what types of commercials best suit your personality and your voice.



# 11

## Television News

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Television Reporters
  - Preparing a Package on Tape
  - Reporting Live from the Field
- The News Anchor
  - Working Conditions and Responsibilities
  - Using a Prompter
- SPOTLIGHT: A Representative Television News Operation
- Weather Reporting

Television news varies from brief voice-over slide bulletins to the twenty-four-hour coverage of Cable News Network (CNN). Most large television stations produce two or three news programs daily, some thirty minutes in length and some lasting an hour. These are typically broadcast at noon, at the dinner hour, and at ten or eleven o'clock at night. A few stations have an early morning newscast. Except for those in small markets, most news departments are large in relation to a station's total employment. Departments range from about a dozen to nearly one hundred employees. Television news programs are put together by reporters, anchors, newswriters, videotape crews, mobile van operators, operators of special-effects generators and computer graphics systems, tape editors, and a production crew working in the studio, the control room, and the videotape room.

**Figure 11.1**

A control center, known as “The Desk,” is a prominently placed, high-energy site found in television newsrooms the world over. An assignment editor is stationed there to schedule reporters, camera operators, and newswriters to every detail of the day’s effort. A record is maintained that follows the progress of each story from the time it’s chosen, to when and to whom it’s assigned, and when it’s delivered. The Desk is essential for the coordination of television news personnel and resources. (Courtesy KTVU, Oakland)



## Television Reporters

Journalists who work away from the station are called **field reporters**, **general-assignment reporters**, or just plain **reporters**. Reporters stationed some distance away are called **correspondents**. As a **special-assignment** reporter, you might cover a regular beat such as crime, politics, or a particular section of a large city. Although few stations can afford such specialists on a regular basis, some place field reporters on special assignment from time to time.

As a field or general-assignment reporter, you’ll receive your daily schedule from an **assignment editor** (the **desk**). Some assignments will involve covering **hard news**—serious accidents or crimes, fires, explosions, chemical spills, tornadoes, and similar unanticipated events; others will be concerned with **soft news**—meetings, briefings, hearings, news conferences, and so on. News departments maintain a **future file**, consisting of thirty-one folders (for the days of the month), into which is placed information about scheduled soft news events. As notices of planned events reach the

station, they're placed in the folder bearing the appropriate date. Each day, the assignment editor searches the file for the most promising news stories and schedules reporters and camera operators to cover them. Scheduled coverage of soft news is often dropped at the last minute in favor of late-breaking hard news.

As a field reporter, you'll work both live and on tape. When reporting on tape, you'll have an opportunity to plan your coverage, engage in on-site investigation, think through and write your opening and closing stand-ups, and record a second or third take if the first effort falls apart. A **stand-up** is a statement by a reporter directly into the camera lens (in other words, addressed to the viewers). It may come at any point in a taped story, but nearly always closes it.

When reporting live by way of microwave or satellite transmission, you'll report events as they happen, and this precludes scriptwriting and reshooting. Your ability to ad-lib an unfolding news event in an accurate, effective manner is the key to success in live reporting.

Taped and live field reports on television newscasts are often longer than stories prepared for radio. Television coverage is much more expensive and time consuming, and involves greater technical complexities. Therefore, you'll be expected to cover only one or two stories in a day. You mustn't assume that your field reports will dominate a newscast, however, for most packages run between thirty seconds and three minutes. To create a usable sixty-second report, you may spend several hours, both in the field and back at your station. You'll use part of the time investigating the story, lining up witnesses or others you want to interview, conducting interviews, making notes for stand-ups, and taping them. More time is consumed after you return to the station because, at nearly every station, reporters edit their tapes, write voice-over narration, record the narration, and assemble a complete **package** (a report that will need only a lead-in by a news anchor).

## Preparing a Package on Tape

As a reporter, you'll follow certain steps in making a news package. Each day at the station, the assignment editor gives you your assignment. If much hard news is breaking, you'll be told what you're to cover; if it's a slow news day, you may be given a soft news story to cover and perhaps be asked for ideas. After receiving the assign-

ment, you leave the station with an **electronic news-gathering (ENG)** operator.<sup>1</sup>

You may travel in a station wagon with little equipment, in a van with equipment for viewing and editing tapes on your back to the station, a truck equipped to send taped reports to the station via microwave transmission, or a truck with uplink equipment that bounces program material off a satellite to a receiver at the station.

On arriving at the scene of the story, you undertake appropriate research to learn what's happened, who's involved, what's going on at the moment, why the event is happening—in other words, you pursue answers to the traditional *who, what, when, where, why, and how* of journalism. As you investigate, the ENG operator is taping whatever is essential or potentially useful in telling the story, including general scenes of action—the overall wreckage of a multiple-car accident, shots of flames shooting from windows and roof of a burning warehouse, or waters spilling through gaps in a levee, for example. Figure 11.2 shows ENG operator George Griswold covering a less-sensational story: Working at the scene of a warehouse whose mural has stirred controversy, he's seen taping cover shots, reporter Mark Jones' interviews with an artist and a person opposing the mural, and standing on the scaffold, looking for interesting or illustrative visual material.

As you gather information, you take notes. At this stage you haven't decided how you'll structure the report, so you commit to notes almost anything that turns up. As the story begins to take shape in your mind, you ask the ENG operator to tape this or that person or object, most particularly interviews with eyewitnesses or spokespersons whose edited comments may become **sound bites**, the television equivalent of radio **actualities**. After all notes have been taken and all visual material has been taped, you do your stand-ups. You may begin your report by addressing the camera with an introduction, and you may tape one or more on-camera comments to be edited into the completed package; you then do an on-camera summary, closing with the phrase that "tosses" your report to the anchor.

Before leaving the scene of your report, you may ask the ENG operator to tape material to be used as **cutaway shots, or cutaways**. Cutaways are a form of insurance used to avoid **jump cuts**.

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<sup>1</sup>Reporters at some stations must do their own ENG work.



**Figure 11.2**

(A) Camera operator George Griswold begins his coverage of a story with a wide-angle shot. Seventy women artists are creating a huge mural to commemorate Women's History Month. (B) A close-up of one artist at work is next videotaped. (C) Camera operator Griswold, on the scaffolding, looks for interesting shots of the mural and artists at work. (D) Reporter Mark Jones is taped while interviewing an artist about the mural project. He asks for her thoughts as to why the mural is controversial. (E) An interview with a person protesting the creating of the mural is taped a short distance away. (F) The remote van features a complete recording and editing station. Reporter Mark Jones edits the taped interviews, his opening and closing stand-ups, and establishing shots of the mural project into a complete package. The microwave transmitter atop the van sends the package back to the station for inclusion in the evening newscast. (Shots courtesy of Mark Jones, George Griswold, and KRON)

When editing an interview, you may want to delete some comments the speaker made while in front of the camera. The insertion of a brief shot of you apparently listening to the speaker will camouflage this kind of cut and keep viewers from noticing any change in position—a jump—of the speaker between comments. To prepare for the possible need of cutaways, you'll ask the ENG operator to tape you after the interview as you look past the camera lens. If possible, do your cutaways while the person you've interviewed is still present. Also, remember that because a cutaway is not an actual, real-time shot of you listening to the speaker, it's *imperative* that your reactions be as true to the spirit of the interview as possible. A popular motion picture of 1988, *Broadcast News*, made contrived cutaway shots the focus of its condemnation of unethical journalistic practices.

Back at the station—if you've not already done so on the drive back—you sit at an editing console in or near the newsroom to view the tapes, make editing decisions, and write a script that you'll record in an announce booth equipped with a microphone and an **equalizer**. You'll have worked with a station engineer to learn how to adjust the equalizer so your voice will sound as close as possible to the way it sounded when recorded in the field. In writing a script, you'll use a conventional format and certain abbreviations. Many of the abbreviations (and their meaning) used in television scripts are listed in Table 11.1.

Your final step is to mix videotaped shots that tell the story, general shots of the scene, sound bites, stand-ups, and your voice-over audio narration into a package.<sup>2</sup> When the package has been labeled, it's ready to be sent to the videotape room, where it will be held for playing during the newscast. Figure 11.4 is an example of a partial editing script.

As you prepare a package keep in mind the visual effects available to you. In general, visuals are available from a character generator, a design computer, videotape recorders, and switchers. The appropriate use of these resources can give your stories more visual appeal and make them more understandable and more informative.

The **character generator** prints out names to identify persons

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<sup>2</sup>You can view tapes in a camera's viewfinder, and perform both logging and in-camera editing. Some reporters do this on their way back to their station.

**TABLE 11.1 Abbreviations Used in Television Scripts**

ABBREVIATION	MEANING
TS	Tight shot
CU	Close-up
MCU	Medium close-up
ECU or XCU	Extreme close-up
MS	Medium shot
WS or LS	Wide shot or long shot
ELS or XLS	Extreme long shot
OS	Over-the-shoulder shot (usually over the reporter's shoulder and showing the person being interviewed face-on)
RS	Reverse shot (reporter listening to person being interviewed)
TWO-SHOT	A shot with two people in the frame
PAN	Camera moves right to left or left to right
TILT	Camera moves up or down
SOT	Sound on tape
SLO-MO	Slow motion
VO	Voice-over
CUT	A brief scene on tape, an actuality, a voicer, or a wrap
IN	Indicates the words that open a sound bite
OUT	Indicates the words that end a sound bite
SLUG	The slug line, a brief title given to a news story for identification purposes
TRT	Total running time

**Figure 11.3**

When reporting live from the field, reporters must ad-lib their news stories without a floor director, monitor, or teleprompter. This reporter holds her notes below camera range and refers to them only when necessary; for most of her report, she speaks directly into the camera lens to maintain eye contact with viewers. (Froscher/The Image Works)



and places and creates pie charts and bar graphs, including animated graphs, and **keys** (images—usually lettering—keyed into a background image). The **character generator** also produces reveals, hot changes, and rolls. A **reveal** flashes key terms on the screen to highlight the points being made by the speaker. A **hot change** occurs when words or statements are flashed on the screen for a moment and then replaced. A **roll** occurs when information moves from bottom to top and off the screen as the speaker voices it—just as images scroll up or down a computer monitor screen.

The **design computer** features a keyboard, a design monitor, an electronic tablet with stylus, and a menu (a list of effects that can be produced by the computer). The stylus, or electronic pen, works by completing an electrical connection when it touches the tablet. Among other effects, the design computer can generate many styles of lettering; boxes, circles, and other shapes; and animated graphics.

**Videotape recorders** provide material taped off a parent network, from CNN, or from a satellite feed and can store both file materials and bumpers. **Bumpers** are stills or moving shots, usually with lettering, that “bump” the story, from one scene to another.

The **switcher** moves video images anywhere on the screen and also keys in **box graphics**—pictures and words that symbolize the

story, usually placed in the upper left or upper right portion of the screen. A switcher can also produce a great variety of wipes. A **wipe** occurs when one picture gradually replaces another; the first picture is wiped, or pushed off the screen. Wipes have various configurations, but the simplest—and most often used—are horizontal and vertical.

The script you'll prepare for each package will list all cuts (scenes) to be used, identified by tape number and time code address. The **time code** is an electronic readout that gives an address (number) for each frame. Figure 11.4 shows the opening portion of a typical format for editing and assembling a package. *TAL* means talent, and the initials below it (*LC*) identify the reporter. *SLUG* is the slug line, a brief title given to identify the story. *TIME* gives the running time. The left side of the script is the video information column with with time code information, descriptions of what is being seen, and *CG* instructions; *CG* indicates that a super title is to be made by the character generator operator. The audio column is on the right. The words to be spoken by the reporter are in **UPPERCASE**, and the words spoken by the witness are in lowercase. *SOT* means sound on tape. In the final sound bites, the script indicates only the in cue and the out cue.

**Figure 11.4**

A script for a video package identifies the cuts used by tape number and time code address.

Thurs, Aug 19		11:18		Page 1	
TAL	STORY SLUG	GRAPHIC	VIS	TIME	
LC	BAD TEMPER?		SOT	2:58	
*CG Ripton me with Simpson		28-YEAR OLD EDWIN SIMPSEN CLAIMS THAT RIPTON MOTORIST, FRANK LEWIS, SEVERELY BEAT HIS PASSENGER AFTER A MINOR FENDER BENDER ON AUGUST FIRST.			

<p>various shots,  tape 1, 5:57 on  or :40 on.  street signs,  10:39</p>	<p>THE INCIDENT BEGAN AT LINDARO AND LINCOLN IN  RIPTON WHEN SIMPSEN AND HIS COMPANION  SIDESWIPE A VAN.</p>
<p>intersections,  10:55</p>	
<p>rolling shots  through streets,  11:50 on</p>	<p>THE TWO MEN STARTED TO PULL OVER, WHEN THEY  SAY THEY THOUGHT THEY SAW LEWIS PULL A GUN  FROM HIS GLOVE COMPARTMENT. THEY TOOK OFF AT  HIGH SPEED THROUGH SEVERAL NEIGHBORHOODS TO  AVOID A CONFRONTATION.</p>
<p>shot of r.r. X-ing  tape 2, 3:31-3:50  CG 2 line  Edwin Simpsen  Witness  tape 1, 1:56-2:03</p>	<p>THEY WERE FORCED TO STOP AT A RAILROAD  CROSSING, AND LEWIS CAUGHT UP TO THEM.  Edwin Simpsen  Lewis approached the driver's side, pulled open the  door and dragged Larry out and started beating him</p> <p>SIMPSEN SAYS THAT LEWIS USED A TIRE IRON IN  THE ATTACK. HE ADDS THAT HIS COMPANION DID  NOT FIGHT BACK.</p>
<p>CG 2 line</p>	<p>ARRESTING OFFICER JERRY JACKSON</p>
<p>Officer Jackson  Ripton Police  me with officer</p>	<p>CONFIRMED THAT THERE WAS A VIOLENT ATTACK</p>
<p>tape 2, 16:11-21</p>	<p>All of us in our business see . . . preserve and  protect at all costs.</p>
<p>SOT MORE SIMPSEN  tape 3, :54-1:13</p>	<p>I saw Lewis grab . . . .  no, it was only him.</p>

**Figure 11.5**

News anchor Tori Campbell seated at a video editing station reviews a taped story, and writes lead-ins for it. She'll see her lead-ins later on an electronic prompter as she co-anchors the News at Noon. Tori majored in French literature at Hamilton College. (Courtesy Tori Campbell and KTVU, Oakland)



In some cases, you'll create a package by returning to your station after covering the assignment, and writing a script to accompany your videotape. You alternate your voice-over narration with sound-on-tape excerpts, and mark your script for use by a tape editor. Some portions of your script may require you to enter a small announce booth and work with an engineer to record your comments for inclusion in the completed package. About one half-hour before the 10 o'clock news goes on the air you return to the scene of the news event with a camera operator. Holding your script—usually below camera range—you do a live ad-libbed intro to your story on cue. After the director cuts to your package, you can bring your script up to a comfortable reading distance and read at least some of your voice-over narration live. You lower the script out of camera range before you're once again seen live on the television screen to make your closing tag. At that time you may engage in a brief on-air discussion with the news anchors.

At a small television station, you may do your own camera work. You go to the scene of a story, conduct your investigation, and record sound bites, including interviews; before leaving the scene, you place the camera on a tripod, start the recorder, walk to a posi-

tion in front of the camera lens, and do your stand-up. When you return to the station, you write the script and edit and assemble your package.

## Reporting Live from the Field

Most television news operations make use of one or more remote vans equipped with ENG equipment: **minicams** (miniaturized cameras), microwave transmitters, and in some cases an uplink to a satellite. Vans are used for conventional coverage of news stories (taping reports in the field), but they also enable reporters to cover events and transmit their stories directly to the station, often live during a newscast. Only reporters who are excellent journalists, have widespread knowledge of many subjects, and can ad-lib fluently and informatively are outstanding at live reporting.

Excellence as a reporter begins with a solid education. Studying journalism in college will prepare you to quickly size up a story, make judgments about its potential news value, identify the most noteworthy points about the event, and organize that information so that it's readily understandable by viewers. **When covering slow-breaking stories (in fact, whenever time permits), your background in journalism will enable you to engage in investigative, or depth, reporting. Knowing how and where to look for hidden information is essential for depth reporting.** Finally, journalism courses will familiarize you with laws regarding libel, contempt, constitutional guarantees, access to public records, the invasion of privacy, and copyrights. All reporters should be competent journalists, of course, but those who report the news live must be especially well prepared. If you make a defamatory statement on a live broadcast, there's simply no way to undo it.

Reporters also need extensive knowledge of many subjects, especially those who report live. It's common practice for anchors to follow a live report with a **Q & A** (question-and-answer) **session** with the reporter. The stories you report may vary from a demonstration at a nuclear power plant to the birth of a rare animal at the zoo. A good Q & A session requires you to speak knowledgeably about the general subject area of the story you're reporting. Blank looks, incorrect information, and the response "I don't know" are unacceptable. You need a broad education in the arts and sciences and you should consider yourself a lifelong student. The reading of selected new books, several newsmagazines, and two or more daily

**Figure 11.6**

A complete videotape editing suite where news packages receive their final screening, editing, and dubbing prior to broadcast. (Courtesy KTVU, Oakland)



papers should be routine for you as you prepare to work as a reporter.

Along with the confidence that comes of a solid educational background, reporters who work live during a newscast must be able to concentrate under pressure and sometimes in the midst of confusion, to speak smoothly, coherently, and in an organized fashion. Sometimes you'll address the camera amid high levels of ambient noise; you may be distracted by onlookers; you may even be in a position of danger. You'll work with notes, rather than a script. You won't have a monitor to show what's being seen by the television audience, though you will hear the words of the director and anchor on an earpiece, an **interruptible foldback (IFB)**.<sup>3</sup>

You can expect an additional problem when you communicate with the anchor by way of satellite. A delay of about one and one-half seconds occurs between the time the anchor speaks and the time you hear the anchor's voice. It's necessary to pick up cues as rapidly as possible to make this delay less noticeable. You can also expect to hear your own voice coming back to your ear one and one-half sec-

<sup>3</sup>*Foldback* is the term for an earphone system; *interruptible* indicates that with this system a director or producer can interrupt an announcer with questions or instructions.

onds after you've spoken. Engineers can **minus out** your voice so the anchor and the viewers hear it but you do not; but when no such technical adjustment has been made, you must give your report smoothly despite the distraction of hearing your words on delay.

## The News Anchor

Performance abilities are as important for a news anchor as journalistic knowledge. News directors look for anchors who are physically appealing (which doesn't necessarily mean young or good looking in the conventional sense), have pleasing voices, are skilled in interpreting copy, can work well with a prompting device, and can ad-lib smoothly and intelligently. In addition to on-camera performance ability, nearly all successful news anchors have a background in field reporting.

The chapters that discuss interviewing, voice and diction, principles of communication, language usage, and foreign pronunciation provide suggestions and exercises that will help you perform well as an anchor. Some of the discussion of radio news, especially the section on newswriting, applies to the work of the television anchor. Chapter 7 provides details of working with scripts and prompters, of addressing cameras, and of moving, standing, sitting, and holding props on camera, as well as many other details of performing as a news anchor. This section concentrates on aspects of preparation and performance that are unique to television news anchors.

## Working Conditions and Responsibilities

Working conditions vary from station to station, but at a typical medium-market or large-market television station a news anchor's job may involve

- Writing 25 to 50 percent of the copy read on the air
- Covering some stories in the field
- Preparing occasional feature reports
- Working with a co-anchor as well as sports and weather reporters
- Preparing and delivering one or two newscasts daily, five days a week

- Meeting daily with newsroom management to discuss and help decide on the stories to be covered and the order in which they'll be presented to viewers

At some stations, you might work three weekdays as a field reporter and Saturday and Sunday as evening news anchor.

As an anchor, you'll work with materials from a variety of sources: field reports, stories written by newswriters, wire-service agency copy, taped reports from a parent network or a cooperating station in a nearby market, and reports from CNN or Reuters. Final decisions on the content of newscasts rest with the news director (or the news producer), but you'll be involved in nearly every step in preparing for a broadcast. You were hired partly because of your journalistic judgment, so you keep abreast of developing stories. You'll check with reporters as they leave on assignment and as they return; you'll scan wire reports and newspapers; you'll confer at regular intervals with your producer; and you'll view taped reports, both to determine their usability and to write lead-ins for those chosen.

Preparation and performance demand that you know the technological possibilities and demands of your medium and that you write well and rapidly, can cope with confusion and last-minute changes, work well with all members of the production staff, and possess your own performance style. Although it's true that a few stations permit anchors to merely show up in time to look over the news script, apply pancake makeup and contact lenses, and spend the next thirty to sixty minutes playing the part of a broadcast journalist, you shouldn't settle for such make-believe; there can be little satisfaction or professional pride in doing so.

Your preparation is, in general, similar to that of a radio news anchor. You'll write lead-ins for packages, voice-over narration, and straight news stories that have no accompanying video, and you'll make notes for teases. A **tease** comes just before a commercial break and is designed to hold viewer interest by headlining a news item to be delivered after the break. Teases must be planned but are seldom written out. Be sure to review any news item or feature you tease; viewers are resentful of teases that keep them watching yet don't live up to advance billing. Viewers also resent teases if they believe that the information itself should have been given instead. Wouldn't anyone object to hearing "And you'd better be on the lookout for an escaped lion—details when we come back"?

A **toss** is a brief introduction to the weather or sports reporter, consumer affairs consultant, or other member of the news team. Tosses are indicated on the script but are delivered ad lib. You toss the program to someone else by turning to that person and making a smooth and quick transition to the next segment.

In writing your share of the news script you'll begin with the standard opening used by your station on all newscasts, for example, "These are the top stories this hour." The opening is followed by **headlines of the major stories of the day**. As you write your copy, you may decide that you need graphics. Anchors sometimes are responsible for suggesting when a graphic aid is appropriate.

Most likely you'll work on a word processor with a video display terminal. Such computers are flexible and make adding or dropping stories quite simple. They also allow you to move a wire-service story to the side or to the top of the screen, leaving room for you to paraphrase the story in your own style. At some smaller stations you may use a special typewriter that features a **bulletin font** (oversized letters). **Hard copy** (a printed script) is generated on a typewriter or a word processor. As noted earlier, the script is printed on copy sets—prepared forms with five or more sheets, sometimes color coded. In some operations, only the edges of tractor-feed copy sets are color-coded. Many news scripts are typed in capital letters only. The left side of the script is used for video information, the right side for audio. The video column is seldom marked by anyone other than the director, who indicates the shots to be taken.

## Using a Prompter

When you go on the air for a thirty- or sixty-minute newscast, you'll have a complete script, but you can expect it to be revised during the broadcast. Runners will bring new copy to you, the camera director, the news producer, and the prompter operator. Instructions to toss to a reporter in the field or in the newsroom will be given to you by a director or producer over an IFB, also called an **ear-prompter**. You'll also receive instructions passed to you by the floor manager (sometimes called the floor director or stage manager) during commercial breaks, reports from the field, or taped stories.

Skill in sight-reading is extremely important. You won't be able to study stories written and delivered after the start of the news-

**Figure 11.7**

Sports reporter Fred Inglis reads from a prompter as he delivers a breaking sports story from the newsroom. (Courtesy Fred Inglis and KTVU, Oakland)



cast. You may have a chance to skim the new copy for names of people, places, or things that you may have trouble pronouncing, but there's no guarantee that anyone in the studio or control room will be able to help you with the pronunciation. For this reason, you should establish an understanding with the newswriters, assignment editors, and associate producers that unusual words or names will be phoneticized on the copy that goes to you and the prompter. As an example, your script may read:

THE EAST AFRICAN NATION OF DJIBOUTI (JEE-BOO'-TEE) HAS BEEN HIT BY A SEVERE PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS.

In this instance, the newswriter took the phoneticized spelling from the pronouncer included in the wire-service copy. **Pronouncer** is the term used by news services for the phonetic transcriptions of words and names that accompany wire-service stories. In this example, the wire-service pronouncer appears in all capital letters, with an apostrophe to indicate the syllable to be stressed. A second style of wire-service phonetics has stressed syllables in uppercase and the unstressed syllables in lowercase, as in this example:

WASHINGTON—A DIETARY SUPPLEMENT THAT MAY CAUSE A FATAL BLOOD DISORDER HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM SALE BY ITS MANUFACTURER. L-TRYPTOPHAN (el-TRIP-toe-fan) HAS BEEN LINKED TO THE POTENTIALLY FATAL BLOOD DISEASE EOSINOPHILIA (EE-uh-sin-uh-FEEL-ee-yuh). A NATIONAL CONSUMER ORGANIZATION PRAISED THE MANUFACTURER'S DECISION, AND CALLED THE HALT IN SALES QUOTE, "A PRUDENT AND CAUTIOUS COURSE OF ACTION."

If you type your own script, make certain that each sentence is indented four or five spaces. This will help you quickly spot the part of the story you're reading in the event the prompter fails. As you read from the prompter, slowly move a thumb down the side of your hand-held script. With practice, you'll eventually become quite precise in keeping your thumb positioned at the point of the story as you read it from the prompter.

Never hyphenate a word at the end of a typewritten line in a script. You must be able to see entire words without having to shift the eyes back to the beginning of a new line for the conclusion of a word. If, for example, a line ended with *con-*, you'd have no way of knowing whether the rest of the word was *-tinuous*, *-tinent*, or *-vict*.

When working with a prompter, the camera usually will be ten to fifteen feet in front of you. Eye movement as you scan the projected script will be less noticeable at that distance. Glance down at your script frequently. This habit not only eliminates the staring look, but keeps you in touch with the ongoing script—a necessity in case the prompter fails.



## SPOTLIGHT

### A Representative Television News Operation

There's a discernible pattern to a daily television news operation. In the newsroom, hours of anticipation are followed by sudden quiet as the action moves to the news set and control room. The show goes on the air in an atmosphere of concentrated effort and often some anxiety. As closing credits roll, there is satisfaction, relaxation, and even exhilaration.

The following sketch describes one day in the life of a news department.<sup>4</sup>

#### The Scene: A Television Newsroom

- 1:00 a.m.: First to arrive are an editor and a newswriter. They watch television news on CNN, check wire-service stories fed to a computer, and generally get things rolling.
- 4:00 a.m.: The executive producer arrives and, after sizing up ongoing news events, makes phone calls to ENG operators to assign stories. Electronic news gathering (ENG) camera operators often work alone to cover news conferences, fires, accidents, and similar events. Their raw footage is screened, edited, and completed by a reporter or a newswriter.
- 4:30 a.m.: The assignment editor and a field reporter arrive. Field reporters are assigned to overlapping shifts so that some will be available every hour of the day.
- 5:00 a.m.: Other members of the large team trickle in—news director, producer, co-anchors, editor in chief, newswriters, desk assistants, field reporters, on-air director, tape editors, and others. At first, everything seems uncoordinated. Gradually, as each team member completes preliminary preparations, small groups begin to form. The pace accelerates but without confusion. All know their duties and prepare without receiving instructions.

Some reporters at KTVU, Oakland, California, work from early morning until early afternoon. During their shift, they report some stories live during the noon news; they also work with ENG operators to tape material for complete reports, or packages. They perform stand-ups and return to the station to edit their tapes, write narration, record it, and add it to the edited packages. Reporters cover one story a day, though they sometimes are asked to record a sound bite for another reporter.

<sup>4</sup>The practices described in this section are those of KTVU, Oakland, a consistent Emmy-Award-winning television news operation.

7:00 a.m.: The two-hour morning show begins. It features news and in-station interviews presented by the co-anchors and on-location interviews conducted by feature reporters. The morning show includes time checks, traffic and weather reports, and far more interviews than do the other news shows.

9:00 a.m.: After the morning program, a conference is held to discuss and select news stories for the noon news. Key members of the news staff, including the assistant news director and the editor in chief, are present.

**A format**, a rundown of the stories to be included in the newscast, is generated on a computer. Stories are discussed by all, but are selected by the news director on the basis of their significance, viewer interest, and timeliness. The format will undergo several changes before air time as breaking stories replace others that are less urgent.

News scripts are written on desktop computers by newswriters and anchors. Eventually, the stories are printed on five-page copy sets. Script copies go to the news producer and anchors for editing. The director marks a copy for camera directions. Other copies go to the prompter operator and the character generator operator.

10:00 a.m.: One anchor delivers a live tease before a fixed camera in the newsroom. Also, by 10:00 a.m., ENG operators arrive with taped material to be viewed, edited, and supplied with voice-over narration and appropriate lead-ins.

10:05–11:50 a.m.: Anchors and writers continue writing scripts; changes are made as updated information and new stories are received.

12:00 noon: The half-hour newscast begins. At its conclusion, most of the early-arriving personnel, including anchors, leave for the day. The newsroom grows quiet, except for those reporters preparing packages for the nightly ten o'clock news.

3:00 p.m.: The nightly news team arrives to prepare for the ten o'clock news.

3:20 p.m.: Anchors meet with the news director, producer, reporters, and other key members of the team. A list of available stories, called a **situationer**, is distributed. Stories are discussed, one by one. The group can view sound bites and packages from the station's reporters, from CNN's NEWSOURCE, Reuters, and other news providers. Preliminary story coverage selections are made. Near the end of the discussion, the evening news reporters receive their assignments and the news producer assigns writing responsibilities to anchors and newswriters.

4:30 p.m.: Anchors and newswriters write scripts while other members of the operation edit tapes and keep up with developing stories. Anchors write intros; newswriters write voice-over narration. The bulk of each newscast comes from news packages and live reports.

Through the afternoon and evening the work continues. Eventually, scripts, taped packages, and inserts are assembled.

9:50 p.m.: The newsroom falls quiet. Few people remain: the assignment editor, two assistants, a newswriter, and two news interns. The interns act as runners, replacing script pages as the show is rewritten because of new or updated stories. The action has moved to the control room and the news set. On the set, the anchors take their places to tease the upcoming broadcast.

9:55 p.m.: Both co-anchors give a live tease from the news set.

10:00 p.m.: The taped program intro is rolled, followed by a cue from the director. For the next hour the program unfolds. Revised scripts (hard copy) are brought to the control room and are noted by the producer and assistant director and given to news anchors. Revisions are electronically fed to the prompter. Noise in the control room is considerable—the audio feed of the newscast is played at a high volume to be heard above ringing telephones, phone conversations between producer and newsroom personnel, the director's orders, and occasional comments from the producer.

11:00 p.m.: Taped closing credits roll. Earpieces and headset microphones are removed. On-the-set lights are dimmed. In the control room there is little sound.



Putting together a television news broadcast involves writing, research, interviewing, taping, and editing, before the actual show. The staff in a typical local television newsroom may begin work at 7:00 a.m., drafting scripts and assembling video segments for the half-hour broadcast at noon. (Photo by Frank Siteman, Stock Boston)

The show has kept team members in a state of tension for several hours. One by one, team members drift back to the newsroom—some to relax, others to pick up personal items on their way to the parking lot and home. If significant problems arose during the newscast (a rare occurrence), the news producer, assignment editor, anchors, and other key personnel meet with the program producer for a brief **post-mortem** (a discussion of what worked, what did not work, and why). The newsroom will not be completely quiet until nearly midnight. The effort starts all over again at 1:00 a.m.

## Weather Reporting

Weather reporting on regularly scheduled newscasts may be as simple as having weather news delivered by an anchor. At other stations, particularly major-market stations and stations in any location where weather information is of exceptional importance, professional meteorologists report the weather. Some weather reporters go beyond the bare facts of weather predicting to explain the causes of meteorological phenomena, subtly and continually educating their audiences. Many meteorologists engage in television reporting as only part of their professional careers. At some stations a professional announcer who isn't a trained meteorologist may become a specialist in weather reporting.

Nearly all television stations use chroma-keyed maps and satellite photos for weather information. The weather reporter stands before a large blank screen, usually a medium shade of blue, and points out noteworthy features of the day's weather while looking at a monitor that carries a picture of the reporter and the weather map.

Weather maps are stored in the station's computer. After determining weather patterns from the complex information sent by the U.S. National Weather Service, the art department creates graphics showing weather fronts, storms, high and low temperatures, and similar information. Satellite photos are received directly from the National Weather Service's satellite and are stored in the computer until used.

As a weather reporter, you may be asked to do special features from time to time. If the area experiences a snowstorm of unusual proportions or at a time of year when it's not expected, or if there's

**Figure 11.8**

Prior to broadcasts, weather reporters interpret weather data coming from several different database and wire sources. They prepare weather graphics, which grow increasingly colorful and dramatic as electronic equipment evolves. (Courtesy of The Weather Channel)



prolonged rain or a drought, you may be asked to do street interviews to assess public opinion. In doing so, you follow essentially the same techniques as for any other interview of randomly chosen passersby, but unless the weather news is serious or tragic, you look for humorous or offbeat comments.

When reporting the national weather, remember that most people don't really care what the weather is like anywhere other than where they are, where they may be traveling, or where they've come from. Unless a weather report from 2,000 miles away is unusual, it's seen by most as not being news at all. Although people in Georgia may care nothing about the weather in Kansas, they *do* care about the price of wheat and pork; and, while New Englanders may feel that the weather in Florida doesn't affect them, they'll care when they learn that a winter freeze will send the price of citrus and other produce soaring. Therefore, whenever possible, tie weather reports to something people care about. In other words, when reporting the weather from distant places, try to arouse interest by interpreting its significance!

It's obvious that weather is newsworthy when it's violent. Tornadoes, hurricanes, exceptional snowfalls, and floods must be accurately reported to serve the interest of viewers and listeners.

However, slow-developing conditions brought on by weather—such as a two-year drought—also must be reported, and they can't be adequately covered by a mere recitation of statistics. To best serve your public, you must go beyond the kind of weather news traditionally offered by wire services. In a drought, for example, you could periodically record telephone interviews with a variety of experts on several drought-related problems. Ask the farm bureau about the effects on farming. Ask a representative of the Audubon Society about the effects of the drought on birds in your area. Ask a fish and wildlife expert about the prospects for survival of fish and wild mammals. Get drought information from professional gardeners and share plant-saving tips with your listeners.

In short, as a weather reporter, you should use your imagination and constantly ask yourself these questions: Why should viewers be interested in today's weather report? What am I telling them that will be of use? Too often weather reports become routine recitations of fronts, temperatures, inches of precipitation, and predictions for tomorrow. Most viewers and listeners find this information somewhat interesting, but, aside from frost, flood, or storm warnings, it is of little use. **Always work creatively to make your weather reports useful to your audience.**<sup>1</sup>



## **PRACTICE**

### **Comparing Local and National Newscasts**

Make videotapes of a local and a national newscast—that of an independent station, as well as that of a major network or Cable News Network (CNN). Study the taped performances and list the ways local television news differs from national coverage. Omit obvious differences such as “national newscasts feature reports from all over the world.” Look instead for differences in length of stories, use of visuals and computer-generated graphics, and inclusion of specialized reporters who focus on the environment, business, weather, sports, and entertainment.



# 12

## Music Announcing

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- The Popular-Music Announcer (DJ)
  - Working Conditions
  - Popular-Music Station Formats
  - Announcing Styles
- SPOTLIGHT: On Being a DJ . . .
  - Working Conditions at Representative Stations
  - Preparing for a Career as a DJ
- The Classical-Music Announcer

Recorded music predominates on radio in the United States and Canada. There are nearly twelve thousand AM and FM radio stations in the United States, and approximately eight thousand are all-music or nearly all-music stations.<sup>1</sup> About 170 stations play classical music, and most are noncommercial. Of the 8,000 popular music stations, about 5,500 are FM. Many AM stations have turned away from all-music formats because the AM sound simply can't compete with FM. As a result, numerous AM stations have moved to all-talk, all-news, news/talk, agriculture, and sports, as well as religious and non-English-language broadcasting. Music on AM remains well represented by stations that play country, Middle-of-the-Road, Gospel, and "oldies."

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<sup>1</sup>Statistics from December 1996 supplied by *M Street*, a weekly publication for and about music radio stations. M Street Corporation also publishes a yearly directory that provides basic information about every radio station in the United States and its possessions and Canada.

Slightly fewer than six hundred radio stations are ethnically oriented or broadcast in a language other than English.<sup>2</sup> Many are all or mainly music. If you're qualified (or qualifiable) to announce on these stations, you may want to include them in your career plans.

Advancements in technology and changes in broadcast practices have reduced the number and the importance of music announcers. The rapid spread of syndicated programming has led to fewer jobs for DJs. Program syndicators tailor programming for specific markets and audience demographics and sell these services at a lower cost than that of full local production. In some instances the programming is sent to stations as part of an automated operation, briefly discussed at the end of Chapter 6, "Broadcast Equipment." Increasingly, satellites are used to deliver programming to stations. Syndicators can provide stations with anything from brief features to complete program services that include music, jingles, promos, and DJ services, which leaves station management free to concentrate on sales. This trend, of course, means fewer opportunities for music announcers at the local station level.

**Local marketing agreements (LMAs)** also have expanded in the field of radio broadcasting. In this practice, two or more stations enter into an arrangement where they share facilities, staff, equipment, and, in some instances, even a frequency. LMAs are able to operate with one announcing staff for all stations, rather than separate staffs for each.

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## The Popular-Music Announcer (DJ)

The term *disc jockey* was coined years ago to identify radio announcers on popular-music stations. The term had logic behind it, because those who announced on music stations worked with "discs" and "jockeyed" them, in the sense that DJs manually cued,

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<sup>2</sup>The category "Spanish" includes all Spanish language stations. Some five hundred radio stations in the United States are listed as "Spanish," and those that feature music are included with other formats. They're listed within such categories as SS-RA (Ranchero), SS-EZ (EZ Listening), or SS-TJ (Tejano).

**Figure 12.1**

Disc jockey Carole Scott stands during her on-air shift. Many radio music announcers, especially those on up-tempo stations, stand to ensure a high energy level. Her music is on compact discs. Commercials, station promos, and jingles are on tape carts or digital audiotapes. (Courtesy of Carole Scott)



introduced, and then “spun” the records.<sup>3</sup> Today, few announcers want to be called “disc jockeys.” Some who perform this function want to be called **personalities** or **on-air talent**, even though these terms refer to *qualities* and not to *people*. An informal survey of several music announcers failed to find a term preferred by all, but most accepted **DJ**, sometimes spelled **DeeJay**, and **Jock**. These terms are well-established; people rarely think of their literal meaning. The term *DJ* is a convenient parallel to the music video term, *VJ*. Throughout this chapter, the term *DJ* or *DeeJay* will be used.

The DJ’s on-air work—introducing or back-announcing musical selections, engaging in pleasant chatter, delivering or playing commercials, and promoting contests—continues to be the common denominator for success. DJs employ a great range of announcing styles, from rapid delivery to casual, or laid back, but the term *DJ* is associated only with popular music. Announcers on classical-music stations aren’t included in this term, even though their work

<sup>3</sup>Music discs used on radio stations began with ten-inch records that turned at 78 RPM (revolutions per minute). Then came long-playing vinyl discs (LPs), that turned at 33 $\frac{1}{3}$  RPMs. A later competitor, 45 RPM discs, were significantly smaller than LPs. In the 1990s, records of all speeds and sizes gave way to tape cartridges (carts); these, in turn, were superseded by digital audiotape (DAT), then by CDs, and, more recently, by mass-storage hard drives.

has much in common with that of DJs. This chapter discusses the work of both the DJ and the classical-music announcer.

## Working Conditions

As a DJ, you can expect working conditions to vary widely from station to station. If you're talented and lucky enough to become a popular DJ on a prosperous major-market station, your on-air hours will be few, and your salary could be in six figures—or even above.<sup>4</sup> Highest salaries generally are paid only to morning drive-time music announcers in major markets. Even announcers in major markets whose shifts are afternoon (both midday and afternoon drive times), evening, or overnight no longer draw the huge salaries they once commanded. Salaries vary according to several factors: market size, day-part worked, and years of experience. Table 12.1 shows some close approximations, supplied by *Radio & Records*.<sup>5</sup>

If you begin your announcing career at a small-market station or at a financially marginal station in a market of any size, you can expect to work a four- to six-hour air shift and to perform other duties for additional hours each day. At a thriving major market station, your board shift will seldom exceed four hours. Whether working for a major- or a smaller-market station, your job will be demanding because of the many hours weekly of off-duty preparation required for continued success. DJs at both large and small stations spend considerable time each week reading music trade magazines, making promotional appearances, and preparing informative or humorous pieces for their shows. Although most popular music radio stations, large and small, require DJs to do their own engineering, an exception is sometimes made at major-market stations during morning drive time. At a “personality intensive” station—a station that features a popular DJ or a team of announcers

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<sup>4</sup>Although definitions of market size aren't standardized, in general a major market has a potential audience of more than one million; a secondary market is one having between two hundred thousand and one million potential listeners; a smaller market has a potential audience of fewer than two hundred thousand.

<sup>5</sup>*Radio & Records (R&R)*, is a weekly newspaper, providing the radio and recording industries with news, sales, marketing innovations, and airplay data. R&R also delivers this information daily via the World Wide Web. In addition to the newspaper, R&R publishes an annual *Ratings Report & Directory*.

**TABLE 12.1 DJ Salary Ranges**

Morning drive-time talent	
Top 15 markets	\$174,472
Average	\$ 80,414
Midday talent	
Top 15 markets	\$ 71,855
Average	\$ 40,719
Afternoon drive-time talent	
Top 15 markets	\$103,361
Average	\$ 50,435

noted for their repartee—an engineer may operate the board and cue and play the music.

At a small station, in addition to your on-air work, you'll likely spend additional hours performing other assigned chores: selling commercial time, writing and recording commercials, producing spots for local retailers, dubbing music from albums to mass-storage hard disks, CDs, or tape carts, performing routine equipment maintenance, and reporting news and weather.

During your air shifts, you'll work in a combined announce booth and control room, called an **on-air studio**, and you'll perform the combined functions of announcer and engineer. This is called **working combo**. You may be responsible for assembling and delivering brief hourly news headlines, although few music stations still produce newscasts. Most now prefer to take a feed from a news service or have dropped news coverage altogether.

Additional duties may see you reading or ad-libbing brief public service announcements—often on a **community bulletin board** or **community calendar** feature—playing commercials and station IDs (on tape carts at some stations, and on hard disks, DAT, or programmable CDs at others), keeping both the program and operating logs and, in some operations, especially on weekends and

holidays, answering the telephone.<sup>6</sup> Many music stations run contests and promotions, and as the on-duty DJ, you'll tease and then conduct the contests with phone-in callers. While doing all this, you're expected to be alert, witty, and personable.

A DJ at work as a combo operator employs an impressive amount of skill and concentration. Should you work combo at a popular music station—one that hasn't yet acquired the latest digital equipment and computer workstation technology described in Chapter 6—a portion of your on-air work might be spent as follows:

- 3:00 p.m.: You play a carted musical ID that identifies your station and go immediately to a cut on a CD, an upbeat song chosen by the music director to kick off your shift.
- 3:03:05 p.m.: You introduce the next musical selection, talking over the opening intro. You start a **music sweep**—several songs, usually three or more, played without interruption. (On some stations, it's policy to play as many as ten songs in a given sweep, followed by a **commercial sweep** or **cluster**—a number of commercials, played in sequence without interruption.) While the music plays, you check your program log to line up the next carted commercials, and then arrange in order the music carts and CDs that you'll play later on. As each cued-up cut of the sweep ends, you start the next recording, usually without a pause or a cross-fade.
- 3:20:30 p.m.: You **back-announce** the music just played, making a few appropriate comments about the music or the performers. If any of the artists are appearing locally, you mention this fact. After you back-announce, you play a thirty-second carted commercial for a local tire-recapping company, add a live tag, and then play two carted commercials back to back. You introduce and start a sweep of four selections on CDs. During the playing of these selections, you refile carts and CDs and pull the next recordings you'll play.
- 3:36:50 p.m.: You make a comment about one of the songs just played and read two or three brief PSAs from three-by-five-inch cards (often prepared for broadcast by another announcer

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<sup>6</sup>The FCC no longer requires radio stations to maintain program logs, but many stations continue to do so for billing purposes.

- at a small station or by a continuity director at a larger station). You play a carted commercial and introduce the next cut.
- 3:40:10 p.m.: You have 3½ minutes (the playing time of the disc being broadcast) to find and cue up the next CD. You check the copy book and the log to see which carted commercials are coming up. You take readings on the remote transmitter monitor and make entries in the operating log, after which you check the emergency alert system (EAS) to make sure it's working. You make entries in the program log.
- 3:48:00 p.m.: You back-announce the music just played and then **segue** into a carted commercial.<sup>7</sup> You then announce the control room phone number so listeners can call with requests or comments. You begin another music sweep and now have time to gather several music selections from the cart library or CD file, including those requested by callers. You refile tape carts and CDs played so far and check area traffic conditions with the highway patrol so you can give an ad-lib report when the song ends.
- 4:00:00 p.m.: As a music sweep continues, you begin answering and taping phone calls. As you record brief conversations with callers, you identify those that fit your station's policy—exchanges that are amusing, are of local interest, are provocative, or are from a person of note. Later, as time permits between music selections, you play the best of your recorded conversations.

Stations employ many variations to this kind of demanding schedule. Some stations subscribe to an audio news feed such as AP Network News or CNN Audio, which means you'll introduce and play newscasts. Some DJs give traffic information and weather reports, make announcements of concerts, interview guests by telephone or in the on-air studio, and deliver brief humorous or informational comments between numbers. A few stations still play some music directly from vinyl albums, so your work would include cuing-up records. Many college stations, which usually broadcast on FM, continue to play both 45- and 33½-rpm vinyl discs along with carts and CDs.

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<sup>7</sup>To **segue** (SEG'-way) is to go directly from the end of one music selection or commercial to the start of a second without a pause or commentary between.

Some stations (usually in smaller markets) have announcers read commercials live on the air; at others, announcers record commercials for local accounts before or after air shifts. Many local advertisers believe that their commercials are more effective when delivered by a person whose voice is known to the listeners, rather than by an unknown. At larger-market stations, music announcers may charge “talent fees” for lending their voices to a client’s spot. The ability to sell products and services is an important asset in a music announcer.

At most popular-music stations, the program director develops a **clock** or **wheel** (often called a **hot clock**) that divides each hour of a particular time period into sixteen or more segments. Each segment specifies a specific activity for the DJ; in one segment, the DJ plays a sweep of music selected by the music director; in another, called a **stop set** or **spot set**, a commercial cluster runs; in yet another, a contest is announced; and weather updates are given in several segments. Music is categorized according to the program director’s concept of competitive programming as instrumental, vocal, up-tempo, top 10, top 5, nostalgia, easy listening, and so on. The days of DJs choosing the music they play are over on most music stations. Station managers set radio station music policy and, at major stations, a program director works with a music director to develop the playlist. At medium- and smaller-market stations, the selections and placement of songs may be made by a program director who most likely also will have a regular air shift.<sup>8</sup> Figure 12.2 shows an example of a “hot clock.”

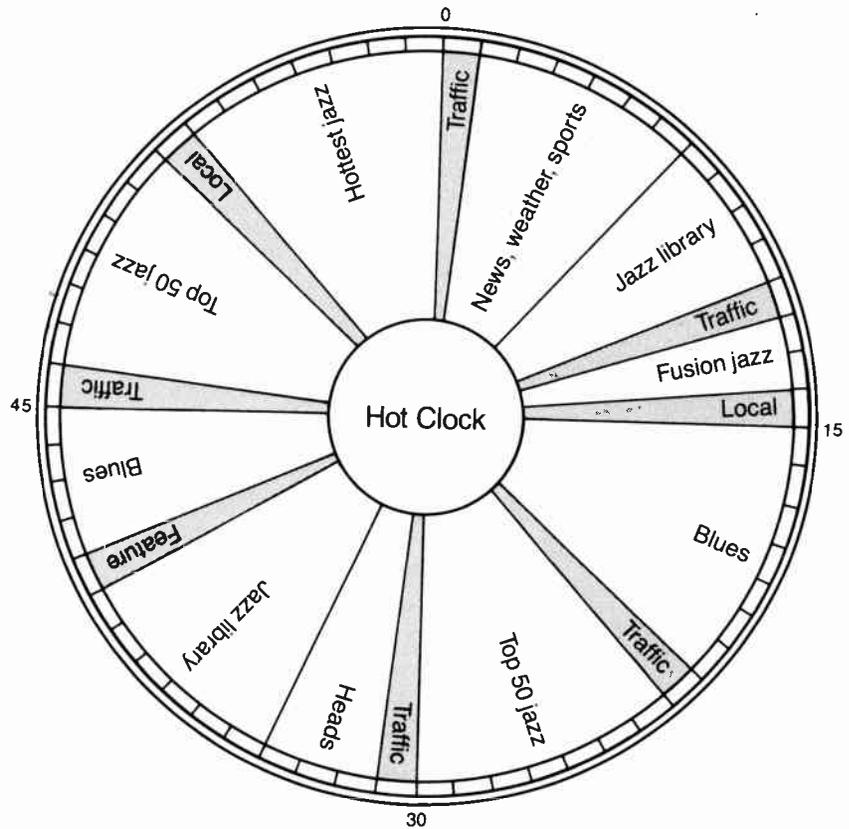
DJs on larger stations have some of the same problems and challenges as their counterparts on small stations. However, generally speaking, they have more help. Even though at a larger station you will almost certainly work combo, all music selections will be on hard disks, CDs, or will be carted. A traffic department will arrange your running log in the most readily usable manner. You won’t have to work six-hour air shifts, but, you’ll likely have collateral duties

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<sup>8</sup>College radio stations, both on-air and carrier-current, often permit student DJs to select music within categories established by a music or program director. A “carrier current” system sends signals directly to radio receivers by feeding a weak signal to an existing metallic network, such as steam pipes. Radio signals can be picked up within a few feet of the metallic network.

**Figure 12.2**

Popular-music stations often use a clock as a programming tool to ensure a balance of music, news, commercials, and features. This clock, which was created for the afternoon drive time, reflects the importance of frequent traffic updates. But clocks do more than manage what gets broadcast and at what times. When entered into a computer, a clock can be altered daily to keep listeners alert and competing stations confused.



that, with your daily four-hour shift, may add up to a solid eight-hour workday.

Regardless of variations, the technical and manipulative skills involved in DJ work can be acquired in a few weeks. The challenge isn't merely to be able to perform all of the routine duties well, but to project an attractive and unique personality, and to be energized and articulate during the few minutes each hour when you're in direct communication with your listeners.

## Popular-Music Station Formats

Music stations range from those that play one narrowly defined type of music to those playing a broader spectrum. The style of mu-

**Figure 12.3**

Much of the success of a music station depends on the personality of its DJs, who can draw a large following. This Easy-Listening DJ speaks to an unseen audience from a studio in Newport Beach, California. (Photo © Spencer Grant, Stock Boston)



music featured by a station is called its format.<sup>9</sup> Music stations describe their formats in various ways. A Country-music station may call itself “Modern Country,” a particular type of rock station may advertise itself as “Lite Rock.”

During the 1970s and 1980s, most popular-music station formats fit quite well into one of a limited number of clearly defined categories. During the early 1990s, two developments made it more difficult to categorize music stations. Some stations became quite diversified in the music they played, and other stations became more narrowly focused. To illustrate, many Country stations no longer confine themselves to songs that are clearly of the Country genre but have enlarged their scope (and, they hope, their audiences) by playing pop songs with a broader appeal as well as pop classics recorded by Country artists. At the same time, the once clearly defined category of Adult/Contemporary (AC) has splintered into more focused formats by stations that call themselves Hot AC, Soft AC, or Urban AC. Each has a distinct sound. Some

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<sup>9</sup>The word *format* is used in several ways in broadcasting. A television talk-show outline is called a *format*. In radio, *format* refers to the kind of programming provided by a station, as in *all-talk format* or *country-music format*. A *tight format* or a *loose format* refers to the degree of restrictions placed on DJs as to choice of music, amount of talk, and sequence of songs played.

stations have play policies that don't fit any standard format, including Contemporary Religious, Gospel-Inspirational, and Country-Spanish, sometimes designated as Ranchero.

*M Street* currently uses twenty categories of music formats. They range from Country, represented by more than twenty-five hundred stations, to R&B Oldies, a format used by only forty-four stations. Some formats are represented by a small number of stations: R&B Oldies, Jazz, Easy Listening, Urban AC, and New or Modern Rock total 12 percent of radio stations. On the other hand, just five formats—Country, Adult Contemporary (AC), Gold (Oldies), Adult Standards, and Alternative Rock—combine to represent about 65 percent of all music stations.

A breakdown by format of popular-music stations in the United States is of interest to anyone thinking of a career as a DJ. As you look at the information in Table 12.2, keep the following points in mind. First, radio is a dynamic field, and changes in musical taste are quickly reflected by changes in programming and station format. Second, many stations are difficult to classify. One station

**TABLE 12.2 Ten Most Popular Music Formats in the United States**

Music Type	Number of Stations	Percentage of Total
Country (CW)	2,537	31.7
Adult Contemporary (AC)	968	12.1
Oldies (OL)	742	9.2
Adult Standards (AS)	503	6.3
Adult Alternative (AP)	386	4.8
Contemporary Hit Radio (CH)	374	4.7
Classic Rock (CR)	351	4.4
Soft Adult Contemporary (SA)	339	4.2
Adult Hits, Hot AC (AH)	285	3.6
Album Rock (AR)	282	3.5

listed as Spanish may broadcast only in the Spanish language and play songs of Mexico, the Caribbean, or Central America; another station classified as Spanish may actually devote many hours a week to music of ethnic groups other than Spanish.

Other music stations, including Big Band, Folk, and Nostalgia, add up to only about 7 percent of all popular-music stations. Music stations not included in Table 12.1 are Gospel, Classical, and foreign language stations (other than Spanish) that play some music but are not self-defined as “popular-music stations.”

The figures and the names given to the formats are from *R&R Ratings Report & Directory*, and are supplied to that publication by Arbitron, an audience-measurement and research service.

Approximate and subject to change, the percentages in the table are clear in their implications. Country is the single most prevalent format in the United States, but several types of rock stations—which are similar in music played and style of announcing—represent about 60 percent of all U.S. popular-music stations. An undoubted correlation exists between numbers of stations and numbers of DJs employed, so these percentages should give you a rough guide to employment opportunities. Format abbreviations appear in parentheses after the name.

Popular-music stations in Canada feature most of the same categories as in the United States. Adult Contemporary, Middle-of-the-Road, Country, Contemporary Hit Radio, and Oldies make up nearly 90 percent of Canadian popular-music station formats.

Some music formats vary in popularity from region to region. Country music stations are far more prevalent in the South than in the East. On the other hand, some formats, including Gold/Classic Rock, show nearly the same degree of popularity in all regions of the nation, ranging from 8 to 10 percent.

The formats described in the following paragraphs are neither rigid nor unchanging. Nearly any type may be automated and may be found in a market of any size. Nearly all stations operate from a wheel, or clock, as shown in Figure 12.2. Music directors use the clock to program their station. Although few stations permit DJs to use the clock to make their own selections of songs within the stipulated segments, you should be familiar with the clock and its purposes. Most stations have several clocks—for morning drive time, midday, evening drive time, and nighttime—as well as clocks for weekends when more older titles are added. Format abbreviations in parentheses are those used by *M Street*.

*Country Stations (CW)* Sometimes known as Contemporary Country or Modern Country, Country-music stations tend to be moderately paced, even though they're as tightly formatted as Adult-Contemporary stations. Country music is incompatible with a frenetic pace.

*Adult-Contemporary (AC) Stations* Adult-oriented pop/rock stations, with no hard rock. Some include nonrock music, and emphasize mostly noncurrent rock music. Typically, A/C stations provide hourly news reports, traffic information during peak drive times, sports reports, business reports, and sometimes live play-by-play coverage of professional baseball and football games. Adult-Contemporary stations are tightly formatted—that is, all music is selected and programmed by a music director—but DJs are allowed to chatter with few restrictions on time or topics. Success at an A/C station is tied to a DJ's ability to develop a personal following.

*Oldies Stations (OL)* The Oldies format is also known as Classic Hits, Rock 'n' Roll Classics, Nostalgia, Golden Oldies, Old Gold, Solid Gold, or Classic Gold. These stations play hits from the early 1960s to the recent past. Jocks at these stations are expected to build a personal following and demonstrate in-depth knowledge of the music they play. Most Oldies stations carry newscasts, weather and traffic reports, and feature contests and call-in listener conversations. A variation on the oldies format is one that aims for the over-thirty age group by playing rock-and-roll hits from the 1970s and early 1980s.

*Adult-Standards Stations (AS)* Music on these stations is targeted at an older adult audience. Music covers a wide range of styles, and is taken from playlists from four decades, 1940 through 1980. Rock music of any genre is seldom heard on Adult-Standards stations, but softer versions of currently popular music may be included.

*Adult Alternative-Rock Stations (AP)* Alternative-Rock stations play some rock music from the latest charts but rely heavily on classic rock hits of the 1970s and 1980s, targeted to older listeners. Most AR stations are tightly formatted, with all music chosen by a music director.

**FIGURE 12.4**

The production studio for the University of California–Berkeley radio station is typical of what some students will encounter on their first job after graduation. Students working in college stations seldom are provided with state-of-the-art equipment. (Courtesy KALX)



*Contemporary Hit Radio or Top 40 Stations (CHR)* Some rock stations call themselves Classic Rock. Others are known as New or Modern Rock and feature mostly new bands along with rock hits of the past ten years. A typical Top 40 or CHR station rotates the top thirty to forty hits of the day with some older titles interspersed according to a formula. Station policies vary, but most repeat all the current hits within two to three hours of broadcast time. Music features songs that are (or are predicted to be) highest in CD sales. DJs on CHR stations generally are upbeat, with rapid delivery but without the piercing high-volume frenzy of earlier days. Most CHR stations limit the amount of DJ talk and feature a seamless sound—one with no gaps or pauses between program elements.

*Classic Rock (CR)* These stations, also known as Classic Hits, play rock-and-roll hits of the past, generally spanning the years between 1960 and 1980. On occasion, they'll add to their playlist non-rock hits of the past.

*Soft Adult Contemporary (SA)* A cross between Adult Contemporary and Easy Listening, these stations present older non- or soft-rock originals. This format may include “smooth jazz” or music usually heard on Adult-Standards stations. DJs are chosen for their

**Figure 12.5**

Jerry Dean, an authority on all types of jazz, wears headphones (“cans”) as he ad-libs a station promotion over a soft musical background. (Courtesy of Jerry Dean)



easy-going, friendly manner, and are allowed to “chat” with their listeners.

*Adult Hits, Hot A/C (AH)* A “hot” A/C station will more likely feature music by the latest artists to reach the top of the charts. It has an up-tempo sound, with no hard-rock or rap music.

*Album Rock (AR)* Mainstream rock-and-roll music, including “heavy metal.”

*Spanish Stations (SS)* Many stations listed as Spanish are full-time music stations that feature music from Latin America. The actual number of full-time Spanish-language music stations is unknown, but they’re of great and growing importance to their audiences. In 1993–94 a Spanish-language music station, KLAX, which features Ranchero music, became the number one station in the huge Los Angeles market. Two years later, KLAX and other Spanish music stations collectively had the largest share of radio listeners in Los Angeles. Spanish stations also were number one in

overall listenership in San Antonio and Miami—Ft. Lauderdale; they ranked third among music stations in New York City.

Spanish-language music stations play songs appropriate to the origins and interests of their listeners. Stations in Florida favor Cuban music; stations in the Southwest generally feature music from Mexico; Puerto Rican and other Caribbean music is popular in the American Northeast; and stations serving a sizable population of Central Americans—Guatemalans, Costa Ricans, Salvadorans, Hondurans, Nicaraguans, or Panamanians—feature music of those countries. Spanish stations generally provide more nonmusic programming than do English-language music stations. They may carry baseball games from Latin America, U.S. games broadcast in Spanish, and interview and religious programs.

## Announcing Styles

You may remember the fast-talking, “punched-up” DJs of several years back. The frenetic delivery of the early and mid-1980s has given way almost entirely to a more conversational manner that seems better suited to the mood of the 1990s. Today, many popular music stations advertise with slogans such as “more music—less talk,” and DJs are expected to avoid both the frenetic style of the 1980s, and the jokes and chitchat of earlier days of radio.

Many music stations—including those formatted as Easy Listening, Adult Contemporary, Country, or Oldies—feature DJs with a conversational style of delivery, with a minimum of “chatter.” On the other hand, Top 40, or CHR, stations ask DJs to project more energy but express it in a moderate volume, rapid-paced delivery. Urban-Contemporary stations featuring music by African-American and Latino artists often ask for a low-pitched, conversational, noticeably masculine style of delivery.

Because of the range of announcing styles on the air, you’d do well to practice various stylistic approaches to popular-music announcing. At the same time, it’s important to be yourself. You must be able to project your individuality while speaking at different rates and levels of intensity.



## SPOTLIGHT

### On Being a DJ . . .

Dave Morey is at the top of his profession as the morning DJ for KFOG-FM in San Francisco. His career moves, from his first job at a small AM station to a highly successful FM station in a major market, are representative of the path taken by most successful DJs. His story, together with his advice to students, is presented here with permission of the *Marin Independent Journal*, and, of course, Dave himself.

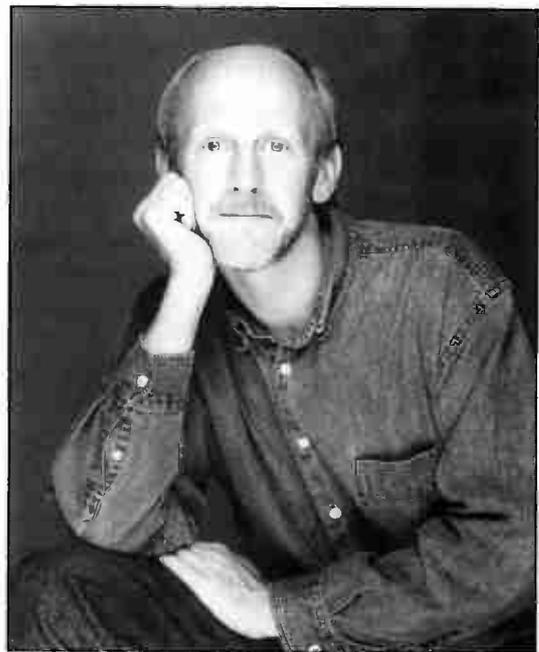
Dave Morey gets up at 3 A.M. to talk to you. He sounds calm, but his job is actually very frantic. And, when he's not working, he's busy with tomorrow's homework. He's your friend, but you've probably never met him. What does he do? He's a DeeJay.

Born and raised in Detroit, Dave began his radio work on a 10-watt station operated by his high school. He enrolled in college intending to become a teacher when he was offered a job as a DJ at WAFB-AM in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He'd worked there since his senior year of high school, but now he was offered a paying, on-air shift. He jumped at this opportunity. "But shortly after I started, the station was sold, and everybody quit, myself included," he said.

He moved across town to WLAV-FM in 1971, where he made \$1.65 an hour—minimum wage.

In 1977 he became a production director in Cincinnati. His production manager was a former circus juggler and acrobat named Earl. "He taught me speed and accuracy and a lot of good tricks." Dave stayed until the station went country.

Next he took a production director job in Charleston, S.C., and then a DJ job in Chicago. "That was a great job,"



Dave Morey, morning drive time DJ for KFOG-FM, San Francisco, is one of a select number of music station announcers nationwide who's more of an audience draw than the music he plays. (Courtesy of Dave Morey)

he said of the overnight shift, because he had his own playlist of blues, jazz, and disco.

Then Dave was offered the afternoon job at KSF X-FM (now KKSF) in San Francisco, a disco station until it was put up for sale.

In 1982 he moved to KFOG-FM. "We changed from elevator music to rock-and-roll in 1982. It's been 14 years [at one station] . . . unheard of in the industry," he said. "My timing has been excellent." In 1993 Dave was tapped for the morning show, considered to be the prime on-air slot in radio.

Here's a run-down of a typical work day for Dave Morey.

- 2:50 A.M. Dave's alarm goes off.
- 4 A.M. Dave arrives at the KFOG studios. He checks his voice mail and memos and heads into the production studio. Dave spends about an hour mixing the news and jingle sound bites for the day's Ten at Ten, a collection of songs and trivia from a not-so-bygone year.
- 5 A.M. Before air time, he gets his head together. "I think simple stuff: What day of the week is it? How do I feel today?" He reads newspapers to prepare for conversations with news anchor, Peter Finch. He also looks over the show's six-page prep sheet—a fill-in-the-blank form—and decides what he's going to talk about when music or commercials aren't playing. This is when he schedules the floating features of his show, like celebrity birthdays and calendar events.
- 5:20 A.M. He gets his questions for Request-O'Rama.
- 5:30 A.M. Dave has a quick staff meeting with news anchor Peter, producer Kim Baird, and traffic announcer Kim Wonderly.
- 5:50 A.M. He heads for the studio. "Everybody has to calibrate the studio the way they like it. So I get it all set up."
- 6 A.M. "Live from KFOG, it's Daaaave Morey!"
- The live schedule: News goes on at a quarter past and quarter to the hour until 8:15 A.M. Traffic is reported at 20 after and 10 'til the hour up to 9 A.M. Weekly features include sports commentator Mark Ibanez every Tuesday and Thursday at 7:30 A.M., and Scoop Niskar on Fridays with his weekly "attitude report."
- 9 A.M. It's "My Three Songs," a feature where listeners guess the connection between three seemingly unrelated songs.
- 10 A.M. It's Ten at Ten.
- 11 A.M. Dave's out of the studio—it's decompression time. "I walk around trying to get my brain together. I always end up at the programmer's office (for a short meeting). I see if he wants me to stay. Hopefully I get to leave—but usually not." If not, he records promos and commercials.

- Noon. Dave checks his voice mail, mail, and e-mail and takes a quick look at what needs to be prepared for the next day.

Some thoughts from Dave Morey

- On the radio bug: “Once I started playing around on the air and had a chance to get into the creative process, I realized how much I could do with sound and voice and music. Then I was really hooked.”
- On mentors: “One of my mentors told me ‘try to be *private*, be *normal*, and be *yourself*.’ If you have personality and warmth, make it shine through because that’s the rarest thing in radio.”
- On being a techie: “You have to know the microphone and what its characteristics are—its strengths and weaknesses. My favorite part of the job is running the board.”
- On college: “College is a good idea, but make sure there’s something else you want to do with your life because you won’t make money in radio for a long time. You must learn the basics and be prepared to learn twice—once in school, and then again on the job. Most stations have internships, so get one. It’s hard to get in, and you must be willing to do some pretty uninteresting work.”
- On skills: “Love of music and performing is the key. You need a good command of the English language; public speaking, perhaps voice training. It’s more than raw voice quality. It’s what you do with it. Technical skills will help round out your portfolio, and expert knowledge of computers is now essential in recording, editing, and broadcasting.”
- On experience: “Start at a small station, doing the worst job. Eventually you’ll get on the air. Soak up the experience and get a mentor, someone willing to work with you. Make yourself available. Sacrifice your holidays, and work at whatever jobs or hours they give you.”
- On performance: “Be yourself—lasting success doesn’t come from imitating others. Listen to the radio and pick it apart.”
- And, one final bit of advice: “If your station changes owners, do your best work and lay low.”

## Working Conditions at Representative Stations

Working conditions for popular-music announcers vary widely, and there's really no such thing as a "typical" music station; however, by studying the following descriptions of a few representative stations you will gain an idea of the working conditions you might encounter.<sup>10</sup>

*WLLL-AM and FM* The A/C stations WLLL-AM and FM are located thirty-five miles from a major market and are the only stations serving the southern county in which they're located. The daytime-only AM station operates with a one-thousand-watt signal, and the FM station, licensed to operate twenty-four hours a day, broadcasts with three thousand watts. When both stations are on the air, they simulcast; the FM station alone broadcasts from sunset to sunrise.

As a DJ at this station, you're a member of a staff of six full-time announcers, each of whom works a four-hour on-air shift six days a week. In addition, several part-time DJs work six-hour shifts to fill in between midnight and 6:00 a.m. and during the daytime and evening hours on weekends. These part-timers also fill in when regulars are on vacation or absent because of illness. The six full-time announcers have collateral duties: one is the program director; one the music director; one receives, edits, and selects public-service announcements and prepares three-by-five-inch cards with basic information; the remaining three sell time and write and produce commercials.

The announcing style on these stations is geared to the slower pace of a rural area. The DJs are known to their listeners by name and are expected to be visible in the community through civic organizations and appearances at malls and fairs. All music is on CDs and DAT, and DJs work combo, pulling, cuing, and playing music and carted commercials.

*KQQQ* An AM country-music station, KQQQ is located in a community of twenty-five thousand, about sixty miles from a major market. Although it receives some competition from stations in the

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<sup>10</sup>The work of a DJ in a state-of-the-art station is described at the beginning of Chapter 6, "Broadcast Equipment."

large city, the sometimes poor reception of those stations gives it an advantage in its own area. This station isn't automated. It has a power of one thousand watts and is licensed for full operation, though it's permitted to beam its signal in only one direction after sundown. To serve the specific interests of its listeners, KQQQ features camping news, fishing and boating information, and commodity reports.

As an announcer on this station, you work a four- or five-hour on-air shift six days a week. You spend another three hours daily in one of several ways: writing and producing commercials for local retailers and dubbing classic and out-of-print vinyl discs to programmable CDs. At this station you work from a playlist developed by the music director. You operate your own board and play music and commercials on CDs and cart machines. To succeed at this station you must know and enjoy Country music.

**KGGX-FM** A metropolitan CHR station, KGGX-FM is located in a large western city. It operates with a five-thousand-watt signal and broadcasts twenty-four hours a day. KGGX has a tight format featuring current hits from the charts plus regularly scheduled hits of the past. The station categorizes music as current, power gold, regular gold, recurrent, and image. **Recurrent** refers to songs just off the playlist; **image** refers to music chosen to provide a change of pace and enhance the station's image. Some music on the playlist at this station is **dayparted**: it's played only during a specified day-part (a segment of the broadcast day). A novelty song, for example, may be dayparted to morning drive time, and a rap or hard-rock hit may be dayparted to nighttime.

As a DJ on KGGX, you're required to maintain a fast pace between CD and some DAT music selections. You ad-lib between songs or sets of songs, but you must keep your remarks brief. You're also expected to project a good sense of humor. Once each quarter-hour you work from **liner notes** prepared by the program or music director to promote upcoming station features such as a weekend of 1980s dance hits, a contest, or a plug for another DJ. Liner notes give you the information you need, but not the exact words; effective ad-libbing from liner notes gives both a personal touch and a spontaneity that are lacking when a script is read.

You work combo at KGGX, operating an elaborate console and banks of CD and DAT players. Commercials, jingles, and station promos are stored on mass-storage hard disks, and you operate a

computer workstation to identify and play these program elements. To generate energy, you stand throughout your shift. At KGGX you work a four- or five-hour shift, five days a week. The pay is excellent, working conditions are good, and the competition is keen.

*KMZ-FM* An Urban-Contemporary (UC) station in a large western metropolitan area, KMZ operates twenty-four hours a day, with a power of five thousand watts. It plays contemporary hit music, mainly by black artists. It is one of only two African-American-oriented stations in an area with a large African-American population. Public-service announcements and community issues of importance to its listeners must be broadcast by KMZ, or chances are they won't reach their intended audience at all.

Eight DJs who have collateral duties are featured on KMZ. In addition to a four-hour air shift five days a week, announcers must spend an additional four hours daily in production: they write scripts and work on the production of local commercials and write and record on carts PSAs produced by the station. As a DJ for KMZ, you're expected to know rhythm and blues, soul, jazz, and black rock music. You're also expected to volunteer time to youth, social, and civic organizations in the community.

*KHXI-FM* Station KHXI-FM broadcasts sixteen hours a day in Spanish and makes the remaining blocks of time available for broadcasts in other foreign languages. Located in a metropolitan area with many ethnic Europeans, it's the only station where homesick Greeks, Swedes, Italians, or Germans can hear their native tongue and music of their culture.

All announcers on KHXI-FM must be fluent in Spanish (sponsors of programs in other languages supply their own announcers), and must be able to perform as remote announcers for parades, sports contests, and live broadcasts of Mexican and Central American music. As an announcer on this station, you also work as a time seller and a writer and producer of local commercials. You're expected to have a sound knowledge of both contemporary and standard Latin music.

## Preparing for a Career as a DJ

In preparing for a career as a DJ, you must develop the ability to use microphones correctly and to operate audio consoles, turnta-

bles, computerized workstations, tape cartridge machines, compact disc players, digital audiotape players, and reel-to-reel tape recorders; you should also become an authority on the type of music you intend to announce.<sup>11</sup> Beyond these requirements, you should work to develop a compelling air personality.

Concentrate on the sections in this book that discuss performance, interpreting copy, ad-lib announcing, commercial interpretation and delivery, newswriting, news delivery, and interviewing.

Although your chances of success as a DJ will be greatest if you develop a *unique* on-air personality, it's helpful for beginners to listen to a wide range of successful announcers. The best approach is to listen to all the popular-music stations in your reception area, rather than concentrating on the one or two stations you prefer.

Successful DJs have a well-developed sense of humor, usually of the "off-the-wall" variety. It's unlikely that anyone without a sense of humor can develop one after reaching adulthood, but it's possible



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Improving Your Popular-Music Announcing Style**

1. Become an authority on the type of music you intend to announce.
2. Work to develop an engaging and unique on-air personality.
3. Cultivate your sense of humor.
4. Learn to operate audio equipment efficiently.
5. Practice announcing for several types of formats.
6. Practice delivering commercials, PSAs, and station promos.
7. Perfect your ad-libbing skills.
8. Learn to match music and chatter to a specific station sound.

<sup>11</sup>Although most music radio stations no longer play vinyl discs on turntables, station executives agree that students of announcing should still learn turntable operation. Reasons are given in the section "But Don't Ignore the Old" in Chapter 6.

to improve one's skills in almost anything, including comedy. An analysis of puns, jokes, and one-liners that you find funny will tell you much about your sense of humor. It may be helpful to you to see what kinds of gags you can invent and test on your friends. Most DJs demonstrate their sense of humor by making ironic or satirical ad-lib comments about current events and noteworthy people.

DJs also need considerable knowledge of music and musicians, including historical facts, trivia, and current developments. This is best gained by reading on a regular basis several trade magazines and newspapers. Among the most useful are *Billboard*, *R&R (Radio & Records)*, *Gavin*, and a variety of tip sheets.

If you lack opportunities to do on-air work as a DJ, you can still practice introductions to recorded music and the kind of humorous chatter required of some DJs. Use the practice suggestions, "Announcing Popular Music," on page 393.

At some stations, announcers speak during a **sweep**, or **set** (two or more songs played back to back without interruption), from the moment the vocal ends on the first selection until just before the vocal begins on the second selection. Practice this technique with dubs made to an audiotape.

Practice announcing for both fast-paced and more relaxed station formats. Research the music you're playing: find out when a recording was made, some of the key artists, and anything of significance about the recording techniques used or the time and place at which a live recording was made. Refer to a news service for information about important anniversary dates (Woodstock 1, the breakup of Led Zeppelin, or the death of Jerry Garcia, for example) and music happenings of one, five, and ten years ago. Publications such as *R&R* include such information. They can be expensive, but you may be able to examine a back issue at a local radio station. When you're on a station's payroll, you'll have regular access to a number of trade publications.

Here are a few more suggestions for practicing DJ work:

- In choosing music to introduce and play, choose performances you know and like. Look especially for music you can talk about. You won't select your own music when working for a station, but it's good practice to begin with the easiest possible challenge.
- When you practice, actually play your songs and play them all the way through. Correct pacing and mood demand that you and your music work together for a total impression.

- Practice headlining songs you'll play later. This is a practical technique used to hold listeners who otherwise might switch to another station.
- Practice giving the name of the song and the performers either at the start or the end of a sweep. All stations have policies on music identification to which you must conform, but as you practice, aim for communicating a maximum amount of information.
- Practice delivering commercials, ad-libbed public-service announcements, and station promos—skills you almost certainly will need.
- Practice cuing records. As a DJ, you may later work only with hard disks, DAT cassettes, carts, or compact discs, but you must be able to work with vinyl discs; you may begin at a station that lacks more modern equipment.
- Practice working with an audio console. You'll almost always operate your console as a professional DJ.
- Practice doing intros first by timing the music between the start of the song and the start of the vocal; then by introducing the number so your voice stops just as the vocal begins or at a natural



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Tracking Rate of Delivery for Different Sounds**

Select and make audio recordings of several popular music announcers each representing a different sound:

A low-key noncommercial station

A fast-paced CHR station

A Country station

An A/C station

Play each tape and make a typescript of any sixty-second portion of the performance that includes the DJ's comments. Count the number of words delivered during the sixty seconds. Compare rates of delivery according to types of stations.

- change in the music, as when the horn section kicks in. Although you may not appreciate DJs who talk over music, some stations require it.
- Practice ad-libbing about the music, the day's events, or ideas that intrigue you. You'll have little chance to ad-lib on a station with a tight format, but other stations will consider you for a job only if you're able to entertain spontaneously.
  - Introduce songs ad lib. DJs don't use scripts other than for commercials, some PSAs, and news briefs.
  - Avoid corny clichés. Instead develop your own announcing style. The creative expressions of popular DJs become the clichés of unimaginative and unoriginal announcers.
  - When practicing, work for a particular **sound**. A station's sound is the result of several factors: the type of music played, the voices and personalities of the announcers, their energy level, the kinds of things they say, whether they speak over instrumental introductions or endings of songs, and the general pace of music



## **PRACTICE**

### **Announcing Popular Music**

To practice ad-lib music announcing, you need a CD player or a cassette deck for playing music, a second cassette machine with microphone for recording your performance, and a stopwatch. First, select and time your music. Time the entire selection as well as the instrumental introduction from its start to the time the vocal begins. If the instrumental intro lasts eleven seconds, then you have just short of eleven seconds to make appropriate comments about the song. End your comments a split second before the vocal begins. As you gain experience, make your timing more detailed. If the intro is eleven seconds and a horn or a drum roll is heard after six seconds, make note of that fact, because you'll want to pause in your comments at that precise moment.

and speech. Useful practice includes determining the specific sound you're attempting to achieve and the selection of music appropriate to that sound.

For information on job seeking, see Chapter 14. Above all, remember that jobs are available if you're well trained, have native talent, and are willing to begin at a modest salary, to work hard, and to move to any geographic location.

## The Classical-Music Announcer

Classical-music stations are found in all parts of the United States and Canada, though they add up to only 4 percent of radio stations that feature music.<sup>12</sup> With fewer than two hundred classical-music stations on the air, job opportunities in this demanding specialization are limited. You shouldn't single-mindedly prepare for a career as an announcer on a classical-music station unless your love of both classical music and radio is so strong that you're willing to put practical considerations aside. On the other hand, preparing for classical music announcing as part of your study of the entire field of broadcast announcing can be of great value. Exploring the great treasure of music, learning musical terms, and practicing the foreign pronunciation required of all classical-music announcers will enrich your life and make you more competent in any announcing specialization.

As an announcer on a classical-music station, you'll have some duties in common with a DJ. You'll cue up and play CDs or DATs, follow and sign the program log, operate an audio console, ad-lib introductions to musical selections (usually from information contained on three-by-five-inch cards), and read public-service announcements. Because noncommercial classical-music stations outnumber commercial stations about six to one, it's unlikely that you'll work with commercials as part of your work. You will, how-

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<sup>12</sup>*Classical* is not really the best label for stations that feature concert and operatic music. An important period in music history, roughly the last half of the eighteenth century, is known as the classical period; the music of that time—represented by Haydn and Mozart, among others—is, strictly speaking, classical music. Classic, which means “of the highest or best order,” is a better choice to name stations of this type. One station calls itself “your classic music station,” but most stations that feature operatic and concert music refer to themselves as classical-music stations. Because the usage is widespread, it's followed here.

**Figure 12.6**

Classical-music announcer Al Covaia reads information about musical events of the week in all areas reached by his station's signal. He prepares his copy from newspaper ads, concert listings, telephone calls, and brochures. (Courtesy of Al Covaia and KKHI, Corte Madera, California)



ever, have a number of other collateral duties such as dubbing music from vinyl discs to DAT, CDs, or mass-storage hard drives, preparing newscasts and summaries, and maintaining an operating log.

Unlike a DJ, you won't be concerned with hit records. You will, however, be expected to keep abreast of new recordings of standards, releases of music not previously recorded, and a small output of new works. You'll be required to have an extensive knowledge of classical music and to be accurate in pronouncing French, Italian, German, Spanish, and Russian. Acceptable pronunciation of Czech, Swedish, Polish, Romanian, and other languages of composers who've contributed to Western classical music would be desirable.

As an announcer on a classical-music station, your name may or may not be known to your listeners. Stations on which announcers perform live usually ask you to give your name at the start and end of a shift, with occasional mentions between, while automated stations almost never reveal the names of those making the announcements. In either case, it's unlikely that you'll be expected to build a personal following. If, on the other hand, you're assigned to or develop a specialty program—a music quiz, a telephone talk show centering on classical music, a program of operatic arias, or a pro-

gram that features the best of the new releases—you might become well-known to your listeners, but such prominence is rare. Most classical-music fans turn to stations because of the music, not because of the announcers.

No ladder extends from the small classical-music station to the big time. Most classical-music stations are noncommercial FM stations, and working conditions and salaries tend to be uniform. Some highly profitable FM classical-music stations operate in major metropolitan areas, and salaries there are quite good, but those stations employ only a small percentage of professional radio announcers.<sup>13</sup>

Your announcing work at a classical-music station will be more relaxed than that of a DJ on a popular-music station. Musical selections are longer; many run thirty minutes or longer. You'll spend most of your time announcing general music programs consisting, for example, of a Bach fugue followed by a Strauss tone poem, a Vivaldi concerto, and a Mozart symphony, rounded off by ballet music by Tchaikovsky.

The selection and placement of music recordings are made by the music director, who's responsible for the total sound of the station. Each broadcast day usually has a coherent plan: brisk and lively short works play during morning drive time (especially at commercial classical-music stations), concert programs during midday, shorter works again during evening drive time, and longer works—including complete operas, symphonic programs recorded during performances, masses, and oratorios—throughout the evening. Music directors keep a list of all musical selections played, complete with date and time of each playing. Most stations have a policy requiring the lapse of a certain number of weeks or months between playings.

Concert music usually is introduced by giving the name of the composer, the selection, the orchestra (or other musical group), the conductor, and, when appropriate, the soloist (as in a concerto or an aria). At some stations you'll be asked to add the name of the recording company. When introducing opera, you'll most likely give a résumé of each act or scene and identify the leading singers. *Schwann Opus*, issued quarterly, publishes extensive information

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<sup>13</sup>Ninety-seven percent of classical-music stations are FM; only 3 percent broadcast on the AM band.

on classical recordings, furnishes birth and death dates of composers and, where known, the date of composition.

As you practice classical-music announcing, keep in mind the following checklist suggestions.

The most important requirements for employment as a classical-music announcer are impeccable foreign pronunciation and a thorough knowledge and appreciation of classical music. If you choose to specialize in this type of announcing, you should enroll in as many general courses in music as are offered to nonmajors. Of course, if you're a musician, more specialized courses will be available. Listen to classical-music broadcasts, collect records and tapes, practice aloud the introductions to musical selections, and learn to use at least some of the source books mentioned under Chapter 12 in Appendix E.



### **CHECKLIST**

#### **Polishing Your Classical-Music Announcing**

1. Perfect your foreign pronunciation.
2. Perfect your use of phonetic transcription. Although wire-service phonetics may be adequate for most announcers, as a classical-music announcer, you should master the International Phonetic Alphabet.
3. Practice reading and ad-libbing PSAs.
4. Practice cuing up and playing the music you introduce.
5. Create music programs. Invent titles, write openings and closings, select theme music, and make sample program offerings.
6. Practice ad-libbing with only the name of the composer, the title of the composition, and the names of performing artists before you.
7. Practice reading news headlines and five-minute news summaries, a typical part of a classical-music announcer's broadcast day.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Announcing Classical Music**

The following scripts feature Spanish, Italian, French, and German names and words. Begin to practice with these scripts, and then move on to scripts of your own creation.

#### **Spanish Music Copy**

Manuel de Falla inherited the role of Spain's first composer with the death of Granados in 1916. De Falla fulfilled his mission well and outshone his mentor in popularity outside of Spain. We hear seven "Canciones populares Españolas": "El paño moruno," "Seguidilla marciiana," "Asturiana," "Jota," "Nana," "Canción," and "Polo." Victoria de Los Angeles sings seven "Canciones populares Españolas" by Manuel de Falla.

Our featured work tonight is the operetta "La boda de Luis Alonso," by Giménez. Soloists are Carlos Munguia as Luis Alonso, Inés Rivandeneira as Maria Jesus, Gregorio Gil sings the part of Paco, Raphael Maldonado is Miguelito. The Gran Orquesta Sinfónica and the Coros Cantores de Madrid are directed by Ataulfo Argenta. We hear now "La boda de Luis Alonso" by Giménez.

Now for music of the bull ring, played by the “Banda Taurina” of the Plaza de Toros of Mexico City. The selections are “Las toreras,” a dedication to lady bull fighters; “Canero”; “Toque cuadrillas,” a signal for assistants to get the bull’s attention; “Purificación,” played at the moment of the killing; “El imponente,” a sign of respect for a very big bull; “Canitas,” played for a bull that has earned much respect; “Gualvidal,” played for a famous matador; “Toque de muerte,” the signal of death; “Dianas,” musical applause played after a successful encounter; and “Porque te quiero,” played when the company enters or leaves the arena. Music of the bull ring.

#### **Italian Music Copy**

Gaetano Donizetti’s “L’elisir d’amore” begins in the fields of Adina’s farm. It is harvest time, and the chorus of farm workers sings “Bel conforto al mietitore”—“What comfort to the harvester.” Nemorino, secretly in love with Adina, then sings “Quanto e bella, quanto e cara!”—“How beautiful she is! How dear!” Our cast features Rosanna Carteri as Adina, Luigi Alva as Nemorino, Rolando Panerai as Belcore, and Giuseppe Taddei as Il Dottor Dulcamara. The chorus and orchestra of Teatro alla Scala are conducted by Tullio Serafin. Donizetti’s “L’elisir d’amore.”

hear excerpts from the third act. First, Gerhard Unger, in the role of Pedrillo, sings the romantic “Im Mohrenland gefangen war,” followed by Gottlob Frick singing “O, wie will ich triumphieren.” Finally, Anneliese Rothenberger and Nicolai Gedda sing the duet “Welche ein Geschik! O Qual der Seele!” The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra is conducted by Josef Krips.

Next on the “Musical Stage” is the “Merry Widow,” “Die lustige Witwe” in German, by Franz Lehár. Tonight, the part of Hanna Glawari is sung by Hilde Güden, the Graf Danilo Danilowitsch is sung by Per Gruden, Waldemar Kmentt sings the part of Camille de Rosillon, and Emmy Loose is Valencienne. The Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra is led by Robert Stolz.

### **Mixed-Language Music Copy**

Welcome to “Music ‘til Dawn.” During the next five hours we will hear works from opera and the concert stage. Tonight’s program features works of Italian, Spanish, and German composers.

Our program begins with excerpts from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s opera “The Marriage of Figaro.” Featured are Hilde Güden as the Countess, Hermann Prey as the Count, Anneliese Rothenberger as Susanna,

Walter Berry as Figaro, and Edith Mathis as Cherubino. We then will hear excerpts from Handel's seldom-performed oratorio "Belshazzar." Featured are Sylvia Stahlman, soprano, and Helen Raab, contralto, with Helmuth Rilling conducting the Stuttgart Kirchenmusiktage Orchestra.

Andrés Segovia will perform as soloist in the "Concierto del sur," by Manuel Ponce. Andre Previn conducts the London Symphony Orchestra. During the third hour, we'll hear George Bizet's "Jeux d'enfants," with Jean Martinon conducting the Orchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire de Paris. Vincent D'Indy's "Symphony on a French Mountain Air" will bring us to our intermission.

"Music 'til Dawn" concludes with excerpts from the opera "La favorita," by Gaetano Donizetti. The cast includes Giuletta Simionato, mezzo-soprano, Gianni Poggi, tenor, and Ettore Bastianini, baritone. The Maggio Musicale Fiorentino is conducted by Alberto Erede.



# 13

## Sports Announcing

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Working Conditions of Sports Announcers
- Interviewing Athletes
  - Tape-Editing Considerations
  - Tips for Effective Interviewing
- Sports Reporting
  - The Television Sports Reporter
  - The Radio Sports Director
- The Play-by-Play Announcer
  - Working Conditions
  - Practicing Play-by-Play Announcing
  - Preparing for Play-by-Play Announcing
  - Calling the Game
  - Additional Tips on Sportscasting
- The Play Analyst
- SPOTLIGHT: Talking Sports With the Babe

Most announcers who reach the top of their specialization spend years of preparation before achieving success; nowhere is the struggle and its potential reward seen more clearly than in sports broadcasting. Sports announcing is extremely competitive and demands years of dedicated effort before there's any likelihood of significant return. Despite this, the prospect of spending a career in sports broadcasting is so appealing that scores of young people eagerly undertake the effort and assume the risks associated with the gamble. If you're determined to become a sports broadcaster, you should weigh carefully the advice of Russ Hodges: First, to succeed you must love both *sports* and *broadcasting* and fully commit your-

self to both; second, you must truly believe that you *will* be successful; and, third, you must prepare yourself educationally for a different career just in case you're one of the ninety-five out of one hundred who don't succeed in sports broadcasting.<sup>1</sup>

To become a successful sports announcer, you must have a *passion* for your work; you'll need it because sports announcing can be a stressful and exhausting way of life. You may find yourself traveling with a team, living out of a suitcase, putting in long hours, eating in restaurants and sandwich shops, and leaving your family for extended periods. Only a passion for your work can sustain you in such a job. Sports reporters who don't travel outside their immediate geographical area still work long hours and seldom have a day off.

Sports announcing includes *sports reporting*, *play-by-play coverage*, and *play analysis*. Most sports announcers become expert in one of these specialties; nearly all beginning sports announcers must become competent at all three. Interviewing sports figures and delivering commercials are additional challenges that you must manage well in order to succeed in sports announcing.

The Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN and ESPN2) considerably expanded the range of sports events shown on television. ESPN covers traditional mainline sports such as football, basketball, baseball, golf, hockey, boxing, and tennis, but in addition, to fill its many hours of daily cablecasting, it televises such events as bicycle racing (the Tour de France, for example), rodeos, billiards, volleyball, horse show-jumping, bodybuilding championships, roller hockey, surfing, water-skiing, gymnastics, hydroplane racing, and even tractor-pulling contests.

In addition to ESPN, many regional radio and television sports networks offer employment to sports announcers. The New England Sports Network (NESN), SportSouth Network, Midwest Sports Channel, Prime Sports Northwest, Sunshine Network (Florida), and Sports Channel Pacific are some of a growing number of regional television cable networks devoted entirely to sports broadcasting.

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<sup>1</sup>Russ Hodges was sports announcer for seven major league baseball teams, including the Yankees and Giants; he also announced football, televised boxing matches, horse racing, hockey, polo, golf, and nearly every other major and minor sport. His broadcasting career spanned forty-one years, from 1929 to 1970.

**Figure 13.1**

Steve Stone, former pitcher for Baltimore and the Chicago Cubs, comments on game strategies as part of the Harry Carey–Steve Stone announcing team. (Courtesy of Steve Stone)



## Working Conditions of Sports Announcers

As a sports announcer, you'll work for a radio or television station (perhaps both), for a broadcast or cable network, for an athletic team, or as a freelance announcer. Your working conditions, responsibilities, and income will be determined by your affiliation.

Network sports announcers, whether play-by-play, analysts, or reporters, are generally at the top of the salary range and have the least strenuous schedules. Network sportscasters seldom broadcast more than one game a week, and even those who add reporting duties to their schedules are responsible for only a few minutes of sports news a day. Sports announcers for national or regional cable systems are well rewarded, but their work schedule is heavy: they may find themselves calling several games each week during basketball, hockey, and baseball seasons.

Sports reporters who work for radio stations are usually responsible for delivering one or two hourly reports during their shifts, as well as taping additional reports to be broadcast after they've left the station. Television sports reporters produce several

minutes of visually informative sports news each day and also produce taped sports features to be run on weekends.

Sports announcers who work for athletic teams have the most strenuous but perhaps also the most exciting and rewarding jobs. As an employee of a professional baseball, basketball, football, or hockey team, you'll travel with the club. You owe loyalty to your employer, even though you may occasionally find it difficult to reconcile your judgment with that of your boss. Most team owners require their sportscasters to advertise special-promotion days and push ticket sales; some demand that their play-by-play sportscasters openly root for their team; some ask their announcers to favor their team but to do so with discretion. Other owners make no demands on their play-by-play staff but expect announcers as well as all other members of the organization to maintain loyalty to the team, especially when the team is on a losing streak. Even when working for the most genial or detached owner, you won't have as much freedom as does a reporter who works for a newspaper or a radio, television, or cable operation.

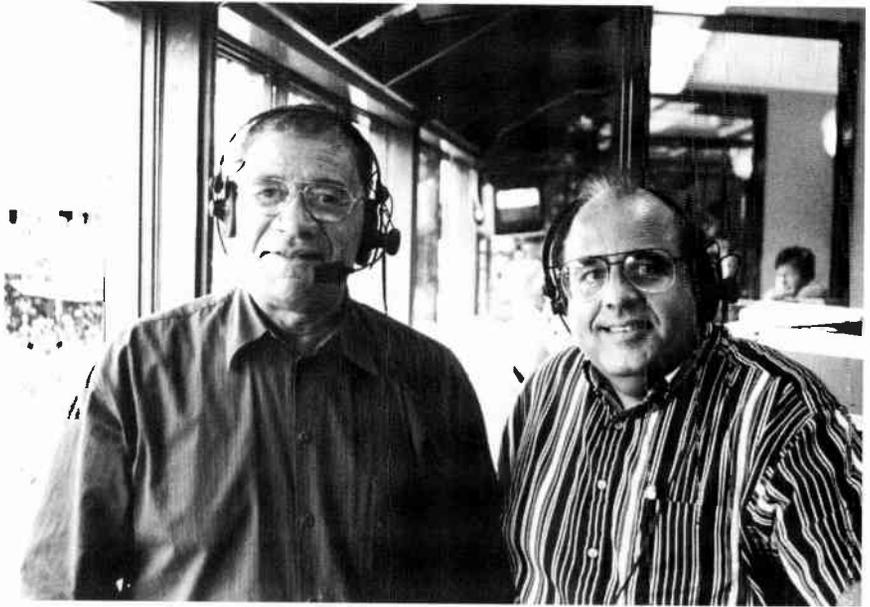
Most sports announcers fill a variety of professional roles. The simplest combination is doing play-by-play baseball during its long season and basketball, football, or hockey during the fall or winter. Other sports announcers combine five days a week of sports reporting for a station with weekend play-by-play reporting of college sports. If you become a sports announcer, you most likely will begin at a small-market radio station doing some sports announcing along with other duties such as reading hourly news reports or performing as a DJ. If you succeed, you may move into full-time sports reporting and play-by-play announcing. You also may move to a larger-market station and, perhaps, from radio to television.

If you're successful in becoming a full-time sports professional for the electronic media, your work schedule and job description might well conform to one of the following models. The first four descriptions are somewhat detailed; the remaining seven examples are more briefly presented.

***Sports Reporter for an All-News Network-Affiliated Radio Station in a Major Market*** You're responsible for eight to ten live reports each day and three taped reports to be played after you've left the station. In addition, your popularity has opened up supplemental jobs that don't conflict with your station work: you do foot-

**Figure 13.2**

Rene De La Rosa and Amaury Pi-Gonzales are the Spanish-language announcers for the San Francisco Giants. Many professional sports teams have found it profitable to reach fans who have English as a second language. (Courtesy of Rene De La Rosa and Amaury Pi-Gonzalez and the San Francisco Giants)



ball play-by-play for a major university; you announce play-by-play during the football preseason for a professional team in your area; and you record commercials for a variety of clients, including a chain of sporting goods stores. Occasionally, when an important news story involves athletes or teams in your area, you prepare a report for your network.

Your work schedule is extremely demanding. Aside from the effort of working a six- to seven-day week, you must constantly keep up with developments in all major sports at amateur and professional levels. You spend hours each week reading several newspapers, *Sporting News*, *Sports Illustrated*, and other specialized publications. You're also asked to speak at team receptions and banquets, news conferences, and civic functions. You schedule yourself to cover as many sports events as possible. You do postgame interviews for use on your daily sports reports, and you deliver some of these actualities live to your station shortly after a game has ended. You record interviews with the star (or, occasionally, the goat) of a game on a small, portable cassette recorder and insert them into your report. You also make notes as you watch the game so you can give a firsthand review, complete with actualities recorded in the locker room, on the following day's reports.

**Sports Director for a Network Owned and Operated (O&O) Television Station** As sports director for an O&O television station, you prepare sports news for the daily 6:00 and 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. newscasts.<sup>2</sup> You view and edit tapes of sports action, select sports photos sent by wire services, and write two three- to five-minute segments for daily newscasts. You spend much of your time attending sports events with an ENG operator. Pregame and postgame interviews with players and coaches make up a good portion of your nightly sportscast. On some weekends, you spend hours at the station watching games on network television. You select key plays that you may want to use on the air and have them dubbed off. A three-hour game may provide you with as much as thirty minutes of dubbed action from which you'll choose a maximum of three minutes for each of your two sports segments.

Your day's work leaves little time for moonlighting. You attend three to five sports events each week to see nontelevized events firsthand and to tape interviews. You regularly spend early afternoons covering sports stories, accompanied by an ENG operator.<sup>3</sup> You arrive at the station at 3:00 p.m., which leaves you less than three hours in which to view or review all available tape, make selections, review sports news from the wire services, write your script, and prepare for on-air performance during the 6:00 news. Between the 6:00 and the late-night newscast, you eat dinner, prepare for your second sportscast, and review sports scores as they come in from wire-services. Your workday ends after the late-night news, but it begins the next day long before you tape your sports news story of the day. You spend mornings arranging interviews, reading several sports magazines and the sports sections of newspapers, and perhaps answering requests for information about the life of a sports reporter sent by high school and college students who would like to have your job.

**Sports Director for a Medium-Market Radio Station** You focus on high school, college, and minor-league sports events. You work for the station and for the AA baseball team whose games are

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<sup>2</sup>"O&O" is broadcast jargon for a station that is *owned and operated* by a parent network.

<sup>3</sup>At some small-market stations, you may work without an ENG operator. You may set up your light weight camera on a tripod, start the camera, and perform stand-ups and interviews without assistance.

broadcast over a three-station network. When not on the road with the team, you do play-by-play descriptions of the most important high school football and basketball games. You work with a group of students you've recruited and trained to phone in ongoing scores of the games not being broadcast. You do play-by-play announcing of home football games for a nearby university. You provide several brief sports reports each day for the hourly five-minute newscasts. You act as spotter for play-by-play sportscasters when university sports events are regionally telecast. And, as time allows, you do play-by-play reports of newsworthy local sports events such as tennis and golf tournaments; hockey and soccer championship playoffs; Little League, Babe Ruth, and Pop Warner championships; and track and field meets.

*Sportscaster for a Television Network* You owe no allegiance to owners, managers, teams, or players; your responsibility is to your viewers, and they expect accurate, balanced, and entertaining reports of the games they watch. Because your continued success depends on perfection, you limit moonlighting and other commitments that might cut down on the hours of careful preparation necessary for a first-rate sportscast. Your schedule requires play-by-play work one day a week, which translates into a minimum of twenty-five baseball games during the season plus preseason and postseason games and sixteen professional football games plus divisional playoff games and the Super Bowl.

This schedule adds up to nearly one game a week for the calendar year, depending on the duration of playoffs, but it's possible to manage because you're able to spend several days each week memorizing players by appearance, number, and position and to rely on a professional support staff that includes a play and game analyst, a statistician, and (in the case of football) spotters. Your travel schedule is demanding, but you're able to return home for at least a portion of each week. Your high salary increases the number of hungry sportscasters coveting your job; this competition alone is reason enough for you to apply yourself constantly to perfecting and maintaining your skills.

*Sportscaster for a Cable Sports Channel* Your work is similar to that of a network sportscaster, but you call far more games each season. As is true of most sports announcers, you shift from one sport to another as seasons change. You do play-by-play for as

**Figure 13.3**

Sherry Davis, first woman stadium announcer in major-league baseball history, announces lineups, batters, pinch hitters, pinch runners, substitutions, and other items of interest to crowds at the ball park. (Courtesy of Sherry Davis and the San Francisco Giants)



many as forty-five home games of a major-league baseball team and another fourteen when traveling with the team on road trips; during the winter you call college football games. You work with a former star appropriate to the sport being covered who adds “color” and interpretations and explanations of strategies. When calling baseball games, your partner calls three innings of each game.

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a Professional Major-League Baseball Team* You’re employed jointly by a baseball organization and a radio station. You lead a life similar to that of the athletes in many respects. You travel with the team and don’t have to make your own arrangements for transportation or lodging. A traveling secretary handles all details, which eases the stress of travel considerably. Throughout the season you broadcast on a regional radio network of as many as ten stations.

Including spring practice games and games rained out before the end of the fifth inning, but not including divisional playoffs or

**Figure 13.4**

Play-by-play announcers for the Kansas City Royals are Dave Armstrong and former ace pitcher Paul Splittdorff. (Courtesy of Dave Armstrong, Paul Splittdorff, and the Kansas City Royals)



World Series games, you call more than 170 games during the season. You work with a partner who calls between two and three innings and provides anecdotal and statistical information throughout the game.

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a Minor-League Professional Baseball Team* You call fewer games each season than your major-league counterpart, but both travel and play-by-play announcing are more rigorous. One of the ways underfunded minor-league teams manage to survive is by economizing on travel. Buses are used for travel whenever possible. The team remains in each town for five or six days, and you must call six games during a five-day visit.

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a Professional Football Team* Your working life is quite different from that of a baseball, basketball, or hockey announcer. Not counting preseason and postseason games, your team plays sixteen games each season, usually a week apart. You broadcast mainly on radio except when games are carried by a regional television network or by a cable sports network.

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a University Football Team* You call about eleven games each season, assuming that funds make it

possible for you to go on road trips with the team. Most universities offer free transportation to away games on charter flights but don't furnish per diem money. If a radio station, the university, and one or more advertisers put together a commercial package for broadcasting an entire season, your full travel expenses are met.

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a Professional Basketball Team* You're part of a four-person announcing staff. You and a partner do television play-by-play, while radio coverage is provided by the two other members of the team's broadcasting staff.<sup>4</sup>

*Play-by-Play Announcer for a Professional Hockey Team* Your traveling and broadcasting schedule is nearly identical to that of your basketball counterpart. Your team plays eighty games, not counting preseason and playoff games. A typical road trip involves five matches in five cities spread over twelve days. Your friends who do play-by-play for minor-league hockey teams call fewer games each season, but they must cope with more demanding travel schedules.

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## Interviewing Athletes

Interviews are an important resource for nearly all sports reporters. The chapter on interviewing will help you develop a general approach to interviewing. This section offers additional comments directed at sports reporting.

As a sports announcer, you'll generally interview players, coaches, managers, trainers, and owners. Your interviews will usually take place at a sports event or at a news conference. Pregame and postgame interviews are common to all sports. As you prepare to interview, keep some of these questions in mind.

What is the overriding significance of the game to be played or just concluded?

Is there an interesting one-on-one player matchup?

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<sup>4</sup>Professional basketball announcing staffs range from four members to one. Typically a team of two work together during radio-only broadcasts and separately when a game is covered by both radio and television.

Is there something unique in the playing ability or game strategy of the person you interview?

Has an athlete been on a hot or cold streak?

Is there an unusually important or interesting game coming up?

Is there any information about trades or free agents that might be newsworthy?

Interviews with athletes can sometimes be frustrating. The code of the locker room seems to demand that athletes—other than professional tennis players, wrestlers, and boxers—be modest about their own accomplishments and praise their teammates or opponents, regardless of the facts. Moreover, athletes are preoccupied before a game and exhausted afterward. Finally, the noise and confusion in dugouts and locker rooms and on the playing field can make sensible, coherent conversation difficult.

### **Tape-Editing Considerations**

When interviewing for later editing into actualities, know in advance whether your questions will remain on the tape. This consideration is important because the questions you ask and the answers you receive must be guided by the way you'll later edit the tapes. The following question and answer would be difficult to use if the question were not included in the actuality when broadcast:

Q: You were in foul trouble early tonight. Do you think the refs were blowing a quick whistle?

A: Well, I guess we had a little difference of opinion on that. I thought they were overeager. Talk of the possibility of some revenge for the last game probably had them uptight.

Without the question, the answer makes little sense. Of course, you could cut the question and write a lead-in that serves the same purpose:

LEAD-IN: I asked Matty if he thought his early fouls came because the refs were blowing a quick whistle.

This approach works, but it would've been better if you and Matty had understood at the outset of the interview that you wanted complete statements that could stand alone without your question. In that event Matty's response might have begun like this:

MATTY: I got into foul trouble early, and I think the reason  
might have been . . .

## Tips for Effective Interviewing

When interviewing sports stars, keep the following points in mind:

*Assume that your audience is interested in and capable of understanding complex, precise discussions about training and technique.* Avoid asking superficial, predictable questions. Your audience probably already knows a lot about the sport and the athlete and wants to find out more. Followers of tennis, golf, and Olympic performances such as gymnastics, diving, and equestrian events are less tolerant of superficial interviews than are most other sports fans. They've come to expect precise analytical comments, and they feel cheated if interviews with participants don't add to their understanding of complexities and strategies. Basketball and football have developed increasingly complex offenses and defenses, and fans have been educated to understand and appreciate detailed information about them. Baseball, one of the most subtly complex of all major sports, is seldom explained or discussed in an enlightened fashion through interviews, but you should not be discouraged from reaching for answers to complex questions.

*Work up to controversial or critical questions with care.* If you ask a big question without any preliminaries, you're likely to get a routine statement "for the record" from athletes and coaches. Sports figures are interviewed so often that most of them can supply the questions as well as the answers. They tend to rely on safe explanations for most common questions. If you want more, lead up to big questions with a sequence of less controversial ones. If you begin an interview with a football coach by asking whether the coach approves of a trade recently made by the club's owners, the coach is naturally going to say "yes" and avoid elaborating. Begin instead by talking about the team and its strengths and weak-

**Figure 13.5**

Freelance announcer Duke Frye records an interview with Kansas City pitcher Kevin Appier prior to game time. (Courtesy of Duke Frye and KMBZ)



nesses. Move to a question about the playing abilities of the traded player. Ask specific questions about the player's strong and weak points. Finally, ask the coach to explain how the loss of this player will affect the team. A coach will seldom criticize the decisions of the club's owners, but you'll have a better chance of getting more than a vague response if you don't ask the big question straight out. Give your guest a chance to comment informatively as well as loyally. A warning: don't use a roundabout approach to the big question if your intent is (or appears to be) entrapment; it could make it more difficult to obtain cooperation in the future.

*Get to know the athletes you are likely to be interviewing.* Knowing the athletes you interview will help you to assess the kinds of questions they can and can't handle. Many sportscasters and some reporters travel with teams, visit locker rooms, and are invited to opening-day parties, victory celebrations, and promotional luncheons. If you have such opportunities, use them to become acquainted with the athletes who attend.

*Listen to conversations among athletes and coaches.* A good way to discover what athletes and coaches think is timely and important is simply to listen to their conversations. Though time pres-

tures sometimes require you to enter into these conversations to come up with a story or anecdote for your program, you can often learn more by just listening. If you're lucky enough to have meals with athletes and be accepted in clubhouses or locker rooms, try to be a silent observer. You'll be amazed at the spontaneous insights that will emerge. Again, a warning: don't use your familiarity or friendships with sports figures to warp your judgment or betray a trust. In other words, don't make excuses for the poor play of an athlete because you have a warm relationship and don't report things said to you or overheard by you that should remain confidential.

## Sports Reporting

At some smaller radio and television stations, the title *sports reporter* is synonymous with *sports director*. Only prosperous stations can afford the services of more than one sports specialist. Radio station sports directors are usually responsible for both live and taped reports. They also prepare guidelines to be followed by news anchors who report in-progress scores and final results.

Television sports reporters are less likely to see double duty as reporter and director than are their radio counterparts. It's common to find three or more sports specialists at television stations: a sports director, who may or may not appear before cameras, and two or more reporters who prepare and deliver sports reports during regular newscasts. Typically, one sports reporter does the Monday-through-Friday newscasts, and the second works weekends. Both cover sports events with ENG crews and prepare taped material for the sports segments of the station's newscasts.

## The Television Sports Reporter

As a sports reporter for a local television station, you may find yourself preparing and delivering three sports features daily—for the 5:00, 6:00, and 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. newscasts—plus a taped feature for weekend broadcast. In another common arrangement, one reporter performs for the 5:00 p.m. news and the second is featured on the 6:00 and the late-night newscasts. The first reporter does weekend sports.

As a sports reporter for a medium- or major-market television station, you can expect to have these resources available to you:

- An ENG operator for taping sports action and pregame and postgame interviews
- Videotapes of complete sports events
- Videotaped sports highlights from a parent network
- Videotaped stories from a nearby television station with which you have a reciprocal agreement
- Tapes and slides from professional and university athletic organizations
- Sports news, photos, and slides from AP or ESPN
- Sports magazines and the sports section of newspapers
- Press information kits and media guides from all major professional and university athletic organizations
- A telephone-audio recorder setup that allows you to make audio recordings of telephone interviews

The Associated Press, SportsTicker, and other services provide extensive material for sports reporters including sports news items and up-to-the-minute scores. Throughout the year, special reports provide extensive information about the sport of the moment—the Kentucky Derby, football bowl games, the World Series, the Superbowl, the PGA tournament, the NBA all-star game, the Stanley Cup, and so on.

The Associated Press provides nonstop coverage of sports, including detailed information on major-league baseball (MLB); the NFL, NBA, and NHL; all major college sports; the Olympics; professional golf and tennis; and everything from Alpine skiing to wrestling and bowling.<sup>5</sup> The AP also supplies Morning and Afternoon SportsWatch as well as several “SportsMinutes” and headlines of sports stories of major importance.

The AP calls its individual sports stories **Separates**. These single-event stories are written for all NFL, NBA, MLB, and NHL games, as well as college bowl games, basketball tournament games, and major breaking stories that involve any sport, team, or athlete.

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<sup>5</sup>In addition to the abbreviation *MLB* for major-league baseball, sports reporting organizations use *NHL* for National Hockey League, *NBA* for National Basketball Association, *WNBA* for Women’s National Basketball Association, *NFC* for National Football Conference, *AFC* for American Football Conference, and *NFL* for National Football League.

In addition to regularly scheduled features, the Associated Press issues both Bulletins and Urgents. Examples of **Bulletins** are blockbuster trades, deaths of noteworthy athletes, and pennant and World Series clinchers. **Urgents** include no-hitters, major firings of coaches and managers, and important breaking stories.

Team media guides are the best sources of detailed information. The guides outline in detail each player's sports career; give statistics for individuals, the team, and the team's opponents; and include each player's photograph to make recognition easier. The won-lost records of every coach or manager who ever served the team and the performance leaders through the years who lead the team in many different categories are also noted. Both statistics and significant facts are provided to help give your narrative a sense of authority and interest.

Your job consists mainly of collecting, selecting, editing, and organizing the materials available to you into a cohesive, action-oriented package for each of the evening's newscasts, and of writing an entertaining and informative script. One of your tasks is to log significant plays as you watch games on television. The log is later used to edit the major plays for your reports.

Using essentially the same visual materials and sports news items, you must prepare as many as three different sports reports each day. The trick is to organize and write your reports to avoid unnecessary repetitions. Many of your viewers will see two of your nightly reports, and a few will see all three, so all reports must provide fresh information for addicted fans. (Of course, a tape of a truly spectacular play may be used on all three reports; die-hard sports fans may actually stay up late to see it *one more time!*)

You'll be under constant pressure from your sports director to make your reports more *visual*. Because you're reporting on television, they'll obviously be "visual"; what the director wants is a great deal of illustrative material (taped inserts, even still photos) to avoid using the kind of shots some television producers sarcastically refer to as **talking heads**. Your judgment may tell you that a series of taped shots may be more confusing than enlightening or that some important stories should be narrated directly into a taking camera, but your judgment isn't likely to prevail.

When writing voice-over copy to accompany taped "play action," you must try always to match words and pictures cohesively. On television, when words and pictures don't reinforce one another, the sound tends to fade from the viewer's awareness. Confine your

remarks to the few essential comments needed to enhance understanding of what the viewers are seeing.

## The Radio Sports Director

As sports director for a medium- or major-market radio station, you'll have many of the same responsibilities as your television counterpart. You'll produce several fast-moving sports reports each day, you'll produce material to be broadcast after you've left the station, and you'll establish and supervise station policy concerning sports. This last responsibility includes preparing an instruction sheet or manual for use by general or staff announcers. In the manual you'll indicate how sports bulletins are to be handled, how the sports news section of general newscasts is to be structured, and the order and manner of reporting scores and outcomes of games.

Depending on your geographical region, you might ask that a certain sport be given priority in reporting. In the Northeast, hockey often comes before basketball; in Indiana, basketball usually comes before baseball; and in Chicago, baseball almost always comes before tennis. If your town has a minor-league baseball team, you might ask that its scores be given priority over major-league results.

As a radio sports director, you're likely to use the following resources:

A high-quality cassette audio recorder on which you record interviews and news conferences for delivery during a live report; the tapes are also used for later editing and broadcasting on your regular sports reports. DAT recorders may be used to record and edit audiotapes at the station, but they're not rugged enough to withstand the punishment they'd receive in the field. Microcassette tape recorders are of insufficient quality for broadcast reports.

Sports news and scores from the news wire services (see a listing of offerings from the Associated Press in the preceding section). Audio feeds from the wire services and perhaps from a parent network.

Special wire-service sports features (listed earlier in this chapter). A specially adapted telephone for recording phone interviews.

Press books and other sources of factual information from professional and university sports organizations.

A variety of newspapers and magazines to which your station subscribes.

One of your most time-consuming jobs will be preparing the audio inserts for your broadcasts. This job includes gathering the recorded material, determining the items you'll use, writing a script to accompany the inserts, editing the excerpts, and dubbing the selected actualities to a tape storage system. Because modern radio practice demands extensive use of taped actualities, the procedures followed by one outstanding sports director, Hal Ramey of KCBS, are outlined here.

Hal Ramey records his interviews without assistance. He attends many sports events and news conferences and carries with him at all times a top-of-the-line audio recorder with a high-quality external microphone. During day baseball games, he presents his twice-an-hour sports reports live from the press box of the stadium, often incorporating actualities recorded prior to game time. His voiced reports are transmitted to his radio station digitally over an ISDN phone line of Pacific Bell.

When working at the station, Ramey arrives an hour or so before his first on-air report. He checks the sports wire to get information on games in progress, league standings, and other information appropriate to a given sport season. He then checks the notes he made following his locker room interviews of the previous day. His notes list the following information for each interview:

Digital counter number where each actuality begins

Name of the person being interviewed

The in cue

The out cue

Length of the actuality

A brief indication of the topic of the comments

Here's a typical note:

121 Fred Williams "I think we can" "be close" 15 secs "Win the pennant"

When preparing sports reports at the station, Ramey has, in addition to his own recorded interviews, audio feeds from CBS Radio Sports (SportsFeed) and the Associated Press as well as scores

and sports reports sent to a desktop computer by the AP. A typical CBS SportsFeed menu will outline twelve to fifteen available cuts. Each cut is identified by number, the name of the speaker, the general subject of the comments, the length of the cut, and the out cue. Cuts are brief, averaging about fifteen seconds. Newsroom staff members receive and record all reports, so it's a simple matter to review them and make selections for inclusion in one of his ten live sports reports.

Hal listens to the actualities, decides which to use, and moves to a small editing booth where he dubs the actualities from cassette to tape carts. He labels the carts and returns to his office to sketch a script for the actualities he's chosen and dubbed. At precisely fifteen and forty-five minutes past the hour he goes on the air in an announce booth to make his sports reports, usually incorporating up to four actualities in each.

Hal Ramey does ten live reports daily and records three more for later playing. Each report lasts two minutes. He is responsible for twenty-six to thirty minutes of broadcast material each day. For this, he spends a minimum of eight hours of preparation.

## The Play-by-Play Announcer

Play-by-play coverage of football, basketball, hockey, and baseball games accounts for most of the many hours of sports reporting on radio and television. Other events that receive coverage are important golf and tennis tournaments, several popular horse racing events each year, auto racing, both summer and winter Olympics, soccer matches, and some unusual sports such as wrist wrestling, "hot dog" skiing, and lumberjack championships. The person who calls the game, race, match, or event is known as the **play-by-play announcer**, even though sports such as track and field have no actual "plays." For many types of sports events, the play-by-play announcer works with a play or game analyst, whose role is described in the next section.

### Working Conditions

If you're a sportscaster for a team that plays many games during a long season, you'll easily acquire the kind of information you need

for intelligent ad-libbed commentary. Your association with league players will make player identification routine, and your exclusive involvement with a single sport should give you plenty of material for illuminating analyses and game trends.

At the highest levels of professional sports broadcasting, you'll have help from a broadcast staff and team management. Each broadcast day you'll be given a press information kit updating all relevant statistics. During the game, a sports wire such as Sports-Ticker, Inc., will give you the scores and details of other games.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps a full-time statistician will work with you, unearthing and bringing to your attention significant records or events you can incorporate into your running commentary. You may also have an engineer to continuously balance your voice with crowd sounds to add drama to your narrative. If you telecast a game, you'll have instant replay to enrich the coverage. Even when doing radio play-by-play, watching a television replay will give you the information you need to tell your listeners that the game officials made a good, a questionable, or an incorrect call.

A famous athlete or former manager may be at your side giving evaluations and predictions that add another dimension to the broadcast. It's demanding work, but you have budget, personnel, and working conditions in your favor. However, overlapping and ever-expanding seasons as well as competition from single-sport specialists will require you to focus on no more than two or possibly three major sports.

If you work for a smaller station and announce a wide variety of games—ranging from high school to college and semipro—your job will be much more difficult. You can expect to cover all sports. Rules of play may not be standardized, you may not know the players, and press information kits may not exist. You can expect little help and a meager budget.

The booth setup will vary with the sport. Football usually demands the services of a team of four: a play-by-play announcer, a play analyst, and two spotters. If you're doing play-by-play, you'll sit between the two spotters, and the analyst will sit next to one of the spotters. For high school, college, and some professional games,

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<sup>6</sup>SportsTicker provides a computerized sports information system. A menu lists categories such as Scoreboard, League News, Standings, History/Quiz, Schedules, Statistics, and Deals/Transactions. When one of these is selected, the information appears on the computer screen. A printer makes a hard copy of selected information for use by the announcers.

**Figure 13.6**

SportsTicker displays a menu listing several categories of sports information available to announcers during a game. Categories include Headlines, Schedules, Previews, Standings, and Scoreboard. (Courtesy of SportsTicker)



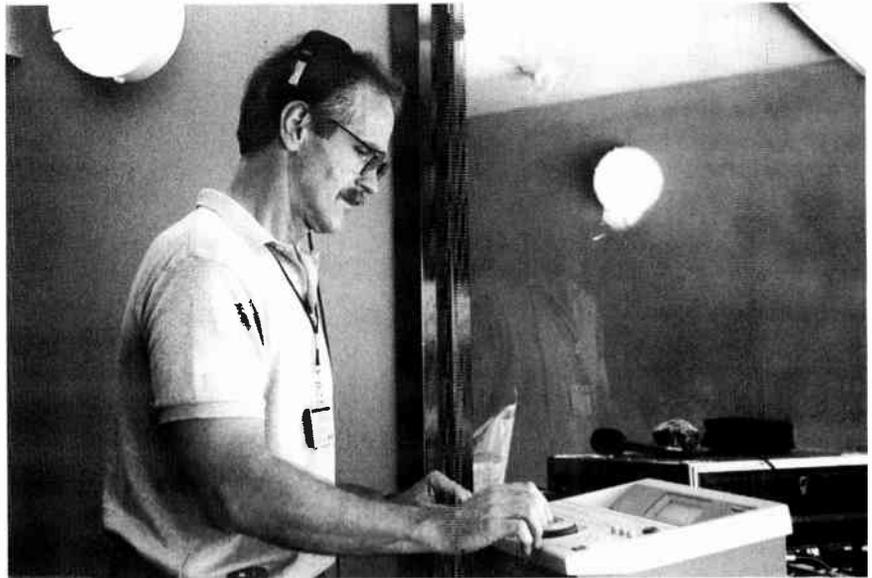
the analyst is likely to be quite familiar with the home team; the analyst's proper position is next to the spotter who points for the visiting team.

Spotting charts are two-sided. One side lists the offensive players, the other the defensive. Push pins mark which players are in the game at any given moment. Playing positions are arranged in ranks that reflect the positioning of the players on the field. The offense side shows one straight line of six players: left tackle, left guard, center, right guard, right tackle, and tight end. Two spaces for wide receivers are outboard of this line of six. Behind the center of the line is a space for the quarterback, and behind the quarterback are two spaces for the running backs. The defensive side of the chart shows a front line of five players: two tackles, two ends, and a linebacker. There are two spaces behind and outboard of the front line for two more linebackers and four additional spaces directly behind the front line for defensive players such as cornerbacks and strong and free safety.

Each spotting chart also has three words written on it: *rush*, *beat*, and *tackle*. As appropriate, spotters point to one or another of these words and then point to a player's name. *Rush* is used to indicate the key players on a rush; *beat*, to show who beat whom in a

**Figure 13.7**

San Francisco Giants radio producer and engineer Lee Jones records, edits, and logs game highlights on this tapeless audio unit, manufactured by 360 Systems. Selected highlights are played during the postgame recap. (Courtesy of Lee Jones and the San Francisco Giants)



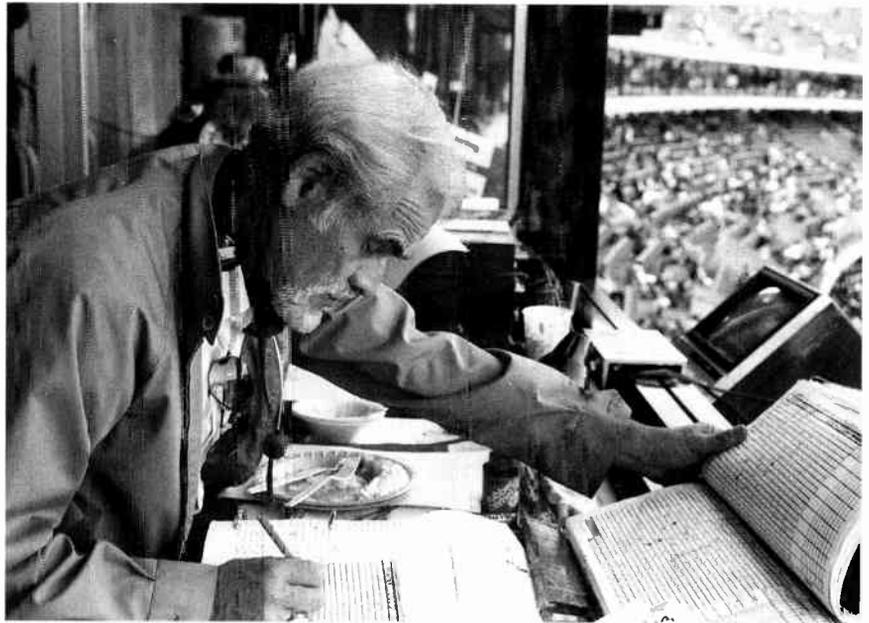
one-on-one situation; and *tackle*, to indicate players who made or missed key tackles.

Because football, especially at the professional level, is an extremely complex game, spotting charts lack adequate flexibility to cover offensive and defensive realignments. As the play-by-play announcer, you'll be concentrating on the handling of the football. Spotters are responsible for showing changes in the lineups. For example, the defense spotter will hold up five fingers to indicate a nickel defense, or the offensive spotter will hold up three fingers to indicate three wide receivers in the game. In general, you should use spotters for actions you can't see for yourself. It's your job to follow the football, so leave other details of each play up to your spotters.

The booth setup for baseball can be as simple as one play-by-play announcer sitting with a remote mixer, a microphone, and an array of information sheets and scoring charts. Some radio and most television broadcasts are enhanced by adding two others to the announcing team: a second play-by-play announcer and a game analyst who also may serve as statistician. The three-person team is positioned with the statistician to the left of the two play-by-play announcers. Typically, one announcer will call six innings, and the

**Figure 13.8**

Before, during, and after the game, sports announcers spend hours researching team and player histories, statistics, and interesting sidelights. Play-by-play announcer Bill King goes over his detailed stat book just before the start of a game. (Courtesy of Bill King and the Oakland A's)



other will call three. Before them are at least three cards or sheets of paper: two diagrams of the baseball field with the names of the defensive players of each team written in, and two score sheets, one for each team.

Another setup for baseball broadcasts calls for two announcers who take turns doing play-by-play and analysis, plus an audio engineer. The engineer serves as booth producer of the broadcast and adjusts the volume on the remote mixer, gives cues signaling “station break,” feeds the on-air signal to the announcers’ headphones toward the end of a commercial break so they know when to pick up their narrative, and operates the sports ticker. The audio engineer also records the entire game on an audio recorder, makes a notation of important plays, and cues the cuts so they can be played in sequence during the play-by-play announcer’s postgame wrap-up.

Basketball and hockey move so fast and have so few players that announcers have neither time nor need for spotters. A name and position chart with pins indicating the players in the game at any given moment may be helpful at times, but in general there’s little time to refer to it. On two-person announcing teams, the second announcer provides analysis (or analysis and color on radio).

Water polo coverage is in most respects similar to coverage of hockey and basketball.

Boxing, golf, tennis, speed and figure skating, skiing, ski jumping, and gymnastics present no problems of competitor recognition. Spotting is unnecessary, and many of the complexities that make football, basketball, and hockey difficult to call, such as multiple players, complex offenses and defenses, and speed of action, aren't factors. However, all of these sports require in-depth knowledge, and fans expect reporters to have outstanding comprehension and judgment. It's standard practice for sports generalists to introduce, talk around, and summarize gymnastics, skiing and skating, with the actual "play-by-play" provided by a former participant of the sport. Boxing, golf, and tennis are covered by announcers who may or may not have competed in those sports, but who've made long and intense study of them. Announce booths may be lacking altogether at the sites of these sports; remote trailers take their place. At the opposite extreme, most notably for the Olympic Games, a highly sophisticated electronic center houses media coverage.

### **Practicing Play-by-Play Announcing**

As a beginner, you should practice play-by-play announcing at every opportunity. Attend every sports event you can, not only the major sports, but tennis, track and field, gymnastics, and skiing—anything that's recognized as a sport and is the subject of radio or television broadcasts. Practice calling games or events into the mic of a battery-operated cassette recorder. Set your tapes aside until your memory of the game has faded, then listen to them to see whether they paint a clear picture of the game. Make note of any instances where you find your reporting incomplete, inaccurate, tedious, or marred by numerous corrections, and work to eliminate the flaws. In particular, *note any improvement*. Improvement builds confidence, and confidence guarantees further improvement.

As a play-by-play announcer for baseball, you must be able to score a game accurately and quickly. Indications of outs, scoring, and other basic information are essential when recapping game action.

It's difficult for a student of sports announcing to practice play-by-play for television. Practicing with an audio recorder will help prepare you for telecasting, but there are important differences in

style, quantity of information given, nature of information provided, and availability of resources, including instant replay. Your apprenticeship for the challenge of televised play-by-play will probably be served by observing others as they call games. If you can, get permission to be a silent and unobtrusive witness in announce booths during the telecasts of games in your area. If you can't be in the booth, begin to view games on television with a critical eye and ear. Tape broadcasts of entire sports events. As you review them, make notes of your observations. Analyze moments of exceptionally competent as well as incompetent play-by-play narrative. Decide for yourself how much description is illuminating, and learn to sense the moment at which announce booth chatter begins to reduce your enjoyment of the game. Note especially those times when an announcing team is so carried away with descriptions of seagulls overhead or an amusing anecdote about a player that its members fail to give you an important detail such as whether or not a first down was made on the last play. Too often, television play-by-play broadcasters assume that viewers have seen and understood what occurred, even when the needed information wasn't seen by a camera. Most professional play-by-play announcers maintain voluminous notebooks full of facts about players and teams from which they can enrich the listener's experience with interesting or informative comments; too often those comments take away from the ongoing contest, rather than add to it.

### **Preparing for Play-by-Play Announcing**

Preparation is the key to successful sportscasting. Don Klein, former voice of the San Francisco 49ers, says, "The two to three hours spent in calling a game is the easiest part of a play-by-play announcer's work. Preparation for most major sportscasts requires up to twenty hours of study." This comment, of course, refers to contests between teams that are unknown or only slightly known to the announcer; less preparation of a different kind is appropriate for play-by-play announcers who work for a team that plays the same opponent as many as thirteen times in a season—as in major-league baseball and basketball. When the problem of player recognition is minimized, preparation focuses on making each sportscast unique.

Before entering the announce booth to call a game, ask yourself a number of questions: Is there anything unusual about this game?

Is either team or any player on a streak of any sort? Are there any interesting rivalries in this matchup? How might the weather affect the game? Is there a home-team advantage? How have these teams fared during the season and during the past few years? Reflecting on these and similar questions should make you ready to call an interesting game.

In preparing to cover a game when at least one of the teams is unknown to you, begin your preparation as far in advance as possible. Your resources are team media guides, press information kits, official yearbooks, newspaper stories and columns, wire-service reports, and specialized sports magazines. Preparation includes memorizing all players by name and position and, if possible, appearance. In football, players' numbers are often important. Preparation includes making notes, usually on three-by-five-inch file cards, of information that might prove useful during the game. Preparation also requires spotting charts, scoring sheets, and any other materials appropriate to the sport.

Arrive early on the day of the game. Check starting lineups. If in doubt, check the pronunciation of players' names with assistant managers or team captains. If possible, spend time with the players before the game; your effectiveness in describing the game will be enhanced by understanding how the players feel. Enter the booth long before game time. Lay out your spotting charts, scoring sheets, file cards of statistical and anecdotal information, and whatever notebooks or other materials you plan to use during the game. Check out your broadcast equipment. For both radio and television sportscasts, commercials, station promotions, and promotions of ticket sales are likely to be recorded before game time. This reduces pressure during the game and gives you many moments when you can take off your headset and make or read notes.

Plan ahead. Think about everything you'll need and make sure you have it with you when you arrive at the booth. Aside from the spotting charts, scoring sheets, and information cards, you'll need pencils, a pencil sharpener, erasers, pins for the chart (if the sport is football), water or some other beverage, binoculars, and perhaps even an electric heater to keep your teeth from chattering!

## Calling the Game

In covering any sport as a member of a two-person team, it's helpful to develop and use simple nonverbal signals to avoid confusion.

A sportscast can be deadly for listeners if you and your partner continually interrupt one another or start to speak at the same time. The general rule is that the play-by-play announcer is the booth director. As play-by-play announcer, you'll do all the talking except when you invite your play analyst or statistician to contribute. Play analysts indicate that they have a comment to make by raising a hand; if you decide to allow the comment, you throw a cue by pointing an index finger when you come to the end of your own remarks. Analysts must always complete their remarks well ahead of the moment when you must again pick up the play-by-play. As you might imagine, hand signals (except for "you're on" cues) are unnecessary when sportscasters have worked together for long periods of time and sense when it's safe to interject a comment.

When calling a football game, many announcers stand rather than sit because it increases energy and frees them to move as needed to relate to the field, the television monitor, spotter's charts, and the play analyst.

When you call any game, keep several important principles in mind. First, truly believe that your chief responsibility is to your viewers or listeners; this translates into being completely honest in reports of the games you call. This belief will be difficult to hold to at times. Unreasonable owners, outraged players, and others who have a stake in your broadcasts may make irrational demands. In the long run, though, you'll prosper best if you have a loyal following of viewers or listeners who have faith in your integrity and know you're not merely a shill for a profit-hungry sports organization.

Second, remember that it's your responsibility to *report*, *entertain*, and *sell*. Your reports must be accurate and fair. As an entertainer, you must attract and hold the fans' attention for up to three hours at a time. Selling means selling the sport more than the team. It means selling yourself as a credible reporter, communicating the natural enthusiasm you feel, and avoiding forced enthusiasm or any other trait that will cause listeners to question your values.

Finally, avoid home-team bias. **Homers** aren't unknown to sportscasting, and some are famous for their lack of objectivity. But some practical reasons exist for avoiding home-team bias, and one stands out as supremely important: bias will blind you to the actual events taking place. Regardless of affiliation or loyalties, it's your responsibility to provide fans with a clear, accurate, and fair account of the game. This responsibility is somewhat more apparent

if you do play-by-play for radio; television fans can compare your work with what they see. But when you serve as the eyes of radio listeners, you have an obligation to report with objectivity; your account is nearly their total experience of the event.

### **Additional Tips on Sportscasting**

Some of these suggestions are appropriate to all sports; others apply to one or two:

*Communicate the important events in a game and provide interpretation when appropriate.* A game is more than a series of individual plays or events. Plays are part of a process that adds up to an overall pattern. If you're perceptive and deeply involved in the event, you'll be able to point out crucial plays and turning points immediately after they occur. It's your responsibility to grasp the significance of plays or incidents and then to communicate your awareness to viewers or listeners. You will transmit the significance not only by what you say but also by how you say it. Some critical situations will be apparent to any reasonably sophisticated fan, but at times you must be so tuned in to the game that your interpretation surpasses common knowledge.

*When doing play-by-play on radio, provide listeners with relatively more information than is necessary for a telecast.* Listeners need to know, for example, what the weather is like, how the stadium or court looks, how the fans are behaving, whether players are right- or left-handed, the wind strength and direction, who's on first, how many yards for a first down, how many outs or minutes left in the game, and whether a particular play was routine or outstanding. Most important of all: *repeat the score often, and always before going to a commercial, and immediately after a commercial break.* You can't overdo this. Some sports announcers use a three-minute egg timer to remind them to mention the score (and other basic information) every time the sand has run through the glass.

*When doing baseball play-by-play, always be ready to talk intelligently and entertainingly during rain delays.* Baseball fans love baseball lore, and well-prepared announcers who can discuss historical aspects of the sport and provide a wealth of amusing or amazing anecdotes can make a rain delay a highlight of a game.

*Never make events in a game seem more important than they are.* A dull game creates a natural temptation to entertain by exaggerating. Avoid this tendency.

*Don't overuse sports clichés.* You can't avoid sports clichés entirely; there are a limited number of ways of describing things that happen over and over in a game. But unless frequent use of sports clichés is a part of your announcing persona, be conscious of clichés and try to avoid their overuse. Here are several overused sports expressions:

in tonight's action  
over in the NBA  
over in the American League  
all the action is under the lights  
was in complete charge  
he got all of it  
he was taking all the way  
odds-on favorite  
off to a running start  
off to a shaky start  
sparked the win  
suffered a sixth setback  
raised her record to  
went the distance

Some familiar sports expressions are clear, direct, and uncomplicated and can hardly be improved on: *loaded the bases*, *gave up a walk*, *got the hat trick*, *was sacked*, *finished within one stroke of*, and *lost the decision*. In general, although you can't—and shouldn't—completely avoid clichés, improve the variety of your play-by-play delivery by using several ways of naming the same events or incidents.

*Have statistics in front of you or firmly in mind before you start to talk about them.* If you make an error, you can correct it, of course: "That's the fourth walk allowed by Rollins—hold it, it's the *third* walk." Taken alone, there's nothing wrong with making a correction. If you repeatedly make corrections, however, they become annoying.

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*On television, concentrate on interpreting the events and adding comments about action not clearly shown by the camera.* Television viewers don't necessarily see everything that a trained observer sees. Your commentary and instant replay can provide viewers with specific details that illuminate, instruct, and entertain.

*When doing play-by-play on television, avoid the extremes of too much or too little commentary.* Avoid extraneous chatter that confuses and distracts viewers.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, don't go to the opposite extreme and assume that viewers have been with you throughout the entire game and therefore know everything important that's occurred. From time to time, review key plays, injuries, and other pertinent facts.

*When a player is injured, never guess about the nature or severity of the injury.* If you consider it important to report on the details of the injury, send an assistant to the team trainer or physician. Inaccurate information about an injury can cause unnecessary worry for friends and family.

*Don't ignore fights, but don't sensationalize them.* Hockey and football are often violent, and fights between players aren't uncommon. If you dwell on them, you may provoke both aggression by fans (thrown bottles, for example) and attempts by players to get revenge.

*If you're not sure about information, don't guess.* Wait as long as necessary to give official verdicts on whether a ball was fair or foul, whether a goal was scored, and whether a first down was made. Constant corrections of such errors are annoying to the fans.

Tell a baseball audience what inning it is as you give the score. Tell football, basketball, and hockey audiences which quarter or period it is and how much time is left. Football audiences need to be

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<sup>7</sup>An exception to this generally sound point: some sports broadcasts, especially those on network television, are meant to appeal to a wide range of viewers, including many who care little about the game. Announcers are encouraged to be amusing, even when their comments have nothing to do with the game. Their "storytelling" often distracts them from providing essential information about the ongoing game.

reminded frequently of who has the ball, where the ball is, and what down is coming up. It's all but impossible to give such information too often.

*Give scores of other games, but never allow them to interfere with the game at hand.* When telecasting, remember that your viewers are being bombarded with information not only from you, the play analyst, and the camera coverage of the game, but also from supers called up by the director to provide statistical information, identify the game, promote a program or another sportscast coming up, and so on. Because of this overload, be careful not to further distract viewers from the game they're watching. Give scores of other games, but be discreet.

*Take care of first things first.* Before going to an analysis of a play, make sure you've told your audience what it most wants to know. On radio, don't describe the double play until you've told the fans whether or not the player on third scored. In football, don't start talking about key blocks or sensational catches until you've indicated whether or not a first down was made on the play.

*Don't keep telling your audience how great the game is.* If it is a great game, the events and the way you report them will speak for themselves. If it isn't a great game, no amount of wishful thinking will make it exciting. At the same time, as an unusually exciting game winds down, it is appropriate to express your honest emotions about the suspense of the game or the victory of an underdog.

*If you can't immediately identify a player, cover the play without mentioning names and give the name when you're sure of it.* Here's a poor example of identifying players:

ANNCR: The ball is taken by Richards. . . . He's back in the pocket to pass. . . . He's being rushed. . . . He barely gets it away and it's intercepted by Pappas. . . no, I think it's Harrison. . . . He has it on the twenty-five, the thirty, the thirty-five. . .

and he's brought down on the thirty-seven. Yes, that was Pappas, the all-American defensive back.

This is a better example:

ANNCR: The ball is taken by Richards. . . . He's back in the pocket to pass. . . . He's being rushed. . . . He barely gets it away and it's intercepted on the twenty. . . back to the thirty, the thirty-five, and all the way to the thirty-seven. A beautiful interception by Charley Pappas, the all-American defensive back.

*Learn where to look for the information you need.* In baseball, watch the outfielders instead of a fly ball to see whether the ball will be caught, fielded, or lost over the fence. Watch line umpires to see whether a ball is fair or foul. In football, watch the quarterback unless you clearly see a handoff or a pass, then watch the ball. Let your spotters or analyst watch the defense and the offensive ends.

*Don't rely on scoreboard information.* Keep your own notebook and record the data appropriate to the sport you're covering. For football, note the time when possession begins, the location of the ball after each play, the nature of each play, and the manner in which the drive ends. These notes will help you summarize each drive and will single out the most important plays. For baseball, keep a regular scoring chart and learn to read it quickly and accurately. For basketball and hockey, rely on a statistician for data such as goals attempted and fouls and penalties assessed.

*Give statistics and records.* Baseball fans are always interested in batting and earned-run averages, fielding percentages, strike-out records, and comparative statistics. Track and field followers are obsessed with distance and speed records. Statistics are only slightly less important to followers of football, basketball, hockey,

and golf. Remember, though, that some statistics are of little value or interest: "That was the seventh time this season that the Hornets were the first to score in the third quarter!"

*Avoid adopting meaningless catch phrases.* Perhaps the most prevalent and annoying habit of sports announcers is the interjection of the phrase *of course* into statements when the information being given isn't necessarily common knowledge, as in "Wilson, of course, has run for over a hundred yards in each of his past seven games." Even when the information is widely known, *of course* adds nothing to most statements: "Mark McGwire, of course, was Rookie of the Year in 1987."

*Eliminate or control the use of the word situation.* With some sports announcers, nearly everything is a situation: "It's a passing situation," "It's a bunting situation," "It's a third-and-three situation." Constant repetition of this word can become tiresome.

*Use background sounds to your advantage.* Most sports have moments of action that bring about an enthusiastic response from the crowd. The sounds of cheering fans can enhance your game coverage. Don't be afraid to remain silent while the fans carry the excitement of the game for you.

*When working with a play analyst, make sure you and your partner agree on the pronunciation of names that could be pronounced in different ways.* During a professional football telecast, the play-by-play announcer and play analyst pronounced the names of three players in different ways:

McMahon: (MUK-MAN') versus (MUK-MAY'-UN)  
 Lippett: (LIP'-UT) versus (LIH-PET')  
 Clayborn: (KLAY'-BORN) versus (KLY'-BORN)

These differences probably went unnoticed by most listeners, but as a professional you should first of all *hear* such differences and then discuss them with your partners in hopes of reaching an agreement. It isn't the most important of the many points discussed here, but to truly be the best in your field demands that you correct even minor inaccuracies.



## CHECKLIST

### Becoming a Better Play-by-Play Announcer

1. Communicate the important events in a game and provide interpretation when appropriate.
2. Provide a radio audience with more information than you would a television audience.
3. Be prepared to talk intelligently and entertainingly during rain delays.
4. Never make events in a game seem more important than they are.
5. Don't overuse sports clichés *unless* you use them as an important part of your on-air personality.
6. Don't talk about statistics unless you have them in front of you or firmly in mind.
7. On television, concentrate on interpreting the events and adding comments about events not clearly shown by the cameras.
8. When doing television play-by-play, avoid the extremes of too much or too little commentary.
9. When a player is injured, never guess about the nature or severity of the injury.
10. Don't ignore fights, but don't sensationalize them.
11. If you're not sure about information, don't guess.
12. Repeat the score at frequent intervals.
13. Give scores of other games without interfering with the announcing of the game at hand.
14. Take care of first things first.
15. Don't keep telling the audience how great the game is.
16. If you can't immediately identify a player, cover the play without mentioning names and give the name when you're sure of it.
17. Learn where to look for the information you need.
18. Don't rely on scoreboard information.
19. Give statistics and records.
20. Avoid adopting meaningless catch phrases.

21. Avoid overuse of the word *situation*.
22. Use background sounds to your advantage.
23. When working with a play analyst, reach an agreement on the pronunciation of names.

## The Play Analyst

Play analysts interpret individual plays and overall strategies. They also provide information that helps listeners and viewers learn the finer points of a sport. Analysts are, without significant exception, former athletes or coaches of the sports they describe. Auto racers, skiers, baseball and football players and coaches, swimmers, gymnasts, golfers, tennis players, and others who've gained fame in sports give in-depth analyses during sportscasts. Play and game analysis is highly specialized, and effective preparation requires considerable devotion to the sport itself.

Play analysts provide information and interpretation that complement rather than duplicate what's offered by the play-by-play announcer. As an analyst, you must have clear instructions about what to look for and how to report it. In football, you look for key blocks, tackles, and similar events of importance. In baseball, hockey, and basketball, you usually serve as a statistician and analyze the whole game rather than individual plays. In these sports, you'll see little or nothing that isn't seen by the play-by-play announcer, so you contribute information such as this:

That was Ponce's twenty-first inning without giving up a walk. Garrett's forty-one points are a season high for him, but they're a long way from the record set by Wilt Chamberlain—he scored one hundred points in a game in 1962.

Hockey and basketball move so fast that opportunities for play analysis are limited. When interesting points are brought up at all, the play-by-play announcer usually introduces them.

The educational function of a play analyst is of great importance to those who care deeply about the sport being broadcast. In televised football games, play analysts use electronic "chalkboards" to draw

the action and movements of a recently completed play. After viewing it and listening to the explanation, a reshewing of the play often helps us see things that we hadn't noticed during "real-time" action. In the process we learn a bit more about the subtleties of the sport.

A baseball analyst—most often a former pitcher, catcher, or manager—can teach us much about the game of baseball. Two examples:

Analyst: Jones just asked for a new ball. Not all baseballs are the same, and some just don't "feel right" to a pitcher. However, with two outs and the tying run on second, Jones most likely wants to throw a curve or a slider, and the ball he tossed back had flat seams. It's easy to throw a fastball with any baseball, but you want a ball with raised seams to help you throw a curve. And, of course, Chavez being a veteran, most likely knows that the next pitch he'll see will be a ball with a lot of motion on it. There's one complicating factor, though: Jones could have decoyed Chavez into assuming that a curve was coming by asking for a new ball.

Analyst: Notice how, with runners on base, second baseman Washington will move right behind second base after every pitch. He wants to make sure that the return throw from the catcher to the pitcher doesn't go into center field. A bad return throw from a big-league catcher to his pitcher is a rarity, but first-rate ball players leave nothing to chance.

Gymnastics, figure skating, ice dancing, diving, and similar sports of a strongly aesthetic nature are almost always described by ex-

perts in the event. Analysis is the primary responsibility of the people who cover sports in which points are assigned by judges, because the vast majority of viewers have little precise knowledge of the pluses and the minuses of individual performances.

Here are a few tips on play and game analysis:

- Never repeat either exactly or by paraphrase what the play-by-play announcer has just said.
- Don't feel compelled to comment after every play of a football game or after every pitch of a baseball game. If you have nothing significant to report, remain silent.
- Be precise in the comments you make. "What a great catch" is neither useful nor informative. "Frick has just gone over the one hundred-yard mark for the eighth time this season" is precise and useful.
- Do your homework on both teams. The play-by-play announcer will also have prepared, but in the heat of the game it may fall to you to remember facts or statistics forgotten by your partner. Make notes of key moments of the game.
- Your major contribution is to see the game with an objectivity not always possible for a play-by-play announcer. Look for the dramatic structure of the contest and report it when appropriate. Don't overdramatize, however.
- Never correct the play-by-play announcer on the air. If an important mistake has been made, write and pass a note. Listeners and viewers become uncomfortable when they sense conflict between members of an announcing team.
- A discussion between play-by-play announcer and analyst in which different points of view are expressed can be useful to fans. As long as the discussion is friendly—perhaps even amusing—there's no reason to avoid or prematurely terminate it.
- Be careful what questions you ask of your partner. Even the most competent veteran can draw a blank when concentrating on a game.
- Follow the rules set down by your play-by-play partner. You may have to ask for an opportunity to speak and then do so only when your partner gives you your cue. If your agreement with the play-by-play announcer calls for it, be prepared to make intelligent comments during time-outs and intermissions in basketball and hockey contests.

- Always be sure to end your comments before the next play begins.
- It may be difficult to maintain harmonious relations with your partner, but it's imperative. Fans appreciate listening to announcing teams that complement each other and work together to present the sports experience competently and completely.
- If you hope to become a professional sports announcer of any kind—reporter, play-by-play, analyst—you should build your own sports library and become knowledgeable about as many sports as possible. And remember—there's no substitute for practicing your skills!



### ***PRACTICE***

#### **Play-by-Play Announcing**

Using a battery-operated audio recorder, do play-by-play announcing for a baseball, football, basketball, or hockey game (or any other sport you prefer). Put the tape aside for a week or two and then listen to it critically. Are you able to visualize the game from the words you spoke and recorded?



## **PRACTICE**

### **Getting Athletes' Names Right**

Prior to an amateur sports event of any kind, obtain a list of players' names. Mark any whose pronunciation isn't obvious—you may be sure of the pronunciation of Smith but not of the preferred pronunciation of Smythe. Depending on where you're allowed access, visit the locker room, the dugout, or other area where team executives may be found, and ask for the pronunciation of names in question. As you're given the information, use your favored system of phonetic transcription (wire-service, diacritics, or IPA) to denote correct pronunciation of names on the list.



## **SPOTLIGHT**

### **Talking Sports With the Babe by Mike Wise**

Back on the air after a commercial, Nanci Donnellan spun her chair around to face the control room and paused for an introduction to her show: "And now, the woman who thought Super Bowl XXX [announcer says "ex-ex-ex"] was a film playing at a Times Square movie house . . ."

A week before the big game between the heavily favored Cowboys and the Steelers, Ms. Donnellan shook her head in mock disgust behind the microphone in a converted broom closet at the huge ESPN headquarters in Bristol, Connecticut.

Yet, as the Babe, the Fabulous Sports Babe, the first woman to have a nationally syndicated show on sports talk radio, she is a cult figure among Joe from Akron, Larry from Miami, and Buford from Tuscaloosa. In that persona, she plays along.

*"Charlotte, N.C. Ray, you're on."*

*"Yeah, Babe. I just want to say, I think the Steelers got a darn good shot at winning the whole thing this year."*

*"We've been waiting for you to call."*

Suddenly, the control-room boys blow up Ray on the air with a taped sound effect.

As the blast ends, Ms. Donnellan adds, *"Go home, Gomer, right now, will ya."*

Off the air, Ms. Donnellan said later: "We can get heavy about why I do this, and the fact that it mirrors society, and it's a microcosm of society, and it's an emotional outlet for the masses. We can, like, get as heavy as you want. But do we need to?"

The Babe nickname is almost seven years old. In 1989, Nanci Donnellan was working at a Tampa, Fla., station when she injured her back playing golf and was confined to bed. Broadcasting from her home one day, she invited listeners to "come spend the afternoon in bed with a fabulous sports babe."

And an image was born. She moved on to Seattle, increasing ratings in her time slot enough for the station to resist letting her out of her contract when she was courted by ESPN Radio.

Ms. Donnellan joined ESPN on July 4, 1994, with fewer than 30 stations agreeing to carry the program. Today, she's heard on about 200 stations. One hour of the four-hour midday show can be seen on ESPN2, the cable television channel.

Mark Mason, the general manager of ESPN Radio, takes credit for Ms. Donnellan's hiring. "I think I know what works and doesn't work in sports talk radio, and Nanci worked," Mr. Mason said. He added that Ms. Donnellan "combined knowledge with entertainment, and that's still a rare combination."

The Global Babe Network is mainly glitter and goof, but Ms. Donnellan has also had many of the people who play and manage on her program, from Roger Clemens, the Boston Red Sox pitcher, to Fay Vincent, former baseball commissioner.

Somewhere in her 40s, she's engaging, robust, and off-beat, a 5-foot-4 pistol with auburn hair, rouged cheeks, and a very Vegas disposition.

The child of an Air Force family, she was forever the new kid on the block, attending 14 different schools, all the while learning to blend in quickly. The chameleon approach seemed to work until she entered a male-dominated field.

She recalled how in the mid-1980s, when she was covering the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, certain officials would make her stand outside in the rain and wait for players to get on the team bus instead of allowing her into the locker room. "They'd tell me I had the wrong press credential, even though it was the same one everyone else was wearing," she said.

In interviews, she won't talk about women in sports. "Because if you continue to talk about it, you continue to perpetuate the stereotype of it," Ms. Donnellan said. "The more people see this is what I do, the less people are going to be, 'Oh, gee, for a woman she sure knows her stuff.'"

She's got a life, thank you. She insists that hearing Luciano Pavarotti at the Metropolitan dwarfed any athletic event she's ever attended. And she collects contemporary art.

Her success includes a book deal worth more than \$200,000 with the Harper-Collins publisher Judith Regan, who marketed Howard Stern and Rush Limbaugh. But the book will not be about Ms. Donnellan: it will be about the Babe.

Besides, who wants to read about someone who paid the rent by phoning in a sound-bite to some podunk station somewhere in America, or about how a woman talking sports in a man's world eventually rose to the top of her profession? This is sports in the 1990s, after all.

Ray from Charlotte would rather be blown up on the air.

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*New York Times*, "Talking Sports With the Babe." February 11, 1995, p. 59.

# 14



## Starting Your Announcing Career

### CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Preparing for Your Career
- Job-Hunting Tools
  - Résumés
  - The Cover Letter
  - Audition or Résumé Tapes
  - Answering Machines and Pagers
  - Mailing Address and Phone Number
- Finding Job Openings
- SPOTLIGHT: Surviving Career Changes
- Applying for a Position at a Radio Station
- Interviewing for a Job
- Joining a Union
- Going Where Your Career Takes You
- Preparing a Scannable Résumé for Today's Standards

This chapter is offered to meet the needs of those with little or no paid experience as an announcer but who feel they're ready for professional employment. Most of the information in this chapter is also applicable to those with some professional experience and those who received their training in workshops or through self-study.

This chapter assumes you're looking for a job as an announcer in one or more of these categories:

- Popular-music announcing (DJ)
- News reporting

- News anchor work
- News-related announcing as an environmental, consumer information, or entertainment news reporter
- Radio or television talk-show hosting
- Sports reporting and play-by-play announcing
- Weather reporting for either radio or television
- Radio commercial announcing as a freelance performer
- On-camera television commercial performance
- Voice-over television work for commercials, documentaries, or training tapes

Despite the focus on these specific career opportunities, your education also is appropriate to businesses or industries not directly related to broadcasting or cable. With the knowledge you've acquired in completing a liberal arts education, together with your focus on media performance, you should perform well in any number of careers that call for articulate, confident communication abilities. Each year, for example, many graduates from electronic communications programs obtain jobs in corporate media. They use their announcing abilities in making audio- and videotapes for employee training, such as demonstrating or explaining new products or technologies to salespersons, or for other "in-house" uses.

This chapter assumes that you've become capable, though not necessarily completely proficient, in the announcing specialization of your choice. As indicated in Chapter 1, merely taking a course or two in broadcast performance can't make you a competent journalist, sports reporter, or talk-show host. The following information is based on the assumption that you've supported your education with practice, that you've completed course work in the area of your specialization, and—ideally—that you've completed one or more internships.

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## Preparing for Your Career

If you're convinced that you want to be an announcer, you undoubtedly have many positive reasons. To be an announcer is to be important. Broadcasting and cable are exciting and dynamic fields. Electronic communication will unquestionably become more and more influential in coming years. Noteworthy rewards of fame and

wealth await those who make it to—or near—the top of this profession. Finally, the opportunity to inform or entertain vast numbers of people is surely a powerful motivating force.

Before committing yourself to a career as an announcer, you should make an honest assessment of yourself—of your strengths, your skills, your areas of specialized knowledge, your interests, and your values. No one can do this for you, but it's important that you make such an evaluation. It should help clarify a number of things: what type of job or freelance work corresponds with your career interests and abilities; what type of work you are equipped to perform; what kinds of working conditions are necessary for you to receive job satisfaction; what salary you would need to support yourself; and where would you be willing or unwilling to live. Also ask yourself if you'd be comfortable in a field where there's little job security.

The checklist questions are personal, but you needn't share the answers with others. For this self-assessment to be of value, it's imperative that you dig deeply and not settle for superficial answers. Undertake this assessment at various points during your student years, and realize that your most valid answers will come at or near the end of your studies. And, don't be unreasonably negative; be honest, but be reasonable. No one expects a beginner to perform at the level of a veteran!

The time to begin preparing for that first job is while you're still in school. This is the time to start making connections that may some day pay off. Join broadcast-related organizations such as College Students in Broadcasting, Alpha Epsilon Rho, and Women in Communication, Inc. (WICI). Student chapters of the Radio-Television News Directors Association (RTNDA) and the International Television Association (ITVA) may also be available to you.

During your final two semesters in college, serve internships at the kinds of stations or other communication-related organizations where you'd like to work. *Important:* Ask for an internship only when you're ready to make a contribution at a particular firm, otherwise you'll likely wind up stuffing envelopes or answering phones. Because you may have little to offer early in your educational program, you may also make an unfavorable impression on those who may review your job application at a later time. On the other hand, when you're ready to help a business in some significant way, go for it—your internship could very well turn into a job!



## **CHECKLIST**

### **Assessing Your Career Potential**

#### **As a communicator in the electronic media**

1. Do I truly have talent as a performer?
2. Is my voice adequate for the career I seek? If not, is it improvable through exercises and practice? Am I prepared to work until the improvement has occurred?
3. (For television performance) Is my physical appearance appropriate to the kinds of positions I seek? If it is not, can my appearance be made acceptable or adequate through hair styling, makeup, and so forth?
4. Do I have an on-air personality that is engaging and unique?
5. What is there about me that makes me feel that I can succeed as an announcer?

#### **As a radio or television announcer**

1. Am I willing to start at the very bottom of the ladder?
2. Am I willing to work for low wages?
3. Am I prepared to move anywhere at any time to further my career?
4. Can I live with the fact that any change in ratings, ownership, or format could cost me my job?
5. Do I perform well under pressure?
6. Does mic or camera fright currently interfere with my performance? If so, what are the chances that I can eventually bring it under control?
7. (for radio) Do I possess the manipulative skills necessary to operate audio equipment in an effortless and error-free manner?

**As a voice-over announcer for commercials, industrials, and documentaries**

1. Do I take direction well and respond quickly and sensitively to instructions?
2. Do I perform effectively under pressure?
3. Can I do a professional job of interpreting copy that requires accents, dialects, or character voices?
4. Am I prepared to live on an absolutely unpredictable and uncertain income?

**As a reporter or anchor for radio or television news**

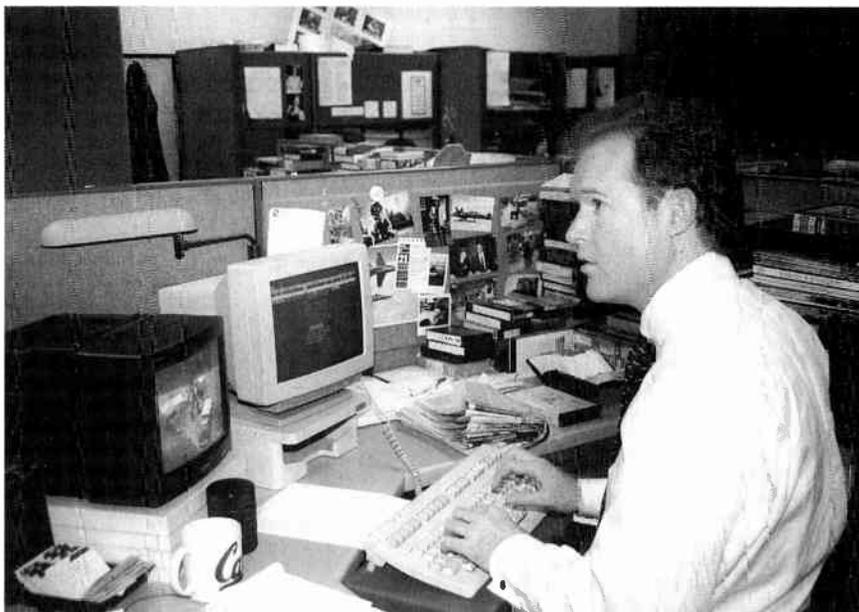
1. Am I a quick judge of the newsworthiness of events as they happen?
2. Have I properly prepared myself to work as a journalist?
3. Can I remain reasonably detached at the scene of a wreck, fire, or other catastrophe where people have been badly injured or killed?
4. Can I maintain my composure and deliver a coherent live report on location despite many ongoing distractions?
5. Have I adequately learned to operate basic items of audio and video equipment that I'll most likely use on the job?

**As a sports reporter or play-by-play announcer**

1. Do I have a thorough grounding in all of the major sports, or am I a single-sport devotee?
2. Do I love sports enough to commit myself to becoming a sports announcer despite the scarcity of jobs and the stiff competition?
3. Am I willing to spend years of frequent travel, often being away from family and friends for weeks at a time?

**Figure 14.1**

News anchor Frank Somerville checks a monitor for details of a breaking story on CNN's NEWS-SOURCE. His immediate job is to size up the story and write appropriate lead-ins. Frank's internship, taken in his senior year at San Francisco State University, turned into a reporter-anchor position at a nearby small-market station. After two other jobs in larger markets, he became morning and noontime anchor on KTVU, Oakland, California.



## Job-Hunting Tools

For most announcing jobs, you'll look for employment at radio or television stations or with independent production companies. If you're interested in commercial announcing and narrating, you'll almost certainly need to work through a talent agency. Whether you approach a station or a talent agency, you'll need two things: a résumé with a cover letter and an audition tape.

### Résumés

Your résumé is indispensable when you apply for a job in any announcing specialization. It lists in an abbreviated manner the most relevant facts about you. Employers can tell, almost at a glance, if you're appropriate for a vacancy or, at least, worthy of an interview. With so much at stake, the preparation of an attractive, factual, and

to-the-point résumé is essential. Note, however, that even *the best résumé can't help you get a job unless you're truly capable, dependable, punctual, and an asset to any employer*. The suggestions that follow take for granted that you have these qualities and that you deserve a position in broadcasting.

Before even starting to prepare your résumé, visit the nearest career guidance or job counseling center. If you're a student, you'll probably find such an office right on campus. If you're not attending school, you can still get help from the job center at almost any community college or four-year school. Some schools regularly offer résumé-writing clinics, sometimes for a small registration fee. Many college placement offices have free handouts on résumé writing. Arm yourself with as much information as you can find.

Although campus placement offices can help you with useful information on résumés, cover letters, and interviews, don't expect personnel in these offices to have all the answers. The field of broadcast performance is so specialized and so out of the ordinary that few career guidance counselors have firsthand in-depth knowledge of it.

## Types of Résumés

Résumés come in two general types and a third type that's a hybrid of those two.<sup>1</sup> All provide some common items of information, including name, address, phone number, formal education, and references, but they differ in some important respects. The first type, the **chronological résumé**, lists relevant employment in reverse chronological order. The second type, the **competency-based**, or **functional résumé**, lists the applicant's areas of competency. The **hybrid**, or **combination résumé**, as the name indicates, combines features of both the chronological and the competency-based résumé.

The chronological résumé is used by anyone with some professional experience. A sample of this type of résumé is shown in Figure 14.2.

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<sup>1</sup>The advice on résumé writing, and the sample résumés, are appropriate for most purposes. However, if you're applying to a large firm, you may want to find out (perhaps from a receptionist) if they want **scannable résumés** and, if so, follow the advice given by Cisco Systems, at the end of this chapter.

Mary Ann Williams  
586 Poplar Avenue  
Huntington, KY 25704  
(304) 883-6572

- EMPLOYMENT**
- 1991-present News reporter, WBRE-AM, Mount Embree, Kentucky  
Cover local stories; report live from the field; produce news packages; specialize in education and environment.
- 1989-1990 Paid news intern at WBRE-AM, Mount Embree, KY  
Collected and edited wire-service copy; rewrote stories; maintained files; performed as news anchor on weekends.
- 1988-1989 Volunteer reporter at local NPR station, writing and voicing reports on school board meetings, local election issues, and impact of growth on the community.
- HONORS**
- Dean's list, all semesters in college; President, College Students in Broadcasting, 1990; Adan Marshall Scholarship, 1990; Albert Johnson Award as outstanding graduating senior, 1991; graduated cum laude, 1991.
- EDUCATION:**
- Kimball University, Hays, Kentucky, B.A. in Radio and Television, 1991. Course work included news gathering; depth reporting; legal aspects of journalism; newswriting; and radio news performance. Performed as news reporter and anchor on campus radio station for three years.
- REFERENCES**
- Dr. Alice Barnes, Kimball Univ., 133 Campus Drive, Hays KY  
Mr. Fred Morales, Gen. Mgr., WBRE, 1600 Morris Blvd., Mount Embree KY  
Dr. Hamid Khani, Kimball Univ., 133 Grove Drive, Hays KY

**Figure 14.2**

A chronological résumé lists employment information in reverse chronological order.

The competency-based, or functional résumé is your best choice if you're nearing graduation and looking for your first announcing job. Many graduating seniors can point only to the knowledge they've acquired in school, which includes skills learned on college radio and television stations or through internships at commercial or public broadcasting stations. A chronological listing of part-time jobs held while in school, such as busing dishes or working in a car wash, isn't likely to impress a prospective employer. However, if you earned half or more of your living expenses while in school, state this, together with a brief list of jobs held. This tells a prospective employer that you're an industrious person who made a sacrifice to gain your education. If you've had bookkeeping, accounting, or sales experience, or if you're fluent in a language other than English, say so.

More important, though, is pointing out that you can perform the duties required of a person in a particular announcing position. Specify, for instance, that you can operate all standard control room or EFP equipment, that you can do audio or video editing, or that you can operate studio cameras and switchers. These and similar competencies serve as basic qualifications for an entry-level position. This is the thrust of a competency-based résumé, as the example in Figure 14.3 illustrates.

It's appropriate on a competency-based résumé to list positions you've held as a member of a college radio or television station staff and to provide information about work you've done as an intern. But it's *crucial* that you clearly identify such work. Applicants who make positions held on a campus radio station appear to have been held at a commercial station will be seen as misrepresenting their backgrounds. And those who try to pass off an internship as paid professional experience are written off immediately. No prospective employer would likely schedule an interview or review an aircheck with an applicant who seemed to be providing misleading information.

The hybrid résumé is useful for students who've had some professional experience either before or during school years and who've also acquired knowledge and competencies as a student. An example of a hybrid résumé is shown in Figure 14.4.

Charles Gonzalez  
1616 South M Street  
Callison, New Jersey 08110  
(609) 777-5456

- EXPERIENCE** Intern at WBCD-AM and FM, an MOR station: produced jingles and station IDs; timed music cuts and produced file cards of basic information. Three years' experience as DJ on campus radio station featuring CHR and AOR music; managed station final year; two years as music director. Two years standup comic at local comedy club.
- EMPLOYMENT** Manager of Callison Comedy Club, 1991-1993. Part-time sales associate, MusicLand, Callison, New Jersey, 1990-1992. Worked at student union as audio engineer for various performing groups, 1991-1992.
- EDUCATION** B.A. in Mass Communications, Genessee University, Fountain, New Jersey, 1994. Graduated with honors.
- REFERENCES** Ms Gerri Boyd, Manager, Callison Comedy Club, NJ  
Mr. Harry Freund, Mgr., Musicland, Callison NJ  
Prof. Arthur Simons, Genessee Univ., Fountain NJ

**Figure 14.3**

A competency-based, or functional, résumé presents the applicant's areas of competence.

Ralph Wente  
435 Livingston Street  
Tacoma, Washington 98499  
(206) 446-3790

<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	Entry-level position in television sports department.
<b>COMPETENCIES</b>	Thorough knowledge of sports officiating and scoring of gymnastics, diving, and other competitive sports; six years' experience scoring baseball; knowledge of football and basketball strategies.
<b>Sports Knowledge</b>	
<b>Sports Experience</b>	Played baseball (second base and shortstop), three years in high school and four in college; played football (running back), three years in college; manager, college basketball team, two years.
<b>Other Competencies</b>	Expert at both still and video camera work; considerable skill in both on- and off-line videotape editing; two years' experience in writing copy for sports newscasts on campus television station; bilingual in Spanish.
<b>AWARDS AND HONORS</b>	Dean's list, 1993-95; member and president of University Block T Club (Sports Honor Society); valedictorian.
<b>EDUCATION</b>	B.A., Broadcasting, University of Tacoma, 1995. Specialized in television performance, production, and writing for sports broadcasts.
<b>REFERENCES</b>	Prof. Ray Marucci, Varsity Coach, Univ. of Tacoma WA Dr. Joyce Ntare, Univ. of Tacoma WA Dr. Bruce O'Hare, Univ. of Tacoma WA Dr. Bruce O'Hare, Univ. of Tacoma, WA

**Figure 14.4**

A hybrid, or combination, résumé gives both professional and academic achievements.

## Some Tips on Preparation

With the flexibility offered by word processors it's easy to prepare more than one résumé, each with a different slant. For instance, as a graduate of a department of radio and television, you may want to apply for positions in both media, and the same résumé wouldn't be ideal for both. Having two basic résumés—one for radio and one for television—you can further tailor each to match your background and interests with the stated requirements for particular positions.

Résumés should be one page long and no longer. Although you may believe you have more than a page of information to disclose, remember that prospective employers want to see your qualifications in the briefest possible form.

Some word-processing programs allow you to choose line spacing other than the traditional single-, double-, and triple-space.<sup>2</sup> For a résumé, single-space is too dense, and double-space is too wasteful of page space. After creating your résumé as a single-space document, you should convert it to the line spacing that makes the best visual impression and fits comfortably on a single sheet.

In preparing your résumé, it's wise to make a draft and then ask a qualified person—a teacher of broadcasting, a person working in a career-guidance or job-placement center, or a broadcaster—to review and comment on it.

Omit from your résumé all of the following:

*Height, weight, hair color, and eye color*—unless you're applying for an on-air television position or a job as an on-camera commercial performer where your physical features are of importance. In this case, supply all pertinent physical information and include photographs.

*Hobbies*—unless they add to your qualifications. Listing your collection of jazz records could be important if you are applying for a position as a DJ on a jazz station. Saying that you enjoy skateboarding or hiking is irrelevant.

*Race, ethnic or national origin, gender, and physical condition*—It's against the law for employers to discriminate against job applicants on the basis of any of these facts or conditions. At the same time, if you have a disabling physical condition that calls

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<sup>2</sup>The most flexible word-processing program, according to the *Macintosh Bible*, is Write-Now. With this program, you can easily vary both type size and line spacing at will.

for special facilities or other considerations, mention this in your cover letter.

*Your high school or college academic transcript*—unless it's requested. You may be asked to provide a list of courses you've taken that relate directly to a specific job, so keep your own list of courses taken arranged by category.

Include information about the following in your résumé:

*Your student record if it was exceptional*—For example, you may note that you were on the dean's list six semesters, graduated cum laude, or that you earned a 3.87 grade point average during the last sixty units.

*Supplementary abilities that might be put to use at the station*—including experience in sales, weather reporting, electronics, data processing, typing, and audio production of commercials and features (including writing, recording, editing, and mixing). If you can operate a computer, say so and list the hardware (Macintosh, PC) you can operate and the operating systems you're qualified to use.

*Leadership positions*—such as student body officer, class president, commencement speaker, and so on.

*Memberships in national associations that relate to broadcasting*—such as College Students in Broadcasting, Alpha Epsilon Rho, Audio Engineering Society, Women in Communication, Inc. (WICI), or the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

*Contributions to your community*—such as Little League coaching, charitable fundraising, and similar activities.

*The ability to speak or read one or more languages*—with an indication of the degree of your proficiency (bilingual, fluent, or passable).

Career advisers are divided on the subject of references. Some suggest that you list four to six names, complete with titles and mailing addresses, others preferring a statement at the bottom, "References available on request." If you're applying to numerous potential employers, giving names could inundate your recommenders, so be reasonable. Choose your references wisely: avoid close friends and family members. Use employers only if the employment was related to the job you're seeking and the former employer can verify your dependability, punctuality, honesty, or other

qualities that would make you a good employee. Your best references will come from teachers and those who supervised your work in an internship or a paying job at a broadcast station. Always obtain permission before listing anyone as a reference. And, when you do ask recommenders to send letters to potential employers, always supply stamped and addressed envelopes.

Your final draft should be perfectly printed on a high-quality word processor. Use a standard type font, such as Times, Helvetica (extended), or Geneva. Don't use a novelty font of any kind. Print size should be twelve point, unless your résumé will spill over onto two pages and you can find nothing to shorten or eliminate. In this case, you may want to use a ten- or eleven-point size. Try different fonts, different point sizes. With some fonts and word-processing programs, you can select any point size you wish.

Your résumé will be more attractive if you print it on a laser printer or ink-jet printer. Any copying service equipped with word processors can use a floppy disk that includes your résumé to make excellent prints. Make certain, though, that the word-processing program you've used (Microsoft Word, MacWrite II, WriteNow) is installed on their computers. From each high-quality original you can use a copying machine to make an unlimited number of prints on twenty-pound bond paper. Have your résumé duplicated on white, off-white, or buff paper, and use matching envelopes. Avoid garish or weird colors.

Finally, despite all these suggestions about what to put in your résumé, if you find that you can't comfortably fit your information on one page, omit the least important points. If you must omit such items as community service, membership in organizations, leadership positions, or academic honors, you may put these on a supplemental résumé, sent as a second sheet.

## Photographs

It's unwise to include a photograph when you apply for a position at a radio station or as a freelance voice-over performer. The physical appearance of those who do radio or voice-over work is totally irrelevant. The *sound* of the voice is all-important. A photograph adds nothing; it can in fact work against you if a potential employer thinks you don't "look like you sound."

On the other hand, photographs are essential when you apply for an on-air position in television. Even if you're sending an audi-

tion or résumé videotape, it's wise to also send still photos. Send two or three photos that show you in different work environments. Photos may be black and white or in color and should be either five by seven inches or eight by ten inches. Don't send "artsy" photos, provocative poses, or graduation photos. The best photos are those taken of you while performing as a reporter, anchor, program host, or other on-air role. You needn't spend a lot of money on photos; producers and agents can see what they need to know by looking at high-quality snapshots. At the same time, your photos should have a professional look.

## The Cover Letter

All résumés should be accompanied by a cover letter. This letter is perhaps as important as your résumé. It gives you an opportunity to stress some accomplishment or quality that makes you uniquely qualified for the job. The function of the cover letter is to persuade a prospective employer to read your résumé; the objective of the résumé is to get that employer to listen to or view your audition tape; the goal of the tape is to gain an interview; the anticipated outcome of the interview is to get that job!

The nature of the cover letter will differ depending on whether you're applying for station employment or looking for an agent. Keep cover letters to station managers brief and to the point. Most such letters contain four short paragraphs. The first tells what position you're applying for and why you're applying to this particular station. The second paragraph gives brief details on your qualifications. The third refers to the accompanying résumé and audition tape and underscores the most significant points. The last paragraph requests an interview and states when you'll call to ask for it.

You can keep cover letters to agents quite brief because the audition tape counts for nearly everything. An opening statement of your qualifications and aspirations, a request that your tape be reviewed, and information as to how you may be reached are all you need to include.

Cover letters should be an honest expression of *your* feelings; don't look for a model cover letter to copy. If you can't clearly and effectively state your case in a cover letter, you may need to attend a résumé-writing workshop in which cover letters are also discussed.

Never duplicate cover letters. Always create a separate letter

for each person to whom you're sending a résumé. Compose your letter on a word processor and print it on a letter-quality printer. Poor-quality computer-generated letters give the impression that they're being produced in quantity. Never send a cover letter that's been duplicated by a copy machine. If you use a word processor, use a ragged, not justified, right margin. Personalize each letter so that you don't inadvertently give the impression that your applications are blanketing the nation. Personalized letters that mention the employer's name, call letters, music format, news policy, or whatever is appropriate, tell the reader that the letter in hand is the only one of its kind. Above all, your letter should be neat, with no erasures, strikeovers, or other signs of sloppiness. Proofread your letters carefully.

### **Audition or Résumé Tapes**

A tape recording is a must for anyone seeking work as an announcer, whether at a station or as a freelance voice-over performer.

*Producing Tapes for Employment at a Broadcast Station* If you're seeking station employment, you may send a **presentation tape** or an **aircheck**. Strictly speaking, the term *aircheck* refers to an edited recording of a person's on-air performance. This is usually the best kind of audition tape. Actually being on the air—even if it's only a local cable company's public access television channel, a cable company's radio channel, or a "carrier-current" campus setup—gives you a level of energy and a sound that's difficult to duplicate when recording for audition purposes.

Students often compile tapes from radio or television performances in media performance classes or on news, entertainment, and information programs that their college department supplied to local broadcasters or cable companies. Some departments of broadcasting make resources available to students to edit, assemble, and duplicate their presentation tapes. If you have a good collection of videotaped performances, you can select eight to ten minutes of your best performances. For radio performance, limit the tape's length to no more than three minutes. And, because some station managers or news directors won't listen for the full three minutes, make sure you put your best work first on the tape.

Radio tapes are inexpensive to produce. The audio recording equipment available in most college departments of broadcasting is

**Figure 14.5**

When applying for a position as an on-air television performer, a presentation or audition videotape is essential. An announcer who specializes in industrial videos reviews her audition tape with a coach. (Photo by Spencer Grant, The Picture Cube)



adequate for this purpose. A typical three-minute audiotape for a position as a DJ will feature five or six different pieces:

1. A series of ad-libbed music intros (or back-announcing of a music set)
2. Ten seconds of an upbeat commercial
3. An ad-libbed comment on some amusing event of the day
4. Ten seconds of an intimate and subdued commercial
5. A twenty-second news story, read at a rapid rate
6. Two or three ten-second PSAs

The most practical format for audiotapes is a good-quality thirty- or sixty-minute cassette. If you have a shorter tape—ten or fifteen minutes—use it. Avoid 120-minute tapes because they may stretch and distort your voice.

Like résumés, audition tapes for popular-music radio work are both simple and inexpensive to make, so it's wise to make more than one tape. Each music radio station has an established sound, an overall mood and spirit. If you're applying for an announcing position at a station that expects its announcers to display wit, warmth, and congeniality, the material on your tape will be quite different from that prepared for a station whose announcers are instructed to keep their comments brief and matter-of-fact. Also, a given Country-music station may have a sound that differs consid-

erably from a Top 40 station in the same market. Study the sounds of the stations in which you're interested and individualize your audition tapes accordingly.

If your audiotape is going to an all-news station, it should present several short news stories of varying moods, plus at least one thirty-second commercial. A presentation tape for a position in sports should include samples of sports reporting, play-by-play, and play analysis. Gear your tapes as specifically as possible to the stations where you'd like to work. If time permits, use the actual call letters of the station to which you're applying.

If you can't use school equipment to record and edit your audiotape, find a recording studio that provides a taping service. Audio recording studios are generally found only in or near larger cities, so you may have to travel to one if you live in a smaller community. The business listings in telephone directories include recording studios. Obtain price quotations from at least three studios before choosing one.

Independent video production companies may be found in every medium to major market. Some produce only studio-based audition tapes; others will go into the field with you to cover some planned news event, such as a parade, a picket line, or a marathon. If you have a choice of production companies, try to find and select one that will include field reporting that's ad-libbed or ad-libbed from notes. Most production companies will provide some guidance, including suggestions for improving your appearance or your performance. Production companies usually charge by the day, with a one-day minimum, plus extra charges for editing the tape and making copies. You can expect to pay between five hundred dollars and fifteen hundred dollars for a complete video presentation tape.

*Producing Tapes for Review by a Talent Agent* Talent agencies require a different kind of tape. Most of the voice work you will obtain through agencies is for these specializations:

Radio commercials

Voice-over narration for television commercials (both radio and television commercials are called **voice-overs** by freelancers)

Corporate videos (also called **industrials**)

Documentary narration, promos for stations and for radio and television special programs

## Cartoon voicing Looping

**Looping** is also called dubbing (short for *postproduction synchronous dubbing*). In this procedure a person's voice is dubbed onto a tape or film soundtrack to match the lip movements and the emotions of another person acting in the film. The most common use of looping in the United States and Canada is in the dubbing of foreign-language films to English.

To become a freelance performer, you almost certainly will need an agent. Agents notify their clients when work that suits their talent is available, help them prepare and tape the audition for the specific job, and negotiate payments with potential employers. Agents collect 10 percent of all payments earned, but effective agents more than earn their fee. If you decide to seek an agent, plan your first audition tape to persuade an agent to "take you on."

The presentation tape required for freelance work is different from that for radio station employment. Most important is that you demonstrate your ability to interpret copy. Unless you're convinced that your future lies in doing character voices or accents and dialects, you should concentrate on performing high-quality, imaginative, but basically standard, commercial copy. Select pieces that demonstrate a range of approaches—*thoughtful, concerned, upbeat, sultry, excited, laid back*, and so on. Do only ten to fifteen seconds of each. As you assemble the bits, arrange them in a sequence that shows contrast; begin with a soft sell, follow with a hard sell, and continue with samples of your entire range. The entire audition tape should run no longer than three minutes.<sup>3</sup>

If you want to do character voices and your repertoire includes foreign accents or regional dialects use samples of these in carefully selected bits of commercials. Put on your tape only those voices or accents that you do extremely well. Confine your voiced bits to ten to fifteen seconds each; take somewhat longer to demonstrate your ability to do straight narration for industrials. In short, provide the agent with as great a range of vocal competencies as possible. Some freelance performers prepare as many as three different tapes: one

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<sup>3</sup>You may use the Internet to listen to audition tapes made by professional announcers. You'll need a computer equipped to receive sound; RealAudio is one program that gives a computer this ability.

for straight commercial announcing, one of characters and cartoon voices, and another geared to narration for industrials.

If you're serious about a career as a freelance announcer, consider taking a workshop from a successful professional performer. Many reputable freelance performers conduct workshops with small groups of students that focus on developing the skills needed for this work. Workshops sometimes cover only one or two weekends and usually culminate in the production and packaging of a presentation tape. To identify a potential coach, ask your instructors as well as professional announcers for suggestions. When contacting those who offer courses, ask for permission to sit in on a session before enrolling in a course. If you're satisfied that the performer is capable, that the workshop is compatible with your needs, and that the cost is not excessive, you could wind up with greatly enhanced performing abilities, as well as a professionally produced audition tape.

*Other Tips Concerning Presentation Tapes* Nearly anyone can make an impressive audition tape if enough time and effort is spent preparing it. Working over a period of several days, doing take after take, and then selecting only the best bits of your work and assembling them can result in a high-quality product. This approach may present a problem: if it's your tape that gets you an agent or a job, you'll have to live up to its quality consistently. Make certain that your tape truly reflects what you can do under actual recording circumstances.

Don't send out tapes that are hastily made, that are made with inferior equipment, or that you made before you attained your present level of ability. Poorly performed tapes can prejudice potential employers or agents against you.

Duplicate audition tapes for voice performance, whether for radio station or freelance employment, on new audiocassettes. Never record or duplicate on a used tape. Be sure to listen to every dub you make, and listen all the way through; oftentimes stations receive tapes with inaudible or distorted sections. Neatly type your identification both on the cassette itself and on its plastic box.

## **Answering Machines and Pagers**

A survey of broadcast announcers asked how they got their first job. More than 85 percent responded that they happened to be "in

the right place at the right time.” In other words, they were immediately available when an opening arose. You can’t, of course, be at several radio or television stations at the same time, but you can be available by telephone at all hours—if you have an answering machine, an answering service, a fax machine, or a pager.

You can buy an adequate answering machine for less than one hundred dollars, used ones cost much less. Make certain that the machine you buy allows you to pick up messages on it by calling from another phone. Also, make sure that you have a businesslike message on your tape. A prospective employer will be turned off by a raucous, bawdy, or childish message. Don’t use an answering system that requires callers to punch numbers according to a programmed series of choices—“If you want to leave a message for Allison, press 1 now,” and the like.

Pagers are small, relatively inexpensive devices that signal you whenever a telephone call is made to your home telephone number. The calling person’s phone number appears on the pager’s display, and you can return the call within minutes.

E-mail and faxed messages, including requests for information not on your résumé, can be received by fax/modem for later printing. If possible, have a dedicated line installed for your fax/modem; if you use the same telephone line for phone calls and incoming faxes, you won’t receive the fax when you’re using the telephone.

## **Mailing Address and Phone Number**

Because you may be away at school and therefore without a permanent address, you should give some thought to the address and phone number you list on your résumé. For most job seekers, it’s best to list only one address, one that will remain accurate for some time (that of your parents, perhaps). The telephone number given should be for the phone you use every day.

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## **Finding Job Openings**

Colleges and universities are sites of intensive recruiting activity every spring semester. That’s the good news. The bad news is that broadcasters almost never appear on college campuses to interview prospective employees. However, this fact shouldn’t discourage

you. Media executives don't like to advertise job openings beyond the requirements of law. Many station executives make vacancies known to faculty members in departments of broadcasting and ask that only three to five students be told of each opening. If you've gained the respect of a faculty member, ask to be notified of job openings. Also, remember that jobs are available if you're willing to move to a small market, to accept an entry-level position, and to work for a subsistence salary. This is called *paying your dues*.

The long-established practice of underpaying novices in the field of broadcasting is deplorable; however, this is the way it was, is, and (most likely) always will be. If you're committed to becoming a successful radio or television announcer, chances are you'll have to begin at the proverbial bottom.

Announcements of job openings are published in *Broadcasting & Cable* and *Radio & Records (R&R)*. To find your first job, however, don't limit yourself to responding to ads. Apply to every station you consider to be a good starting point or a second step for you. Begin with stations in your own area, unless you have compelling reasons to leave.



## SPOTLIGHT

### Surviving Career Changes

Fred LaCrosse is a media performer whose career demonstrates the twists, turns, frustrations, and successes common to most who spend years in broadcasting. Fred earned his undergraduate degree in humanities at a small liberal arts college in Indiana. He then went to graduate school at Northwestern University majoring in broadcasting. The university guaranteed him thirty hours a week on the air with the local educational television station. His response: "A dollar an hour! Wow! It was great experience. It was in the third market in the country!" Here's Fred's story:

*Everything was live—it was before videotape. Fantastic experience! We were live from 4:00 to 7:30 P.M., back-to-back programs, three studios. I did that for two years while I was getting my master's degree. Then I got a job in Columbus, Ohio, as studio supervisor at the NBC station.*

After two years in the army (Korean War), Fred got a job as stage manager at Channel 11 in San Jose, California. After two years, he was promoted to announcer-director.

*I didn't want to do any air work, but I studied about six months—started doing voice-overs, reading anything into a tape recorder in an old shed. And I would go out there every morning for an hour or so and slooow-ly, slooow-ly get better; almost tolerable. After about six months, it was finally air-able.*

*After I was there about a year, they made me production manager. We finally got videotape, and every used-car dealer in the Valley wanted to cut commercials on videotape so he could sit there on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday night and watch himself on television.*

*During my time there, I would fill in on occasion when some of the anchors would go on vacation. At that time we had a three-person news department. We had two people who could shoot and report and one guy in Monterey who would set the tripod, start the camera, go around the other side, and give his report. And he did wonderful stuff.*

*On the average day there, I'd go in about 11:00 A.M., play with the budget, meet with the boss, be concerned with union hassles. Then I'd produce the early newscast, go home and grab a quick bite, say, "Hi," to my wife and kids. I'd come back and do the late newscast then hang around 'til maybe 12:30 or so to finish up some paperwork. Those were long, long days. And that lasted for four years. Then KRON called and asked, "Would you consider coming to San Francisco to anchor the news?" I wasn't sure, but I was willing to take a look. I was doing pretty well in San Jose at the time, making decent dollars as a department head, but I decided to audition.*

*And what an audition! I auditioned with Jerry, an anchor. I'd read a story, he'd read a story, I'd read a story, he'd read a story, and then we'd rap ad-lib for thirty seconds just to see how the rapport was, how we'd jell. Jerry would bring up something, and I'd respond. Because that's what they wanted to find out—whether or not I could think on my feet and how it worked, how it jelled. I was offered the weekend job, but it was nine thousand dollars a year less than I was making in San Jose, and I couldn't do it. A lot of decisions you'll make along the line in your career make you wonder later, "What would have happened if?"*

*After four years in news in San Jose, I got another nod to come to San Francisco to audition. They set me up in the newsroom and said, "Why don't you just prepare about three minutes' worth of copy." I thought, "Great—I can at least read my own stuff." It's a lot easier to read your own stuff. So I wrote up about three minutes' worth of copy, maybe six or seven different stories, and went down to the studio with a stage manager and a*

camera operator. The stage manager cued me and I read the copy and signed off and just sat there wondering what was going on. After about five minutes, the news director came in and said, "The station manager would like you to just sit there and talk about yourself and how you feel about the news business for maybe five minutes or so."

Now, that's kind of interesting. That's when you learn whether or not you have that ability to keep it going. To think, to plan, and at the same time keep talking. If you can develop that skill, if you happen to have it, it's amazing how much that will help you when you finally get into a situation when a heavy news story comes down and you've got to be out there at the anchor desk for an hour or two or three coordinating, gathering information, and trying to make it sound very smooth. That is not easy to do. Especially if you have the wrong producer telling you stupid things in your ear! So I talked for five minutes, telling how I felt about various things, and then I sat for about another ten minutes. Then the news director came down and said, "The manager would like to see you in his office."

I thought I'd probably blown the audition. As soon as I sat down, he said, "LaCrosse, we'd like you to come to work for us." He could be a tough cookie, and I think in this first meeting he was establishing our relationship right then.

I spent the next four years anchoring the news. It was the most boring job I ever had in my life. The most boring job! I was in the fourth-largest market in the country. I'd come out of a situation where I was working twelve hours a day consistently. Working my head off but totally immersed in it. Now I came up here—fourth market—and all they'd let me do is anchor. And that is the most boring job in the business. It pays you five times as much money as any other job in the business, but it's boring.

Your primary job as an anchor is to be a journalist. The first hour and a half when I got to the station I'd spend reading wire-service copy. I read about five newspapers. You have to know what's going on. You have to read a lot, and you have to know how to spot the salient points. I took a speed-reading course in college, and it was invaluable to me.

After four years, the news director was replaced and another person took over and replaced me with "his man." Two years later, I replaced him. That's how this silly business works.

A few years earlier, during a strike, I had started a business. I coached business people on how to get their points across on television. Eventually it became so successful that I gave up anchoring altogether. After two years I was approached by a San Francisco television station to be a co-host on a morning talk and interview show. I did that for five years until a new

*owner cut the budget by 50 percent, fired half the producers and, at contract renewal time, reduced talent salaries by 50 percent. I went back to my business and lived happily ever after.*

Fred LaCosse, after many years in various positions and markets in the field of television, voluntarily left broadcasting to form his own company, LaCosse Productions, Inc. He coaches business executives and corporate public relations personnel in performing for the electronic media. He also offers classes to those who want to enter the field of voice-over announcing.  
(Courtesy of Fred LaCosse)



## Applying for a Position at a Radio Station<sup>4</sup>

With a completed résumé and presentation tape—and, of course, your education and college broadcasting experience—you're ready to apply for an announcing job. This section is appropriate for those applying for DJ work, classical-music announcing, radio news reporting and anchoring, and sports reporting.

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<sup>4</sup>This text doesn't offer a list of suggestions for applying at television stations because television stations hire relatively fewer announcers, and most are in a single specialization—news reporting and anchoring. However, some of the suggestions offered in this section apply equally to television.

To apply for a job, obtain the names of the program directors of those radio stations where you'd like to work. Names of key station personnel are listed in *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook*, which can be found at many libraries and at nearly every radio and television station. Before writing to a program director, however, telephone the station to confirm that the person listed is still with the station and in the same position. There's a great deal of movement of executives in the broadcasting industry.

Send a brief letter, a résumé, and your presentation tape to each program director. In your letter, state that you'll call in a week to see if an interview can be arranged. Follow through with the telephone call but don't be discouraged if few or none of the station managers express interest in you. Even though announcing jobs are available, the number of persons applying for them far exceeds available positions. Perseverance is the most important quality a prospective announcer can possess.

If you live in a major or secondary market, it's unlikely that you'll be hired by a local station unless you've had years of on-air experience. Therefore be prepared to look for work in a smaller market. *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook* can help you locate stations to which you may apply. It lists every radio station in the United States and Canada, indicates its signal strength (a clue to its audience size and therefore its economic standing), gives names of chief administrative personnel, and, for music stations, tells the music format.

In addition to obtaining as much information as you can about a station, make sure you've actually listened to the one to which you're applying. It will be most uncomfortable for you if you have to admit that you know little or nothing about the station. If a station to which you're applying is so far away from your home that you can't receive its signal, you can learn what kind of program policies and format it has in *Broadcasting & Cable Yearbook* and by spending at least a few hours on arrival in the area listening to the sound of the station. It will be to your advantage if you can intelligently discuss details of the station's programming. If applying to a popular-music station, for instance, you should know its music format, the nature of the DJ's chatter (if any), and so on. When listening to a music station, make notes as to how the news is handled—whether there are network cut-ins, an audio news service such as AP Network News, who's responsible for reading the

news, and so on. News reading may very well be a part of your air shift as a DJ. When applying to a news station, find out such basic details as these: What is the typical length of a report from the field? Does the station work with a single anchor or co-anchors? What news features (weather, traffic, skiing conditions, sports reports, business reports, and such) does the station provide?

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## Interviewing for a Job

The job interview is critical in your pursuit of a position as a radio or television station performer. A general manager, station manager, or program director may be impressed with your credentials, your tape, and your résumé, but an interview is usually the final test that puts you to work—or sends you away.

Before seriously seeking a job, you may want to discuss career possibilities and job seeking with an executive at a station where you're not applying for work. This is called an **informational interview**. Almost any college teacher of broadcasting can guide you to someone who'll be happy to spend time exploring your employment prospects. Ask the professional to review your résumé and to discuss strategies for finding employment.

The suggestions and comments that follow are based on several assumptions: *that you truly are ready for the position you seek; that you'll honestly state your capabilities and competencies; and that you'll be able to back up your statements by effective performance.*

Before you appear for an interview, practice being interviewed. A friend or an instructor may be willing to assist you and then to critique your performance. Remember that an interview is not acting, but it *is* a type of performance.

When confirming an appointment for an interview by phone, don't ask how to find the station or where to park. To ask such questions is to give the impression that you can't find your way around.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Use the Internet to find your way to a station. The BigBook directory will give you the address, phone number, and a full color map of the location of nearly every broadcast business in the U.S.

**Figure 14.6**

When keeping an appointment for a job interview, present yourself in the most attractive manner possible. Dress neatly and conservatively for an interview. Although most on-air performers dress casually, remember that they are established and you are not. You cannot make a mistake if you wear a dress or a sport coat and tie. (Photo by Hazel Hankin, Stock Boston)



Before going to another town for a job interview, take time to learn something about that community. The *Places Rated Almanac*, published by Prentice-Hall, and *Cities of the United States*, published by Gale in four volumes—*South*, *West*, *Midwest*, and *Northeast*—are convenient sources of information about nearly every town and city in the United States.

When you go to an interview have with you all pertinent information about yourself that you might need to complete an application form. This includes your social security number, driver's license number, dates of graduating, dates of starting and ending various jobs, previous addresses, and so forth. Also bring a list of references in case you're asked for it.

Always be early for an interview but not too early; five to ten minutes ahead of your appointment is just about right. If you're being interviewed in an unfamiliar city or town, drive past the station sometime before the interview—preferably the day before and at the same time of day as your appointment. Not only will you learn the way to the station, but you'll also see how busy traffic is at that time of day and where to park.

Dress neatly and conservatively for your interview. Although some on-air performers dress casually, they're established and you aren't. Chances are good that you'll be interviewed by a person who is essentially a businessperson, not a performer. You can't make a mistake by wearing a dress or a sport coat and tie.

Be yourself. Don't try to act the part of the person you assume the interviewer is looking for.

Be frank about your strengths and accomplishments but take care not to come across as boastful.

Match your eye contact with that of the interviewer. Most interviewers maintain strong eye contact, but if you meet one who doesn't, act accordingly. Eye contact isn't the same thing as staring. Take your cue from the interviewer. If the interviewer looks you in the eye, try to reciprocate.

Don't take chances by making small talk that might reveal ignorance. For instance, don't ask what tune is being played—it might be number one in that community. Don't venture opinions about broadcasting in general unless they're completely to the point of the interview. You can hurt your cause by stepping on the toes of your interviewer.

Be careful to avoid traps. Some interviewers will lead job applicants along and make somewhat outrageous suggestions to see if the applicant is an unprincipled "yes" person. Don't be argumentative but think carefully before you respond to questions that seem "off the wall."

Don't misrepresent yourself or your abilities in any way! Even if you obtained a job through an exaggeration of your capabilities, you wouldn't have it for long.

Stay away from politics, religion, and sex. If the interviewer tries to lead you into any of these areas, politely avoid them.

The law forbids discrimination on certain grounds. Interviewers cannot require you to reveal information such as your national origin, religion, and physical condition. If you refuse to divulge such information, do it as tactfully as possible.

Although you're under pressure during a job interview, try to be relaxed, warm, open, and relatively energetic. Help the interviewer to enjoy spending time with you. Don't, however, try to entertain by taking over the interview by telling stories, anecdotes, or jokes.

Be ready to answer any questions the interviewer may have about statements made on your résumé. Also, be prepared to tell

your life story—in an abbreviated form, of course. This might include where you were born, where you grew up, schools attended, significant travel, relevant job experience, and where you're headed in your career.

During an interview, find opportunities to ask questions. Most people like to believe they have something of value to communicate. If you feel comfortable doing so, ask the interviewer for advice. You may or may not get the job, but you'll certainly get some tips from an experienced person and make that person feel your respect.

Mention any favorable opinions you've reached about the station, its sound, and its on-air personnel. This isn't the time to tell the interviewer what you don't like about the station or any plans you may have for changing things.

Never try to gain the sympathy of the person interviewing you by complaining about your problems. People will hire you for one or another of these reasons: (1) they believe you can help them or make them look good; (2) they believe you can make money for them; (3) they need someone and think that you're the best applicant. You'll never be hired because a station executive feels sorry for you.

You may be asked to do an audition after an initial interview. You've already sent in an aircheck or audition tape, but this is an on-the-spot, under-pressure audition, and it can be nerve-racking and threatening. If you're truly prepared and well suited for an on-air position, this is your opportunity to really show off! The important point is that you should go into each job interview with the attitude that you *will* succeed. If you do, you'll always be prepared for an on-the-spot audition.

If you're asked to audition, you may be given scripts full of words that are difficult to pronounce, sentences that feature plosive and sibilant sounds, announcements that contain foreign words and names, or pieces that require you to read 190 to 200 words a minute. Practice in advance of job interviews for these and similar possibilities.

If you're taken on a tour of the station make note of the equipment being used and be prepared to state whether or not you can operate it. When you're introduced to engineers, people in sales and traffic, on-air announcers, and others, show genuine interest in them and what they're doing. If you feel no such interest, you're probably applying to the wrong station.

If you smoke, avoid it totally while you are at the station. Even if your host is a smoker, others who are influential at the station may take offense. It's all right to accept an offer of coffee, tea, or a soft drink, but under no circumstances should you accept an offer of an alcoholic beverage.

Toward the end of the interview—especially if it's gone well—look for an opportunity to ask about salary and fringe benefits. A good interviewer will generally bring this up without your asking, but you can't count on it. Almost without exception, the salary of a first-time station employee will be abysmally low, so be prepared for that. At the same time, it's extremely important for you to know whether health, dental, and vision plans are offered and how long you must be employed before they take effect.

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## Joining a Union

To work at a unionized station or to perform freelance at a high professional level, you'll be obliged to join a union. The two unions for performers are the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (**AFTRA**) and the Screen Actors Guild (**SAG**). Generally speaking, AFTRA represents performers who work live on radio or television or whose performances are recorded on audio- or videotape; SAG represents those who perform on film. Radio and television station and network announcers usually belong to AFTRA; freelance performers as a rule belong to both.

Joining a performers' union can be tricky. Acceptance by SAG requires that you have worked as a film performer; the catch is that you aren't likely to be employed as a film performer unless you already belong to SAG! A way around this dilemma is to join AFTRA, which doesn't require previous professional employment. After you've gained experience as a member of that union, you'll be eligible for membership in SAG.

## Going Where Your Career Takes You

If you live in a major or secondary market, you may have to leave for a smaller market to obtain that first job—unless, of course, you're willing to accept an entry-level job as a receptionist, a courier, or a clerk in the mail room. A few graduating seniors are so talented that they move directly from school to on-air positions at medium- or even major-market stations. For most, though, a career begins by moving to a smaller market where there's less competition and, usually, lower pay. Most radio and television stations in markets of more than two hundred thousand hire only on-air performers who've gained experience and moved up through the ranks in smaller markets.

“Going to the sticks” is a negative and self-defeating phrase for gaining initial employment in a smaller market. It implies that moving to and working in a small town is an *unfortunate* necessity for most beginning broadcast performers. This attitude carries with it a feeling of contempt for life and work in markets outside of major metropolitan areas. It further carries with it a belief that after suffering for several years in some sort of rural purgatory all will be well if the individual is able to “move up” to a larger market. You have several good reasons for shunning this attitude.

First, by starting your career in a smaller market you can begin your on-air work at once, thereby accelerating your growth as a performer. Unlike those who start at a major-market station as a receptionist or a runner, you don't have to wait for that break that may never come.

Second, life as a broadcaster in a small town can be deeply fulfilling. Knowing that you're able to help your community in significant ways through public service work can be rewarding. Putting down roots, becoming a contributing member of society, and participating in town events can regularly confirm the fact that you do make a difference!

Salaries do tend to be lower in smaller markets, and many stations are non-union. At the same time, the cost of living is lower, and you may very well find your standard of living higher in a small town than in a large city.

A final reason for avoiding a negative attitude about a small market is that people who do the hiring are quick to spot conde-

scension on the part of applicants who communicate a “holier than thou” attitude. Would you hire applicants who acted as though they were making a sacrifice to come to work for you?

This chapter is designed to help you find entry-level employment at a radio or television station. Most of the suggestions are applicable to other kinds of employment—doing voice-overs, industrials, and other freelance work. There are several things this chapter can’t give you, however. It can’t give you talent, good work habits, or the perseverance required for success in the world of broadcasting. Remember that the jobs are out there. You can obtain one if you have performance skills, if you’re a reliable and hard-working person, and if you have a strong drive to succeed.



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Drafting Your Résumé**

Write a résumé following the guidelines and examples given in this chapter. Bring copies for your instructor and each class member to discuss and compare.



### **PRACTICE**

#### **Checking Out the Job Scene**

Visit a career-guidance center and obtain handouts on résumés, job interviews, and information. Find *Broadcasting & Cable*, and compile a list of advertised job openings for on-air talent. Note the geographical areas with the greatest number of openings and note the areas of specialization most in demand.

## Preparing a Scannable Résumé for Today's Standards<sup>6</sup>

Prepare a résumé that's consistent with today's technology and a job could be just a keyboard away. Most leading businesses now use **electronic applicant tracking systems** that scan résumés into a computer system that searches for and extracts important information necessary to qualify you for a job. Knowing this can help you prepare a résumé that computers can scan and read. Landing the job of your life could be a résumé away!



### **CHECKLIST**

#### **Preparing a Scannable Résumé**

A *scannable* résumé is one that can be easily scanned into a computer without loss of data. Résumés that scan best have standard fonts and crisp and dark type and offer plenty of facts for the artificial intelligence to extract. The more skills and facts you provide, the more opportunities you have for your skills to match available positions. A scannable résumé is like a traditional résumé in that you focus on format and content. When preparing your résumé, use these tips:

#### **Format Tips to Maximize Your Visibility**

1. Provide the cleanest original and use a standard résumé style.
2. An unusual format such as a newsletter layout, adjusted spacing, small font sizes, graphics or lines, too-

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<sup>6</sup>Courtesy of Cisco Systems of San Jose, California. Cisco is the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. News and information about Cisco are available at—<http://www.cisco.com>

light type, or too-dark paper make your résumé difficult for the computer to read.

**Tips to Maximize the Scannability of Your Résumé**

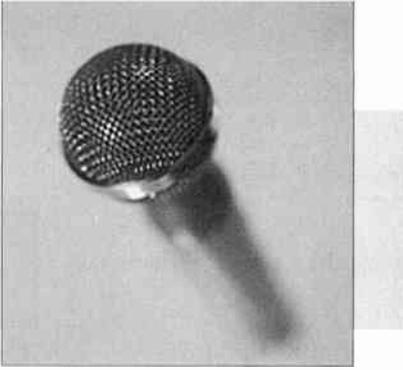
1. Use white or light-colored paper and print on one side only.
2. Provide a laser printer original.
3. Use standard typefaces such as Helvetica or Geneva.
4. Use a font size of twelve to fourteen points.
5. Avoid fancy treatments.
6. Avoid vertical and horizontal lines, graphics, and boxes.
7. Avoid two-column formats that look like newspapers or newsletters.

**Content Tips to Maximize “Hits”**

1. Use enough key words to define your skills, experience, education, professional affiliations, and such.
2. Describe your experience with concrete words rather than vague descriptions.
3. Use more than one page if necessary.
4. Use jargon and acronyms specific to your industry.

**Additional Tips:**

1. When sending a résumé use e-mail if possible; it always produces the best quality. Use plain text in ASCII format when sending e-mail.
2. When faxing, set the fax to “fine mode” to make a better-quality copy.



# **Appendixes**

## **References for Broadcast Performers**



# Appendix A

## Scripts to Develop Performance Skills

This appendix is made up chiefly of radio and television commercials and public service announcements (PSAs). Other script types are included, specifically essays, “impressions” (a type of essay), sports analysis, and commentaries.

There are far more commercials and PSAs in this appendix than the other categories combined. The reason? Aside from commercials and PSAs, all other types of scripts may be found on the Internet, so a near-endless supply of them is available for daily practice. Countless trees can be spared by not having dozens of scripts in this text or an accompanying workbook.

Aside from being readily available, there are other good reasons for finding and working with scripts found on the Internet. You can choose only copy that excites you and serves your particular needs. After locating several essays (for example), you can print, read, and record your favorites. And, with a system such as RealAudio, you can listen to scripts read by their authors. Scripts found on the Internet can also be timely, as with commentaries about developing crises. Check out the sample scripts in this section, and use them as models for your search.

## Solo Narrative Scripts

### Essays

Radio and television essays are *personal statements* that represent the feelings or opinions of their authors, and they usually are narrated by their creators. Generally speaking, essays don't deal with "hard news," and they need not be "timely." The purpose of most essays is to explore a situation, a tradition, or a movement, and to present it with analysis and a personal point of view. Essays may be serious, tongue-in-cheek-humorous, or anger-driven. Here's an essay written with obvious disgust, in which the writer pulls no punches.<sup>1</sup>

Talk-Show Trash

Ayrien Houchin

Tonight, I want to get right down to business. I want to know what the hell has happened to daytime television? Have we totally lost it? I mean come on people—have we no shame? I'm beginning to think we don't. I'm specifically talking about talk shows, or rather talk show trash: Whatever happened to Dinah Shore, Merv Griffin, and our beloved Phil Donahue?

It's disheartening to find that happy talk and variety shows have been replaced by fist fights and name calling. And it's not just one or two shows a day. They start at 9 A.M. and run throughout the night. Television talk shows of the nineties have turned day-

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<sup>1</sup>Reprinted with permission of the author, Ayrien Houchin.

time TV into a garbage site of abnormality and amorality. With topics such as, "Women Raped and Pregnant," "I Married My Grandfather," or "My Mother Dresses Like a Slut," it's no wonder people watch out of sheer disbelief!!!

I've heard talk show hosts say they serve a valuable role in educating the public about such things as rape, incest, and domestic violence; what they *should* tell us is that these shows are done purely for entertainment, which translates into "generating money."

I wonder if so much deviance on the air-waves is causing viewers to become desensitized to their surroundings? I mean, there was a time when incest and devil worship were topics that made one feel disgusted, not intrigued. I know this sounds extreme, but think about it: Do people watch because they *care*, or because they think it's so *bizarre*?

It's more and more apparent to me that talk show hosts are so devoted to portraying deviant, bizarre, and unusual behavior that their millions of daily viewers are becoming confused as to what's normal and abnormal in society. With so many people watching such trash, and the content becoming increasingly bizarre, it's certain to be causing problems for viewers. No matter how their apologists rationalize them, talk shows give legitimacy to behaviors once rightly labeled as abnormal or destructive, and the more atten-

tion given to people committing these acts, the harder it is to make them feel ashamed.

Talk shows portray many of their guests as victims who aren't responsible for their actions. Rather than being mortified, ashamed or trying to hide their stigma, guests willingly and eagerly discuss their child molestation, sexual quirks, and criminal records in an effort to justify their so called "disease." And, there's inevitably an "expert" present to lend an aura of respectability to the discussion. It's obvious to me that the trend of "pointing fingers" at others and not taking responsibility for ones' actions will eventually play a role in the breakdown of American Culture. In my opinion, trash talk shows are promoting such behavior and profiting from what I believe to be irresponsible broadcasting.

***Impressions*** An impression is an essay that explores inner feelings and is quite personal. While it differs from other essays only in its degree of "shared privacy," it's useful to consider separately because the mood conveyed and the degree of self-involvement are of a different order. One way of expressing this is to say that, while all impressions are essays, not all essays are impressions.

Well-written "impressions" will help you appreciate the rich (and seldom used) potential of the aural medium of radio. The only broadcast service where you're likely to hear such a piece is non-commercial radio. Here's an impression by a Japanese visitor, living for a time in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Reprinted with permission of the author, Midei Toriyama.

About the Rooms

Midei Toriyama

On a rainy, quiet afternoon, I leave the window slightly open to allow the air to stream into the room. I hold a cup of hot raspberry tea in my hands, feeling the warmth and enjoying the aroma. I feel the movement of air on my cheek—the combination of the cold air from the outside, and the warm steam rising from the tea cup. I am completely relaxed in this comfortable room where silence gently lies. With a sense of great appreciation, I lie down in the heart of solitude, thinking how lucky I am to be the resident of a room with such good vibrations.

Every room has a different atmosphere that cannot be seen, but only sensed with the surface of my skin; they call this "intuition." When I look for a place to live, the room has to have some kind of impression or impulse that welcomes me. I don't know if there are many people who share this feeling; however, I feel it when my senses respond to the frequency of the room—the vibration of the molecules of the airwaves. I believe there is a congeniality between the room and the resident. I can feel it when the room likes me. When I don't feel it in a room, I will not be living there for long.

I once had a room with no feeling of the vibration. At that time I was forced to find a place to live as

quickly as possible. I was visiting here from another city to look for a place, but I did not have much time. All I had was a couple of days, which was not sufficient to find the best place. After miles of walking to look at many different places, I finally ended up with a two-bedroom flat near the Geary Theatre. However, although the place was nice and actually pretty, with a huge living room and a high ceiling, a spacious kitchen and cozy bedrooms, I did not receive the feeling. I compromised because of the limited time that I could spend.

I moved in, but lived there just for a few weeks. Something did not feel right, and I was again thrown into the middle of town to look for "room for rent" signs.

Fortunately it did not take me long to find the next place. That time I knew I was getting the place even before I got to the door of the room; I could feel it while I was going up the stairs. I remember I was so excited to open the door that my hand was shaking. The room did welcome me in an obvious way. I heard every part of the room—the ceiling, the walls, the windows and the floors—all giving a shout of joy to have me in. As soon as I opened the door I felt a big pressure of air on my whole body. The room was full of wind; there was a whirlpool of air and I was wrapped within it. It felt as though invisible tenta-

cles were crawling over my body to identify me. I was welcomed.

I lived there for a whole year. When I moved out of the room I left a little wish for the next resident-to-be for their good time in this room where I packed pounds of memory in numbers of boxes. I loved the room, and I could tell the room as well appreciated my residency.

Then I was drawn to this present place nearby the ocean. It may be just a sentiment of my own; however, I think the space or rooms can sense the resident's feelings. I do not know how and why, but for some reason I hear something that space radiates. And it does change its atmosphere. After the absence of a few days, I can always tell the change in the air. It smells different. To me, it seems like it is complaining of my absence.

The space is alive, I believe, and it needs to be communicated with in some way. We are likely to be insensitive to this kind of matter, and treat it without respect. What if there is a spiritual thing involved? We don't know, but how can we be so sure that no such thing is present?

On a rainy day, on such a quiet afternoon, I comfortably sit in the room with a cup of tea in my hands. I hear the silence with my eyes closed. Slowly, the aroma of raspberry tea expands in the room. I open

my eyes and smile, experiencing the same feeling of tentacles which crawled on me in that old room with the feeling of the wind. It was also a rainy, quiet day, just like this.

## Commentaries

Commentaries are position statements, made by persons accepted as qualified to conceive and express them. They often address political or social issues, and their authors usually both write and voice the statements. Richard Rodriguez, an editor for Pacific News Service, is one of the most respected authors of commentaries and essays in American radio and television.<sup>3</sup>

TV Restores Our Medieval Faith in the Eye<sup>4</sup>

Richard Rodriguez, Pacific News Service

On the day Richard Nixon died, Hillary Clinton met reporters in the White House to answer questions about her personal finances and the Whitewater controversy. The First Lady appeared on national television looking cool and composed in an outfit that was color coordinated with a nearby bowl of spring flowers. Mrs. Clinton sat under a large painting of President Lincoln.

Richard Nixon, on the other hand, was notoriously awkward on television. His career almost ended that long ago night when the entire nation saw him perspire

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<sup>3</sup>© Pacific News Service, San Francisco, reprinted with permission.

<sup>4</sup>EDITOR'S NOTE: Americans observe our politicians through the unblinking eye of the TV camera, as if what we see is what is real. But this medieval faith in the eye competes with a modern skepticism about public life. PNS editor Richard Rodriguez is author of "Days of Obligation: An Argument with my Mexican Father."

during the debate with the smooth, the handsome, the affable Kennedy.

How much do you trust or, for that matter, distrust what a politician tells you because of how he or she looks? How much of the truth of what politicians say is communicated by their clothes? Does Hillary Clinton need to wear an outfit color coordinated with a bowl of spring flowers? Would you vote for a candidate who appears nervous in front of the unblinking eye of a camera?

In Western art, the oldest prejudice has been Platonic. External appearance mirrors the inner life. In her medieval portraits, as a result, the Virgin Mary can only be beautiful, must always be beautiful—as girl, as mother—because her soul is beautiful. This ancient aesthetic notion trusts public life. For if the eye is to be trusted, then external behavior, how a person (a king, a queen) appears in public, is all-telling.

Around the fifteenth or sixteenth century, something changes. With the Renaissance, the ancient faith in the eye is called into question. For example, John Milton writes *Paradise Lost*, an epic poem in which Satan appears heroically beautiful.

There come moments in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* when Hamlet, the character, steps out of the play, speaks

directly to the audience—his soliloquies. The play literally stops.

Medieval confidence in public life gives way to a modern skepticism. Hamlet has secrets. He has a life that is hidden from everyone around him. The ancient assumption of the theater was that everything we needed to know about a character we learned in his public behavior. With his monologues, Hamlet becomes a character in a novel.

And so it happens. The play gives way to the novel. The eighteenth century novel is still filled with beautiful heroes and heroines, but the voice of the novel becomes starkly solitary.

Modern skepticism about public life has extended in our own century to a post-modern skepticism about private life. Psychoanalysis provides us with the means to uncover secrets we have kept from ourselves. Were he alive today, Hamlet wouldn't tell us about his mother. His analyst would tell Hamlet what his relationship to his mother means.

In San Francisco, in a district of interior designers and advertising agencies, there is a plaque outside a building honoring Philo Taylor Farnsworth for having invented television. Television flickered to life in San Francisco in 1929. Television's invention led us to believe in the eye with a faith almost as strong as that of our medieval ancestors. Television

returned us to a world where the Virgin Mary is always beautiful and where villains are as physically repellant as demonic gargoyles outside a cathedral.

In the age of television we become medieval people again. We become public people again. We trust the evidence of our eyes. We want pretty people to read the news on TV.

But at war with our medieval faith in television is a modern skepticism about public life. Some part of us resists the evidence of our eyes. If something within us responds positively to Hillary Clinton's color-coordinated outfit, something within us also wonders if we ever knew who Richard Nixon was. Or if even he knew.

***Sports Commentary and Analysis*** Joan Ryan's insights about events in the world of sports make her commentaries far more substantial than narrowly focused "sports reports." In this article—an essay, really—she finds lessons for all of us in a case of failed effort.<sup>5</sup>

Our Weird Fascination with Colossal Failure

Joan Ryan

In blowing a six-stroke lead, Greg Norman turned the Masters into the most compelling show on TV Sunday. Watching his total collapse in the final round was, some say, like watching a car wreck. You wanted to

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<sup>5</sup>© The San Francisco Chronicle, reprinted with permission.

shield your eyes; instead, a stronger impulse riveted you to the wreckage.

What is it that makes choking so fascinating to watch? It's one reason the Olympics is always dramatic. Olympians choke all the time: Debi Thomas, Jim Ryun, Kim Zmeskal, to name a few. Dan Jansen choked in both the 1992 and '94 Winter Olympics—before finally winning—and became more famous than if he had won every race.

But perhaps no sport is more prone to choking than golf. Choking is a self-inflicted defeat. You aren't beaten when you choke; you bring about your own demise through a debilitating crisis of confidence. In golf, more than most sports, the game is so slow that a player's inner demons have plenty of time to feast.

"We all choke," Tom Watson once said. "You just try to choke last."

I have never much enjoyed watching golf on TV, though I occasionally find it a wonderful sedative on a lazy weekend afternoon. The drama of a collapse like Norman's, however, turns golf into theater. There's something fascinating and satisfying in seeing rich, gifted, famous athletes completely unravel before our eyes. For a viewer, the slow pace offers hope that the choking player will right himself. Any moment now he'll snap to. So you keep watching as he crumbles, hole by hole.

"It's like you're walking down the fairway naked," Hale Irwin has said. "The gallery knows what you've done; every other player knows, and, worst of all, you know. That's when you find out if you're a competitor. The longer you play, the more certain you are that a man's performance is the outward manifestation of who, in his heart, he really thinks he is."

Other than cheating, choking is considered the greatest sin in sports. The challenge of sports is not simply to perform well but to perform well when the pressure is highest. Some, like Joe Montana, found pressure invigorating, a challenge to be met. It brings out their best because they feel most alive when they're risking everything and pushing themselves to the edge of their capabilities.

For most of us, like Norman, pressure is an enemy to be feared and beaten back. Though some might feel contempt for Norman for buckling the way he did, I think more empathized. Like golf, most of life is you against yourself. Just when you think you've got everything under control—ka-blooeey! You go blank in a presentation to the board of directors. You freeze on deadline. You forget your spouse's name when the boss stops by your dinner table to say hello.

Everyone loses, everyone suffers public humiliation, but sometimes it seems as if it's only you. So

it's strangely encouraging to watch someone else, such as Greg Norman, choke so spectacularly.

This kind of "tragedy," brought about by one's own character flaws, has always appealed to audiences. Our attraction to Norman's defeat is not so different from the ancient Greeks' attraction to "Medea," the Elizabethans' to "Macbeth" and today's audiences' to any soap opera on any channel on any afternoon.

We share in the anguish of every wrong move because, on some level, we've been there. We know what it's like to expect one outcome and watch in horror as something terribly different unfolds. We know about defeat, disillusionment and unfulfillment, and so we can identify with the fallen hero perhaps more than the triumphant one. I have noticed that players we don't much like as winners seem more appealing once they lose.

We watch, too, to see how the fallen hero copes with failure. Will it destroy him? Will he face it with humor and dignity? Or with anger and self-pity? To paraphrase Irwin, a player's performance reveals who he is. If Norman's collapse revealed something of his character, so, too, did his good-humored response to it.

That, I think, is the ultimate heroism: accepting one's fate with grace.

Now that you've seen a few examples, you're encouraged to use the Internet to find other narrative scripts to use for further development of your interpretive abilities.

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## Radio Commercials

### Scripts for Solo Delivery

These commercials were written for delivery by a single performer. Nearly all can be effectively performed by persons of either gender, and only a few ask for a specific age category. In some, an introduction, tag, or other addition is made by a second voice, but the main message of each commercial is delivered by one performer.

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AGENCY: Donn Resnick Advertising<sup>6</sup>

CLIENT: LaserEyes Vision Center  
:60 Radio "Penny Metzger"

MS. METZGER: "If I had a third eye, I'd have *it* done too."

ANNCR: If you're nearsighted and want to see clearly without glasses or contacts, you need to read about Penny Metzger—She went to Gary Mackman and Sheldon Davidson, the ophthalmologists at LaserEyes Vision Center, to have her eyes corrected with a new kind of eye surgery called PRK.

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<sup>6</sup>Donn H. Resnick, President of Donn Resnick Advertising of Scottsdale, Arizona, contributed four commercials for your practice. They range from one with a catchy phrase that opens and closes the LaserEyes Vision Center commercial; to a logical presentation, as in the Lincoln Health spot; to a "Monty Pythonish" humorous spot for Easy Learn Computer Learning Centers; and a dialogue spot for Cajun Kitchen, found in the section on "Accents and Character Voices." As you practice with these, work for a different mood for each.

The January issue of *Phoenix Magazine* describes how Dr. Mackman used a computer-guided laser to correct Penny's vision without surgical cuts or weakening of the cornea.

LaserEyes Vision Center has the *first* Phoenix eye surgeons certified on the Excimer Laser, the *only* laser procedure approved by the Food and Drug Administration.

Which is why Penny says . . .

METZGER: "If I had a third eye, I'd have *it* done too."

ANNCR: For a free reprint of the article or a complimentary eye screening and consultation, call Doctors Gary Mackman or Sheldon Davidson at 258-LASER.

That's 258-L-A-S-E-R.

Up to 12 months interest-free financing available.

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AGENCY: Donn Resnick Advertising

CLIENT: Easy Learn Computer Learning Centers, Inc.

"Laughs" :60

LAUGHTRACK UP FOR APPROXIMATELY :15 (NOTHING ELSE)

ANNCR: (*BRITISH*) The preceding message has been [BEAN] brought to you by Easy Learn Computer Learning Centers, where one has fun learning how to use the computer. Our reasonably priced one-day sessions can teach you any program you wish . . . in a non-threatening atmosphere. We make it so easy, children,

beginners, even business owners can learn computers. Evening and Saturday classes are also available. To be more productive and profitable tomorrow, have more fun learning computers *today*.

Call Easy Learn Computer Learning Centers in Scottsdale at 970 E-A-S-Y.

Which is . . . 970-3279.

You'll laugh 'til it Megahertz.

LAUGHTRACK UP FOR BUTTON

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AGENCY: Donn Resnick Advertising

CLIENT: Lincoln Health

Health Source :60 Radio

"Take Charge"

LINCOLN HEALTH MUSIC

ANNCR: How long are you going to live?

How *well* are you going to live?

Knowing which habits and behaviors can hurt your health, and making a few changes for the better can make a real difference.

For instance, lifestyle choices like smoking, unhealthy diet, lack of exercise and alcohol abuse can lead to serious illness. Yet all these factors are under your control. So by making a few changes—by taking charge—you can lead a healthier, happier life. The Health Source, John C. Lincoln Hospital's resource center, has the latest information on how your

lifestyle affects your health, and the important changes you can make. We're easier than a library, give you more information than a magazine, and we're free.

The Health Source is one more way Lincoln Health is making a difference in people's lives. To take charge of your lifestyle, call me. \_\_\_\_\_ at 555-6356.

That's 555-6356.

LINCOLN MUSIC ENDS

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AGENCY: Ketchum Advertising

CLIENT: The Potato Board

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: The Potato Board wants to ask you a question: have you ever thought of the potato as a *vegetable*? The potato . . . as a vegetable? Most people only think of the potato as a starch—a filler food. They couldn't be more wrong, because the Potato Board reminds us that the potato is a *vegetable* that contains lots of good things like vitamins, minerals, complex carbohydrates, and, of course, fiber. But the potato is *not* full of calories. Only 100 in a medium-sized baked potato—and just 40 more with some butter. That 140 calories is less than a cup of green salad with two tablespoons of dressing. As a vegetable, the potato is the crown prince of versatility. And the Potato Board says you can serve potatoes in dozens of delicious ways, both

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as a side dish and an entree, for any meal of the day. So next time you think of the humble potato—please, please think of it first as a nutritious vegetable. Because that's exactly what the potato is.

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AGENCY: Millar Advertising, Inc.

CLIENT: Andre's International Bakery

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Hot, fresh, breakfast rolls, glistening with melting butter! Croissants (krah-SAHNTS') and cafe au lait (kahf-AY'-oh-LAY'). Raisin bran muffins to go with your poached eggs. Andre's has these delicacies, and they're waiting for you now. For afternoon tea, Andre suggests English crumpets, served with lemon curd. Or scones and pomegranate jam. For after dinner desserts, how about baklava (bahk-lah-VAH'), the Persian delicacy made with dozens of layers of paper-thin pastry, honey, and chopped walnuts? Or, if your taste runs to chocolate, a German torte (TOR'-tuh)? These and dozens of other international delights are created daily by Andre and his staff. Made only of pure and natural ingredients—Grade A cream and butter, natural unrefined sugar, pure chocolate and cocoa, and imported spices. For mouthwatering pastries, it's Andre's International Bakery. We bring you the best from the gourmet capitals of the world. Visit Andre's today! In the Corte Madera Shopping Center. Andre's!

## Dramatized Radio Commercials

Several commercials for two performers are given here to help you work on characterization, teamwork, and timing. All of these spots are humorous, and their comic effectiveness is dependent on your ability to simultaneously project an “off-the-wall” delivery while remaining completely believable to your listeners. Slight exaggeration is called for in most instances, but avoid becoming too extreme or farcical; if listeners feel that you’re “play-acting,” you’ll fail to communicate such subtle qualities as gullibility (“Frosty Paws”), slight annoyance and petulance (“Mona Lisa”), suspicion (“All Out”), or covert lying (“Excuses/Gas Logs”).

Eric Poole, writer-producer of the first four spots in this section, describes himself as “head creative guy of Splash Radio, a commercial production company with nearly fifty Clio, Sunny, New York Festival, and London International Festival awards.” These commercials demonstrate his understanding of the “Theatre of the Mind” potential of radio, as well as a wild but disciplined sense of humor.

One of Eric Poole’s spots, “Excuses/Gas Logs,” was part of an advertising campaign scheduled to end after four spots were written; because of the remarkable success of these commercials—due to a creative, though ludicrous concept, skillful writing, and outstanding performances of two actors—the campaign was extended to twenty spots, produced over a three-year period.

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AGENCY: Splash Radio

CLIENT: Frosty Paws

PRODUCT: INTRO

“Research Lab” AS PRODUCED

SFX: FOOTSTEPS

MAN: And this is our motivational research center . . .

GUY: Wow . . .

MAN: Where we do all our doggie treat research.

GUY: Doggie treat?

MAN: Yeah, dogs are capable of much more than you think.

GUY: Really?

MAN: Oh, yes. They've just never had the right motivation.

GUY: Oh.

MAN: What does your dog do?

GUY: Well, he rolls over, plays dead . . .

MAN: Exactly. Now in here . . .

*SFX: DOOR OPEN, PIANO, TAP DANCING*

CHOREOGRAPHER: Okay, girls, big finish!

GUY: Dogs tap dancing?

MAN: Yeah, they want the new frozen treat for dogs, Frosty Paws.

GUY: Frosty Paws?

MAN: It's like ice cream for your dog. Now in here . . .

*SFX: DOOR OPEN, JAZZ COMBO PLAYING*

GUY: A jazz quartet!

MAN: You should hear Muffin's tenor sax solo.

GUY: Wow.

MAN: We've found dogs will do anything for Frosty Paws. And over here . . .

*SFX: DOOR OPEN, TYPEWRITERS*

GUY: Secretarial school?

MAN: Typing, dictation, and shortpaw.

ANNCR: Unleash your dog's potential with Frosty Paws, the world's first frozen treat for dogs. There's never been anything like it. It's full of protein, vitamins and

minerals. And unlike real cream, it won't upset your dog's stomach.

*SFX: DOOR OPEN, MUSIC UP*

MAN: And this is our malt shop.

GUY: Lotta dogs eating Frosty Paws.

MAN: Uh huh. Smart as they are, they still think it's ice cream.

ANNCR: Frosty Paws, the world's first frozen treat for dogs. New in your grocer's ice cream freezer. Go fetch some today.

---

AGENCY: Splash Radio

CLIENT: LOIS/EJL

PRODUCT: Southern California Gas

"Excuses/Gas Logs"

*SFX: TYPING ON OLD ELECTRIC TYPEWRITER (WITH DINGS, ETC. WHERE APPROPRIATE)*

WOMAN: (SHE'S TYPING) Dear Valerie . . . we're really sorry we didn't make it the other night . . .

MAN: (PICKING UP THE DICTATION, DEADPAN) Uh huh, but the, uh, funniest thing happened.

WOMAN: While we were getting ready, Fred snuck into the living room and turned on the fire.

MAN: You see, we have gas fireplace logs now, so all I gotta do is flip a switch and POOF . . . there it is.

WOMAN: Well, talk about your instant moods.

- MAN: Uh huh . . .
- WOMAN: Fred wasn't all tired and crabby from shoveling ashes and lugging in tree trunks . . .
- MAN: And Wanda didn't melt her mascara lighting those wet logs with that flamethrower . . .
- WOMAN: And we didn't lose time being revived by paramedics after the smoke set off the sprinkler system . . .
- MAN: So when Wanda saw that perfect, roaring fire, she put on my 8-track of "Accordion by Firelight" . . .
- WOMAN: (GETTING ROMANTIC) Fred slipped into his high school football jersey . . .
- MAN: (GETTING ROMANTIC) Wanda uncorked a primo bottle of cream soda . . .
- WOMAN: And, well . . . (GIGGLES PLAYFULLY)
- MAN: Yeah, you get the picture . . . (LAUGHS)
- WOMAN: (BACK TO NORMAL) So we're awfully sorry we missed your wedding . . .
- MAN: (BACK TO NORMAL) Yeah, but the next time you get married . . .
- MAN & WOMAN: You can bet we'll be there.
- WOMAN: Love . . .
- MAN & WOMAN: Mom and Dad.
- SFX: PAPER RIP
- ANNCR: Gas logs. There's no excuse to have anything else. For a free fact sheet on gas logs, call 1-800-427-2200. From the people at The Gas Company.

AGENCY: Splash Radio

CLIENT: Wisconsin Dental Association

PRODUCT: Checkups

"Mona Lisa" AS PRODUCED

*MUSIC: ITALIAN CLASSICAL THEME UNDER*

MONA: Gee, Leonardo, I'm really excited about you painting my portrait.

LEONARDO: So am I, Mona, you're gonna make me famous.

MONA: Ah, you Da Vinci boys, such flatterers.

LEONARDO: Okay, sit down on this marble slab and smile.

MONA: Okay.

LEONARDO: (A BEAT) Mona . . .

MONA: Yeah?

LEONARDO: You're not smiling.

MONA: I know.

LEONARDO: I can't paint a world-famous portrait that'll hang in the Louvre if you don't put on a happy face.

MONA: This is as happy as it gets.

LEONARDO: Look, just say "cheese."

MONA: I can't.

LEONARDO: What do you mean, you can't? I got a career riding on this picture.

MONA: It's my teeth.

LEONARDO: Your teeth?

MONA: I didn't get regular checkups as a kid, so now I'm paying for it.

LEONARDO: Let me see.

MONA: No!

LEONARDO: Open your mouth.

MONA: Lay off, Da Vinci, or I'm calling Mister Lisa.

LEONARDO: Maybe you oughta call a dentist.

MONA: Maybe I oughta call Van Gogh.

LEONARDO: Not with those ears.

ANNCR: Today's dentistry is more than just filling cavities. Your regular dentist cares about your teeth for the long-term, too. And keeping your teeth healthy now can save you lots of money down the road. Get the picture?

MONA: Can't you just pretend I'm smiling and draw in some teeth later?

LEONARDO: Oh, forget it. Just sit there with that dumb blank expression.

MONA: It's mysterious.

LEONARDO: Yeah, who's gonna buy that?

ANNCR: Call your regular dentist for your six-month checkup now. A reminder from the Wisconsin Dental Association. And smile.

---

AGENCY: Splash Radio

CLIENT: Kresser Stein Robaire

PRODUCT: AM/PM Mini-Markets

"All Out"

SFX: STORE AMBIENCE

GUY: Hi, welcome to AM/PM.

MAN: Thanks. I heard about your new Rib-B-Q sandwich . . .

GUY: Yeah, flame-broiled pork smothered in spicy barbeque sauce on a sesame seed bun . . .

MAN: With toppings you can add yourself . . .

BOTH: (TOGETHER) For just 99 cents . . .

MAN: And I'd like one, please.

GUY: (FLATLY, DEFINITELY) We're all out.

MAN: You're all out?

GUY: Yep. Nada. Zip. Zero.

MAN: But they're only here for a limited time.

GUY: I'm really sorry.

MAN: (DISAPPOINTED) Okay, well, thanks anyway.

SFX: FOOTSTEPS AWAY, THEN SUDDENLY STOP

MAN: Hey, what was that?

GUY: (MOUTH FULL) What?

MAN: I saw you take a bite of something.

GUY: (DEFENSIVELY, MOUTH STILL FULL) It was nothing.

MAN: (SUSPICIOUS) You sure? It looked like a big sandwich.

GUY: Positive.

MAN: Well, okay.

SFX: TWO OR THREE FOOTSTEPS, THEN STOP SUDDENLY

MAN: There! You did it again!

GUY: (MOUTH FULL AGAIN, DEFENSIVE) What?

MAN: You took another bite. You've got a Rib-B-Q sandwich back there, haven't you?

GUY: (BARELY ABLE TO GET THE WORDS OUT) No, I swear!

MAN: We'll see about that. There's the manager. Excuse me, sir . . .

SFX: FOOTSTEPS

BOSS: (CHEWING, MOUTH STUFFED) Yes?

MAN: (HE REALIZES THEY'RE ALL IN ON IT) Oh, for crying out loud . . .

ANNCR: Introducing AM/PM's mouth-watering new Rib-B-Q sandwich . . . just 99 cents, with toppings you can add yourself. But you'd better hurry . . . before the employees get'em all.

BOSS: (MOUTH FULL) Anybody got a napkin?

ANNCR: At participating AM/PM's for a limited time. Price is suggested, actual prices may vary. Fill up for less at AM/PM.

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CREATION AND

PRODUCTION: Chuck Blore & Don Richman, Inc.

CLIENT: AT&T

LENGTH: 60 seconds

CATHIANNE: (ON PHONE) Hello.

DANNY: Uh, hi. You probably still remember me, Edward introduced us at the seminar . . .

CATHIANNE: Oh, the guy with the nice beard.

DANNY: I don't know whether it's nice . . .

CATHIANNE: It's a gorgeous beard.

DANNY: Well, thank you, uh, listen. I'm gonna, uh, be in the city next Tuesday and I was, y'know, wondering if we could sorta, y'know, get together for lunch?

CATHIANNE: How 'bout dinner?

DANNY: Dinner? Dinner! Dinner's a better idea. You could pick your favorite restaurant and . . .

CATHIANNE: How 'bout my place? I'm my favorite cook.

DANNY: Uh, your place. Right. Sure. Sounds great to me.

CATHIANNE: Me too. It'll be fun.

DANNY: Yeah . . . listen, I'll bring the wine.

CATHIANNE: Perfect. I'll drink it.

BOTH: (LAUGH)

DANNY: Well, OK, then, I guess it's a date. I'll see you Tuesday.

CATHIANNE: Tuesday. Great.

DANNY: Actually, I just, uh, I called to see how you were and y'know, Tuesday sounds fine!

SOUND: *PHONE HANGS UP*

DANNY: (YELLING) Tuesday . . . AHHHH . . . she's gonna see me Tuesday. (FADE)

SUNG: *REACH OUT, REACH OUT AND TOUCH SOMEONE*

---

AGENCY: Cunningham & Walsh, Inc.

CLIENT: Schieffelin & Co.

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Once again, Stiller and Meara for Blue Nun.

ANNE: Hello, I'm Frieda Beidermyer, your interior decorator.

JERRY: Oh, yes, come in. This is my apartment.

ANNE: Don't apologize.

JERRY: Huh?

ANNE: They didn't tell me you were color-blind. Plaid windows?

JERRY: I want decor that makes a statement about me, that exudes confidence, savoya fair. Where do we begin?

ANNE: The Last Chance Thrift Shop. Everything's gotta go.

JERRY: Everything?

ANNE: Everything.

JERRY: These are mementos my parents brought back from their honeymoon.

ANNE: They honeymooned in Tijuana?

JERRY: You noticed the terra-cotta donkey?

ANNE: I noticed. Out.

JERRY: So, where do we start?

ANNE: We start with a little Blue Nun.

JERRY: I want my apartment converted, not me.

ANNE: No, Blue Nun white wine. It'll lend you some style.

JERRY: I never tried Blue Nun.

ANNE: You have so much to learn, my naive nudnick. Blue Nun tastes terrific.

JERRY: I want good taste.

ANNE: That's why you can get Blue Nun by the glass or by the bottle at swank bars and restaurants.

JERRY: Gee, style, confidence, and taste. Will Blue Nun do all that for me?

ANNE: It's a bottle of wine, honey, not a miracle worker.

ANNCR: By the glass or by the bottle, there's a lot of good taste in Blue Nun. Imported by Schieffelin (SHIFF'-UH-LIN) & Co., New York.

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CREATION AND

PRODUCTION: Chuck Blore & Don Richman, Inc.

CLIENT: Campbell Soup

LENGTH: 30 seconds

DON: You're eating chunky chicken soup with a fork?

JOHN: Well, you've got to spear the chicken to get it into your mouth. Look at that. Look at the size of that. You gotta use a spoon for the noodles.

DON: You got some noodles on your fork.

JOHN: Yeah, but they slide through.

DON: Well, you use the spoon, you use the fork.

JOHN: That's right.

DON: Is chunky chicken a soup or a meal?

JOHN: I leave that up to the experts, but I personally . . .

DON: (OVER LAUGH) Why'd you say that?

JOHN: I know, but I mean, you know, I'm not a connoisseur on the food department but I would say it's a meal.

DON: But it's a soup.

JOHN: It's a meal within a soup can. Let's put it that way.

DON: Campbell's Chunky Chicken . . . it's the soup that eats like a meal.

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## Accents and Character Voices

No suggestions on how to affect accents or develop unusual character voices are given because written instructions are of little help. Audio recordings of professional announcers performing all sorts of character roles are available on the Internet and may be obtained through a service such as RealAudio. Some audiovisual departments and learning resource centers have recorded performances that may guide your efforts.

As you work with these scripts, make recordings and listen critically to the results. *If you aren't truly outstanding at doing a particular voice, abandon it in favor of others you can do with authority.*

### The Pitch "Artist"

The commercial that follows is an example of a type of commercial that is, fortunately, rarely heard. Nevertheless, it will afford you an opportunity to see if you can perform it in 60 seconds without slurring or stumbling. The commercial contains 221 words.

---

AGENCY: Client's Copy

CLIENT: Compesi's Meat Locker

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: How would you like to save dollars, while serving your family the best in beef, pork, chicken, and lamb? Sounds impossible? Well, it isn't, if you own a home freezer and buy your meats wholesale at Compesi's Meat Locker. Hundreds of families have discovered that it

actually costs less to serve prime rib, steaks, and chops than it does to scrimp along on bargain hamburger and tough cuts. The secret? Buy your meat in quantity from Compesi's. Imagine—one hundred pounds of prime beef steaks and roasts for less than \$3.00 a pound! Save even more by purchasing a quarter or a side. With every side of beef, Compesi's throws in twenty pounds of chicken, ten pounds of bacon, and a leg of spring lamb—absolutely free! If you don't own a freezer, Compesi's will get you started in style. Buy any of their 300-pound freezers, and Compesi's will give you a freezer full of frozen food free! Meat, vegetables, even frozen gourmet casseroles, all free with the purchase of a new freezer. Prices for freezers start at \$299, and terms can be arranged. Beat the high cost of living! Come into Compesi's and see which plan is best for your family. Compesi's has two locations—in the Lakeport Shopping Center, and downtown at 1338 Fifth Street.

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## Low-Pitched Voice

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IN-HOUSE: Channel 7  
 TITLE: 3:30 Movie, Creepy Creature Tease

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### AUDIO EFFECTS

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### COPY

(MUSIC: "THE DAY TIME ENDED")

Hello. Afraid of those creepy things that go bump in the night?

(STING ON "NIGHT"<sup>7</sup>)

Well, I wouldn't watch Channel 7's "3:30 Movie," because we've got a whole week of creepy creatures.

(SFX: LOUD FROG)

Monday, it's Ray Milland and his giant (SFX) "Frogs." (SLIGHT PAUSE) Tuesday, Hank Fonda is all wrapped up in "Tentacles."

(SFX: MALE SCREAM)

(SFX)

(SFX: ELEPHANT TRUMPET, BACKWARD)

Wednesday, it's back to those old days, with prehistoric creatures in "The People Time Forgot." Thursday, little gnomes (GUH-NOMES) are after a luscious young wife in "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark."

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<sup>7</sup>A **sting** (short for *stinger*) is a sharp musical chord used to highlight a transition or draw attention.

Finally, Friday—if you haven't had enough—it's a submarine full of snakes in "Fer-de-Lance." Creepy Creatures starts Monday on Channel 7's "3:30 Movie."

(SFX: WOLF HOWL)

## High-Pitched Voice

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AGENCY: Annette Lai Creative Services

CLIENT: Allison's Pet Center

LENGTH: 60 seconds

MUSIC: INSTRUMENTAL VERSION OF "RUDOLPH, THE RED-NOSED REINDEER" UP AND UNDER TO CLOSE

ANNCR: (HIGH-PITCHED AND ELFLIKE) Hi! I'm Herman, one of Santa's helpers. Rudolph would have been here, too, but he's getting the light bulb in his nose replaced right now. We're inviting you to Allison's Pet Center for their annual and spectacular Christmas sale! Every year, kids send letters to Santa asking for puppies and kittens, monkeys and mice—and, to top it off, some ask for aquariums, too! Can you imagine what the back of Santa's sleigh looks like? Come on, give Santa a break! I don't want to baby-sit all those animals and fishes until Christmas Eve—I want to go back to building dollhouses! Come to Allison's, and save on household pets and presents for your pets. Get a head start on your Christmas shopping. The sale starts on

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Saturday and runs through Christmas Eve. Allison's is located at the corner of Fulton and North Streets, in Petaluma. And, a Meow-y Christmas and a Happy New Year from Allison's Pet Center!

### **British Accent (Oxford)**

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AGENCY: Ammirati & Puris, Inc.

CLIENT: Schweppes-Mixers

LENGTH: 60 seconds

SFX: WINTER SOUNDS (RAIN, SLUSH, ETC.)

BRITISH VO: Leave it to American ingenuity to take a rather bleak time of year and transform it into a season full of quaint but cheerful holiday traditions.

SFX: HOLIDAY MUSIC

And leave it to British ingenuity to impart a rare sparkle to these festivities—Schweppes.

For example, when feasting until immobilized on an oversized bird, Schweppes Club Soda, bursting with Schweppervescence, makes a lively dinner companion. Your ritual of cramming as many people as possible into a department store elevator, meanwhile, inspires a thirst only Schweppes Ginger Ale with real Jamaican ginger can quench. And while transfixed to the telly watching a group of massive, helmeted chaps smash into one another, what could be more civilized than

Schweppes Tonic Water with essence of lime and Seville oranges? And while many of your holiday traditions seem quite curious to us, we certainly toast their spirit. And suggest you do the same, with the purchase of Schweppes. The Great British Bubbly.

### **British Accent (Cockney)**

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AGENCY: Ammirati & Puris, Inc.

CLIENT: Schweppes Ginger Ale

LENGTH: 60 seconds

MUSIC: GUITAR MUSIC AND TUNING UP UNDER VOICE

COCKNEY: Years ago, if a fellow gargled with floor sweepings, he'd be called crazy. But today, it's just one of the things we've got to do to be heavy metal stars here in England. In fact, we scream our flippin' lungs out. Makes us awfully parched and thirsty. Which is why me and the boys, the Sleeze-Hunks, keep a lot of Schweppes Ginger Ale on stage. You see, for all our obscene wealth, there's still nothing like Schweppes Ginger Ale's cheeky little bubbles and thirst-  
quenching Schweppervescence to make sure our voices don't crack and the windows do. (LAUGH) Here, take this little ditty we whipped up, for instance:  
(MUSIC, HE SINGS)

"Coat-check woman—You make me sore! When I got back, I found my coat on the floor!" See what I mean? Totally taxing to the old vocal cords. Not to mention thirst-building. So it's no wonder this Schweppes Ginger Ale, made with real Jamaican ginger, is so popular with us Brits. I like it so much, I had my hair dyed that lovely green on the label. (LAUGH)

ANNCR: Schweppes Ginger Ale. The great British bubbly.

## Transylvanian Accent

AGENCY: Scott Singer

CLIENT: Partytime Novelties

LENGTH: 30 seconds

ANNCR: (SCARY MUSIC) (BELA LUGOSI IMITATION) Good evening. You are probably expecting me to say that my name is Count Dracula, and that I am a vampire. Do you know what makes a vampire? Do you really? It's not the hair—bah! greasy kid's stuff! It's not the cape, made from your sister's satin bed sheets. No! It is the fangs that make the vampire. Now, you too can have the fangs. Dress up for parties—frighten the trick-or-treaters on Halloween. These plastic marvels fit over your regular teeth, but once there—you'll be the hit of the party. Amaze and delight your ghoul friend. It is so much fun! I know. So, send for your fangs today.

Send \$2.98 to "FANG," Box 1001, Central City, Tennessee. Or dial toll-free: 800-DRA-CULA. Order before midnight tonight. That's an order!

## Spanish Pronunciation

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AGENCY: Miller and Stein, Advertising

CLIENT: Su Casa

LENGTH: 60 seconds

MUSIC: MEXICAN HARP, UPBEAT TEMPO, IN AND UNDER TO CLOSE

ANNCR: Ole, Amigos! (OH-LAY' AH-MEE'-GOS) Su Casa (SOO-KAH'-SAH) means "your home," and that's what Ramona wants you to feel when you visit her at San Antonio's most elegant Mexican restaurant, Su Casa. Ramona features the most popular dishes from Mexico, including enchiladas verde or rancheros (EN-CHIL-AH'-DAS VEHR'-DAY or RAHN-CHER'-OHS), chile con queso (CHEE'-LAY KAHN KAY'-SO), and chimichangos (CHEE'-MEE-CHANG'-GOS). But, Ramona also has special family recipes that you won't find anywhere else. Try Pescado en Concha (PES-KAH'-DO EN COHN'-CHAH), chunks of sole in a rich cream and cheddar cheese sauce, served in scallop shells. Or Scallops La Jolla (LAH-HOY'-UH), prepared with wine, lemon juice, and three kinds of cheeses. Or Baked Swordfish Manzanillo (MAHN-ZAH-NEE'-OH). See Ramona today, where *her* home is *your* home. Su Casa!

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## German Accent

The two award-winning commercials that follow feature Dieter (DEET'-ER), a German imported car salesman. These commercials were improvised, so the scripts were actually typed after the fact.<sup>8</sup>

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AGENCY: Young & Rubicam

CLIENT: Lincoln-Mercury Dealers

LENGTH: 60 seconds

TITLE: "Dieter 5"

DIETER: Pull over and help me, please, my car is . . .

WEAVER: Hi, Dieter.

DIETER: Hello, Mr. Weaver.

WEAVER: Having a little trouble with that fine European sedan, huh?

DIETER: Having a little lunch.

WEAVER: Yeah, the hood's up.

DIETER: Heating my bratwurst on the engine block.

WEAVER: It must be done; it's smoking.

DIETER: It's smoked bratwurst.

WEAVER: Hmm, some kind of hot purple liquid's dripping out of there.

DIETER: Smoked fruit punch.

WEAVER: Uh huh, you know I haven't had any trouble since I traded in that car you sold me for this Mercury Cougar, Dieter.

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<sup>8</sup>The two Lincoln-Mercury commercials presented here were supplied by their creator, Gene Chaput of Young & Rubicam.

DIETER: Mercury Cougar, its a very fine car.

WEAVER: Oh, it's a lovely car, Dieter.

DIETER: Could you give me a ride in the Mercury Cougar to the mechanical?

WEAVER: Oh, I want to give you more than a ride, Dieter. I want to give you a push.

DIETER: I don't want a push.

WEAVER: Get in the car, Dieter.

DIETER: My car is moving.

WEAVER: Turn the flashers on. I want people to see this.

DIETER: Let me get in there.

WEAVER: Clear the way.

DIETER: (LOUDLY, OUT THE CAR WINDOW) He's not pushing me; I'm pulling him!

ANNCR: The Mercury Cougar. Compare the performance with luxury European imports. Compare the styling with the luxury European imports. Even before you compare the price.

WEAVER: Okay, Dieter, you're on your own.

DIETER: Wait, this isn't a service station; it's a Lincoln-Mercury dealership.

WEAVER: Think about it, Dieter.

ANNCR: The Mercury Cougar. See your Lincoln-Mercury dealer today, at the sign of the cat.

AGENCY: Young & Rubicam

CLIENT: Lincoln-Mercury Dealers

LENGTH: 30 seconds

TITLE: "Dieter/Law"

DIETER: Mr. Weaver. I have something for you.

WEAVER: What is this, Dieter, a flyer? Are you having a sale?

DIETER: It's a subpoena. I'm suing you.

WEAVER: Suing me? For what?

DIETER: I'm no longer just Dieter Eidotter, car salesman.  
You're dealing with Dieter Eidotter, third week law student.

WEAVER: What is this? "Defamation of car?"

DIETER: You told people that the Mercury Cougar was better looking than the car I sell.

WEAVER: It's a fact.

DIETER: It's an opinion.

WEAVER: "Alienation of affection?"

DIETER: Well, the people who found out that the Mercury Cougar costs one-half as much as the car I sell don't come into the showroom anymore.

WEAVER: You're blowing more smoke than one of those diesels you sell.

DIETER: Oh, now you're into the murky legal area of libel, and slander, and torts.

WEAVER: What's a tort?

DIETER: Well, right now, it's a chocolate cake. But when I find out what it is . . .

WEAVER: You're not even a real lawyer. I don't have to put up with this. Here is what I think of this thing, right back at you!

DIETER: This could be second-degree littering, Mister.

ANNCR: The Mercury advantage. Compared to the imports, Mercury gives you more style, more features, more for your money. See your Lincoln-Mercury dealer.

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## Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

The first sets of PSA campaigns for the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse, the Environmental Defense Fund, and Second Harvest were created by advertising agencies as *pro bono* contributions. These and many other PSA campaigns are coordinated, produced, and distributed by the Advertising Council, a private, nonprofit organization of volunteers. Since 1942, the Ad Council has been the leading producer of public service advertising in the United States. In 1996, it generated more than \$700 million worth of free advertising time.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN

For: National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse

:30 LIVE RADIO COPY - "Before It Starts"

For years, child abuse has been a problem to which there were few answers. But now, there's an innovative new program that can help stop the abuse before it

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starts. A program that reaches new parents early on, teaching them to cope with the stresses that lead to abuse. It's already achieving unprecedented results. To learn how you can help where you live, call 1-800-CHILDREN. Because the more you help, the less they hurt. Call 1-800-CHILDREN today. A public service message from the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse and the Ad Council.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

:20 LIVE RADIO COPY - "Before It Starts"

Now there's a new program that helps stop child abuse before it starts. It's already working in many parts of the country. To learn how this program can help in your community, call 1-800-CHILDREN. Because the more you help, the less they hurt. A public service message from the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse and the Ad Council.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION CAMPAIGN  
"Testimony" :30

MUSIC UNDER ENTIRE SPOT

WOMAN: I first met Jane right after Jonah was born.

ANNCR: Now there's a revolutionary new approach to stopping child abuse before it can start.

- WOMAN: She said it was normal for new mothers to get frustrated. She taught me when to take a minute for myself.
- ANNCR: By reaching new families early on, this program teaches them how to cope with the stresses that lead to abuse. But we need your help where you live. Call 1-800-CHILDREN. 1-800-CHILDREN.
- A public service message from the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse and the Ad Council.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

BUY RECYCLED CAMPAIGN-for the Environmental Defense Fund<sup>9</sup>

"Circle" :60

- ANNCR: Hi, I'm Joanne Woodward. Ever notice how many things in life happen in a circle? The seasons. Revolving credit. Hula hoops. The spinning of the circle we call earth. And recycling. Together, we've already made a difference. Sorting-glass, plastic. Separating cans. Stacking newspapers. Now, there are lots of products made from things we've already recycled. A paperclip? In a more daring life, a '56 convertible. A cereal box? Once your Sunday paper. It all goes back to the

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<sup>9</sup>As indicated, the first two spots were voiced by actress Joanne Woodward. When performing these PSAs, you may, of course, substitute your own name. Ms. Woodward is one of many performers who contribute time and talent to causes they support.

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circle. It starts when we recycle trash at home and at work. It's completed when we buy products made from recycled materials. How do you know the difference? Check the label for something called Post-Consumer Recycled Content. Then buy the highest percentage of it you can find. You'll save a tree, you'll save energy, and in your own way, you'll help save the world. Complete the circle.

ANNCR: For your free BUY RECYCLED SHOPPING GUIDE call 1-800-CALL-EDF. Brought to you by the Ad Council and EDF, the Environmental Defense Fund.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

"Circle" :30

ANNCR: Hi, I'm Joanne Woodward. Ever notice how many things in life happen in a circle? The seasons, the spinning of the circle we call earth, and recycling. The circle starts when we recycle trash. It's completed when we buy products made from recycled materials. Check the label for something called Post-Consumer Recycled Content. Then buy the highest percentage of it. Complete the circle.

ANNCR: For your free BUY RECYCLED SHOPPING GUIDE call 1-800-CALL-EDF. Brought to you by the Ad Council and EDF, the Environmental Defense Fund.

The Advertising Council, Inc.

SECOND HARVEST CAMPAIGN

RADIO - AS RECORDED TEXT - "Birds" :60<sup>10</sup>

SFX: MUSIC UP & CONTINUES UNDER SPOT

SHELLY WRIGHT: Hi, this is Shelly Wright. A while back, while I was on the road, I saw a man, and his son, throwing bread crumbs to a little flock of birds. It wasn't unusual, but it stuck in my mind. I remembered all the times in my life I've fed the birds or set out some food for a stray dog or cat. And I realized then, that this man, and his son, were showing a very common, yet beautiful, human instinct: the natural instinct to feed the hungry. It's something that's inside every one of us. Well, for every bird out there, there's also a hungry child. There are 30-million hungry people in America, 12 million are children. For them, I ask you to follow your instincts. Just call Second Harvest, America's Food Bank Network, at 1-800-532-FOOD. Second Harvest has many ways for you to help that are as easy as feeding the birds in the park. Just call: 1-800-532-FOOD. Second Harvest. Together, we're hunger's hope.

ANNCR: A public service from the Ad Council.

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<sup>10</sup>These PSAs for Second Harvest were created by the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency and packaged and distributed by the Advertising Council. When practicing with this copy you may, of course, substitute your name for that of Shelly Wright.

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The Advertising Council, Inc.

SECOND HARVEST

RADIO-AS RECORDED TEXT- "HUNGER HAS A CURE" :30

SFX: CHILDREN LAUGHING UP & UNDER

ANNCR #1: Right now children are suffering from a disease that's decreasing their ability to learn, and slowly breaking down their immune systems. A disease that's affecting over 12 million children. A disease . . . that's totally curable. It's called hunger.

SFX: MUSIC UP & UNDER TO END

ANNCR #1: Second Harvest is America's Food Bank Network, bringing hunger relief to your community. Making sure, that hunger has a cure.

ANNCR #2: A public service message brought to you by Second Harvest and the Ad Council.

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CLIENT: Amigos de las Americas

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Are you a teenager, sixteen years or older? Are you looking for the adventure of a lifetime? Why not check out Amigos de las Americas? Amigos is a nonprofit organization, with chapters in cities all over America. Amigos spend the school year studying Spanish and paramedic work, and spend the summer working in a Latin American country. What do Amigos do? Well, last

year Amigos administered over 230,000 dental treatments to 60,000 children. They gave over 90,000 immunizations for polio and other diseases. And, they tested over 22,000 people for tuberculosis. Amigos work in rural areas and big city slums. They are not on vacation. Assignments in Panama, Ecuador, Paraguay, and the Dominican Republic, among others, call for dedicated, caring young people. If you think Amigos is for you, write for information. The address is: 5618 Star Lane, Houston, Texas, 77057. Or, use the toll-free number: 1-800-231-7796. Amigos!

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## Television Commercials

Only a handful of television scripts are provided here. Nearly all television commercials, whether produced by large advertising agencies or small-market stations, require special effects, animation, or elaborate sets, not generally available to students. Computerized digital effects equipment manipulates visual images in a number of dazzling ways, and announcers, aside from those in dramatized sketches, are most often limited to voice-over delivery. In many commercials, an announcer may appear on-screen briefly at the outset and then perform as an unseen voice-over narrator for the remainder. To practice television commercial delivery, you may want to adapt some of the radio commercial scripts for direct, on-camera presentation.

AGENCY: Ketchum Advertising  
 CLIENT: Safeway Stores, Inc.  
 LENGTH: 30 seconds

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 VIDEO
 

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OPEN ON SAFEWAY LOGO. MOVE IN  
 UNTIL ENTIRE SCREEN IS RED.  
 DISS TO WHEEL OF WISCONSIN CHEDDAR  
 WITH CRACKERS ON TOP AND PIECE OF  
 BUNTING ON SIDE.<sup>11</sup>  
 DISS TO LARGE SLICE OF DUTCH GOUDA  
 WITH DUTCH FLAG.  
 DISS TO SLICES OF HAVARTI AND  
 CRACKERS WITH HAVARTI ON THEM.  
 DANISH FLAG IS STUCK IN ONE SLICE  
 OF CHEESE.  
 DISS TO SLICE OF JARLSBERG ON  
 CUTTING BOARD, WHEEL OF JARLSBERG  
 IS IN BACKGROUND. WOMAN'S HAND  
 PLACES NORWEGIAN FLAG ON SLICE OF  
 JARLSBERG.  
 DISS TO SQUARE OF SWISS CHEESE  
 WITH SWISS FLAG. SMALL PIECES OF  
 CHEESE ARE ON CUTTING BOARD.

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 AUDIO
 

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SFX: MUSIC UNDER.  
 MALE VO: Safeway's international  
 cheese experts invite your taste  
 buds  
 and your taste budget to enjoy some  
 of the world's finest cheeses. So we  
 feature them at low Safeway prices.  
 A deliciously economical world  
 taste tour that you can enjoy now.  
 Quality world cheeses, low Safeway  
 prices. No passport required: just  
 an appetite.

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<sup>11</sup>DISS is an abbreviation for *dissolve*; "dissolve to" means to replace one picture with another.

WOMAN'S HAND LIFTS PIECE OF  
CHEESE.

DISS TO CU MAN BEING FED SWISS

CHEESE BY WOMAN'S HAND.

DISS TO SAFEWAY LOGO.

SFX: MUSIC ENDS.

Man: Mmmmmmm.

LOGO: Safeway. Everything you want  
from a store and a little bit  
more.

AGENCY: Backer & Spielvogel, Inc.

CLIENT: Quaker

PRODUCT: Celeste Pizza

LENGTH: 30 seconds

SUPER: Giuseppe Celeste

Fictitious Little Brother

GIUSEPPE: I need your help. My big sister, Mama Celeste, she  
make a great crust for her pizza. But was Giuseppe's  
idea. I say, "Mama, you make perfect sauce, perfect  
toppings, make a perfect crust." She do it. But I  
think it. So my picture should be on the box, too, no?  
Which you like? (HOLDS UP PICTURES) Happy—"Hey, I  
think of great crust!"? Or serious—"Yes, I think of  
great crust"? Or it could be bigger? (HOLDS UP HUGE  
PICTURE)

ANNCR VO: Celeste Pizza. Delicious crust makes it great from top  
to bottom.

CLIENT: Herald Sewing Machines

TITLE: Preholiday Sale

LENGTH: 60 seconds

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VIDEO

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OPEN ON SHOT OF ANNCR SEATED  
BEHIND SEWING MACHINE CONSOLE.  
ZOOM IN ON MACHINE, AND FOLLOW  
SEQUENCE OF SHOTS INDICATED BY  
ANNCR.  
ANNCR DEMONSTRATES THE REGULATOR  
DIAL.

ANNCR DEMONSTRATES.

ZOOM BACK TO MEDIUM SHOT OF ANNCR  
AND MACHINE.

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AUDIO

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ANNCR: This is the famous Herald  
sewing machine.

Notice the free arm, perfectly  
designed to allow you to sew  
sleeves, cuffs, and hems. Note,  
too, the stitch regulator dial.  
You move easily and instantly to  
stretch stitch, embroider, or  
zigzag stitches.

The Herald has a drop feed for  
darning, appliquéing, and  
monogramming.

This advanced machine has a self-  
stop bobbin winder. Other standard  
features include a built-in light,  
a thread tension dial, and a snap-  
on extension dial for flat bed  
sewing.

Yes, there isn't a better or more  
versatile sewing machine available  
today.

ANNCR STANDS, AND WALKS AROUND  
MACHINE AND TOWARD CAMERA.

ANNCR HOLDS UP SALE SIGN, WITH  
\$349 CROSSED OUT AND \$299 WRITTEN  
IN.

But, I've saved the best for last. The Herald Star model sewing machine is now on sale at dealers everywhere. The Star, the most advanced model Herald makes, is regularly priced at three hundred and forty-nine dollars.

During this month, you can buy the Star for only two hundred ninety-nine dollars—a saving of fifty dollars. You can't beat a deal like this, so visit your Herald dealer soon, while you still have your choice of color. Check the yellow pages for the dealers in your area.

AGENCY: In-house

CLIENT: Madera Foods

LENGTH: 60 seconds

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VIDEO

OPEN ON ANNCR STANDING BEFORE  
CHECKOUT STAND.

CUT TO PRODUCE SECTION. ANNCR  
WALKS INTO FRAME.

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AUDIO

ANNCR: I'm here at Madera Foods,  
checking up on the specials you'll  
find here this weekend.

There are excellent buys this  
weekend in fresh fruits and

ANNCR PICKS UP A GRAPEFRUIT.      vegetables. Like extra fancy Indian River ruby red grapefruit, three for ninety-nine cents. Or

ANNCR POINTS TO LETTUCE.      iceberg lettuce, two heads for seventy-nine cents. And, don't overlook the relishes—green onions or radishes, two bunches for twenty-nine cents.

CUT TO MEAT DEPARTMENT, ANNCR WALKS INTO FRAME.      Meat specials include rib roast at two sixty-nine a pound, all lean center cut pork chops at two seventy-nine a pound, and lean ground chuck at only one thirty-nine a pound.

CUT BACK TO CHECKOUT STAND.      And, here I am, back at the checkout stand. Here's where you'll really come to appreciate Madera Foods. Their low, low prices add up to a total bill that winds down the cost of living. So, pay a visit to Madera Foods this weekend. Specials are offered from Friday opening to closing on Sunday night. Madera Foods is located in the Madera Plaza Shopping Center. Hours are from

CUT TO ANNCR OUTSIDE FRONT ENTRANCE.

9:00 A.M. 'till 10:00 P.M., seven  
days a week.

DISS TO MADERA FOODS LOGO SLIDE.

See you at Madera Foods.

HOLD UNTIL CLOSE.

AGENCY: Sherman Associates, Inc.

CLIENT: Bayview Health Club

LENGTH: 60 seconds

VIDEO

AUDIO

OPEN ON MCU OF TALENT.

Get ready! Swimsuit season is almost here! Now is the time to shed those excess pounds and achieve the body you know is hidden somewhere within you.

ZOOM OUT TO MEDIUM SHOT.

The Bayview Health Club will help you find the possible you. Bayview is a complete fitness club. We offer day and evening classes in weight training, aerobic and jazzercise dance, full Nautilus equipment, tanning, Jacuzzi and sauna facilities.

CUT TO STILL PHOTOS OF EACH  
FEATURE AS IT IS MENTIONED.

CUT TO MCU OF TALENT.

In addition, we sponsor weight reduction clinics, jogging and running programs, and health and beauty seminars, with a supportive staff to coach you in every facet

CUT TO MCU OF TALENT.

of personal health care. Bayview is tailored for you—the modern man or woman—and, for this month only, we're offering new members an introductory price to join: Just half price! That's right, a 50 percent reduction during the month of April.

CUT TO MCU OF TALENT.

So, call now for a tour of our facilities. Meet the staff, and chat with satisfied members.

Bayview Health Club, in downtown Portland. Join now. Don't lose time—instead, lose that waist, with a 50 percent reduction in membership costs.

MATTE IN ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER.

Find the hidden you, and be ready for the beach! Bayview Health Club: we're ready when you are!



# Appendix B

## Pronunciation Guide

This appendix consists of about 300 words, selected for one or more of these reasons: (1) The word is often mispronounced. (2) The word is unusual or new but might well appear in broadcast copy. (3) The word is of foreign origin but is widely used in the English-speaking world and may appear in commercial copy for fabrics, foods, or fashions.

The pronunciations given are those used in Standard American. All words are transcribed into the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), diacritics, and wire-service phonetics. The source of diacritical transcriptions is *The American Heritage Dictionary*.<sup>1</sup>

Because this is a pronunciation guide, definitions are given only where necessary. You should note that brief definitions given for words such as *gestalt* and *nihilism* are inadequate to explain these concepts fully. This appendix is not a substitute for a good dictionary.

It should be noted that many common words are omitted from this appendix because either of two common ways of pronouncing them is correct. In this category are words such as *economic*, *program*, and *pianist*.

**accessory** [æk'sesəri] (äk-sēs'-ə-rē) [AK-SESS'-UH-REE]

Something supplementary; one who incites.

**accompanist** [ə'kæmpənɪst] (ə-kūm'pə-nīst) (UH-KUM'-PUH-NIHST)

**aegis** ['idʒɪs] (ē'jīs) (EE'-JIHS)

Protection; sponsorship; patronage.

**almond** ['ɑmənd] (ä'mənd) (AH'-MUND)

*Note:* The *l* is not sounded, and the first syllable is like the *a* in *father*.

**amateur** ['æmə,tʌr] (äm'ə-tūr) (AM'-UH-TOOR)

An athlete or artist who participates without pay.

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<sup>1</sup>*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3d ed.

- amoral** [e'mərəl] (āmôr'əl) (AY-MOR'-UL)  
Not admitting of moral distinctions or judgments; neither moral nor immoral.
- a priori** [ɑpri'ɔr,i] (ä prē-ôr'eē) (AH PREE-OR'EE)  
Made before or without examination; deductive; not based on an experiment or experience.
- apropos** [,æprə'pɒ] (äp'rə-pō') (AA-PRUH-PO')  
Appropriate
- archetype** ['ɑrkɪ,tʌɪp] (är'kī-tīp) (AR'KIH-TYPE)  
An original model or type after which other similar things are patterned; a prototype.
- arctic** ['ɑrk,tɪk] (ärk'tīk) (ARK'-TICK)  
*Note:* Both c's must be sounded; the same is true for *Antarctic*.
- argot** ['ɑrgɒ] (är'gō) (AR'-GO)  
A specialized vocabulary or set of idioms used by a particular class or group.
- art deco** [ɑr de'ko] (är dā-kō') (AR DAY-KO')  
A high decorative style of artistic design that was popular between the two world wars.
- assuage** [ə'swɛdʒ] (ə-swāj') (UH-SWAYJ')  
To make less burdensome or less severe.
- au gratin** [o 'grɑtn] (ō grät'n) (OH GRAHT'-UN)  
Covered with bread crumbs or cheese and browned in an oven.
- basalt** [bæ'sɔlt] (bæ-sôlt') (BUH-SALT')  
A hard, dense, volcanic rock.
- baud** [bɔd] (bôd) (BAWD)  
A unit of speed in data processing, equal to one binary digit per second.
- bestial** ['bestʃəl] (bēs'chəl) (BESS'-CHUL)  
Behaving in the manner of a brute; savage.
- Bethesda** [bə'θɛzdə] (bə-thēz'də) (BUH-THEZ'-DUH)  
An urban center in Maryland; the name of a famous government hospital.
- bijou** ['biʒu] (bē'zhō) (BEE'-ZHOO)  
A small, exquisitely wrought trinket; the name of many American movie houses.
- bivouac** ['bɪvʊ,æk] (bīv'-ōō-āk) (BIHV'-OO-ACK)  
A temporary encampment made by soldiers in the field.
- blasé** [blɑ'ze] (blā-zā') (BLAH-ZAY')  
Having no more capacity or appetite for enjoyment.
- B'nai B'rith** ['bne 'brɪθ] (bnā'brīth') (BNAY'-BRITH')  
A Jewish international fraternal society, perhaps best known for its sponsorship of the Anti-Defamation League.
- boatswain** ['bosən] (bō'sən) (BO'-SUN)  
A warrant officer or petty officer in charge of a ship's deck crew.

- bouclé** [bu'kle] (bōō-klā') (BOO-KLAY')  
A type of yarn or a fabric knitted from this yarn.
- bouquet** [bo'ke] (bō-kā') (BO-KAY')
- bourgeois** [bor'ʒwɑ] (bōōr-zhwä') (BOOR-ZHWAH')  
One belonging to the middle class.
- boutique** [bu'tik] (bōō-tēk') (BOO-TEEK')  
A small retail shop that specializes in gifts, fashionable clothes, or accessories.
- brooch** [brɒtʃ] (brōch) (BROTCH)
- buoy** ['bu,i] (bōō-ē) (BOO'-EE)
- cache** [kæʃ] (kāsh) (KASH)  
A place for concealment and safekeeping, as of valuables; a store of goods hidden in a cache.
- caisson** ['kesən] (kā'sōn') (KAY'-SAHN)  
A watertight structure within which construction work is carried on; a large box used to hold ammunition.
- calm** [kam] (käm) (KAHM)  
The *l* is not sounded.
- camembert** ['kæməm,bɛr] (kām'əm-bâr) (KAM'-UM-BEAR)  
A creamy, mold-ripened French cheese.
- canapé** ['kænəpɛ] (kän'ə-pā) (KAN'-UH-PAY)  
An appetizer. *Note:* In broadcast copy, there is likely to be no acute accent mark over the *e*.
- caramel** ['kærəməl] (kär'ə-məl) (KARE'-UH-MUHL)
- carcinogen** [kɑr'sɪnədʒən] (kär-sī'n'ə-jən) (KAR-SIN'-UH-JUN)  
A cancer-causing substance
- Cassiopeia** [kæsiə'piə] (käs'-ē-ə-pē'ə) (KASS-EE-UH-PEE'-UH)  
A constellation visible in the Northern Hemisphere.
- cataclysm** ['kætə,kli:zəm] (kät'ə-klīz'əm) (KAT'-UH-KLIZ-UM)  
A violent upheaval.
- catarrh** [kə'tɑr] (kə-tär') (KUH-TAHR')  
Inflammation of mucous membranes, especially of the nose and throat.
- caulk** [kɔk] (kōk) (KAWK)
- chaise longue** [ʃe:z'lɔŋ] (shāz lōng') (SHAYZ LONG')
- chamois** ['ʃæmi] (shām'ē) (SHAM'-EE)
- chartreuse** [ʃɑr'tru:z] (shār-trōōz') (SHAHR-TROOZ')  
A liqueur; a greenish yellow color
- Charybdis** [kə'rɪb,dɪs] (kə-rīb'dīs) (KUH-RIB'-DISS)  
A whirlpool off the Sicilian coast, opposite the rock of Scylla. (To be "between Scylla and Charybdis" implies that one is between two serious dangers.)
- Chianti** [ki'anti] (kē-än'tē) (KEE-AHN'-TEE)  
A dry, red Italian wine.

- chiaroscuro** [ki,ar-ə'skuro] (kē-är'ə-skōōr'o) (KEE-AR-UH-SKUR'-O)  
The arrangement of light and dark elements in a pictorial work of art.
- chic** [ʃik] (shĕk) (SHEEK)
- chiropodist** [ki'rɒpədɪst] (kī-röp'ə-dīst) (KIH-RAHP'-UH-DIST)
- ciao** [tʃau] (chou) (CHOW)  
An Italian greeting, meaning both hello and goodbye.
- Cinzano** [tʃɪn'zano] (chīn-zän'-ō) (CHIN-ZAHN'-O)  
An Italian liqueur.
- circa** ['sɜ:kə] (sūr'kə) (SUR-KUH)  
About; used before approximate dates or figures.
- claque** [klæk] (klāk) (KLACK)  
A group of persons hired to applaud at a performance; any group of adulating or fawning admirers.
- cliché** [klɪʃe] (klē-shā') (KLEE-SHAY')  
*Note:* In broadcast copy, this word may appear without the accent mark.
- cloche** [klɒʃ] (klōsh) (KLOSH)  
A close-fitting woman's hat.
- cognac** ['kɒnjæk] (kōn'yāk) (KOHN'-YAK)  
A French brandy.
- coiffure** [kwə'fjʊr] (kwä-fyōōr') (KWAH-FYUR')
- colloquial** [kə'lɒkwɪəl] (kə-lō'kwē-əl) (KUH-LO'-KWEE-UHL)
- coma** ['kɒmə] (kō'mə) (KŌ'-MUH)
- comatose** ['kɒmə,tɒs] (kō'mə-tōs') (KŌ'-MUH-TOESS)
- comparable** ['kɒmpərəbəl] (kɒm'pər-ə-bəl) (KAHM'-PUHR-UH-BUL)
- comptroller** [kɒn'trɒlə] (kən-trō'lər) (KUN-TRO'LER)  
An officer who audits accounts and supervises the financial affairs of a corporation or governmental body. *Note:* the *p* is not sounded, and the *m* has the *n* sound.
- conch** [kɒŋk] (kāŋk) (KAHNK)  
Any of various large marine mollusks.
- concierge** [kɒnsi'erʒ] (kōn-syārzh') (KAHN-SEE-ERZH')  
A person who attends the entrance of a building.
- conglomerate** (v.) [kɒn'glɒmə,ret] (kən-glōm'ə-rāt') (KUN-GLAHM'-UH-RAYT) To collect into an adhering or rounded mass. (n.) [kɒn'glɒməɪt] (kən-glōm'ər-īt) (KUN-GLAHM'-UH-RIHT) A collected heterogeneous mass; a cluster. *Note:* The noun frequently is used to denote a large corporation made up of several different types of businesses.
- conjugal** ['kɒndʒəgəl] (kōn'jə-gəl) (KAHN'-JUH-GUL)  
Of marriage or the married relationship.
- consortium** [kɒn'sɔrtɪm] (kən-sōr'tē-əm) (KUHN-SOR'-TEE-UM)  
Any association or partnership.
- corps** [kɔr] (kōr) (KAWR)

- cortège** [kɔr'tɛʒ] (kôr-tězh') (KAWR-TEHZH')  
A train of attendants; usually refers to a funeral procession.
- coup** [ku] (koo) (KOO)
- coxswain** ['kɒksn] (kôk'sən) (KAHK'-SUN)
- crepe** [krɛp] (krăp) (KRAYP)  
A light, soft, thin fabric; also a type of crinkled tissue paper.
- crêpe** [krɛp] (krĕp) (KREP)  
*Note:* In its French usages—crêpe de Chine is a type of cloth, and a crêpe is a thin pancake—this word is pronounced as indicated. This word will probably not have the circumflex over the *e* in broadcast copy, so you must remember to use the French pronunciation when the context so indicates.
- crescendo** [krə'ʃɛndo] (krə-shĕn'dō) (KRUH-SHEHN'-DOH)
- crevasse** [krɪ'væs] (krĭ-vās') (KRIH-VASS')  
A deep fissure, as in a glacier.
- crevice** ['krɛvɪs] (krĕv'īs) (KREHV'-ISS)
- crinoline** ['krɪn'əlɪn] (krĭn'ə-lĭn) (KRIN'-UH-LIHN)  
A coarse, stiff cotton fabric.
- cryogenics** [,kraɪo'dʒɛnɪks] (krĭ'-o-jĕn'iks) (KRY-OH-JEN'-IKS)  
The science of low-temperature phenomena.
- cuisine** [kwɪ'zɪn] (kwĭ-zĕn') (KWIH-ZEEN')  
A characteristic manner of preparing food.
- culotte** [ku'lɒt] (koo-lôt') (KOO-LOT')  
A divided skirt.
- cupola** ['kju:pələ] (kyoo'-pə-lə) (KYOO'-PUH-LUH)
- cybernetics** [ˌsaɪbər'netɪks] (sĭ'bər-nĕt'ĭks) (SY-BER-NET'-IKS)
- cynosure** ['saɪnə,ʃʊr] (sĭ'nə-shōōr') (SY'-NUH-SHOOR)  
A center of interest or attraction.
- dachshund** ['dɒks,hʊnt] (dăks'hōōnt') (DAHKS'-HUHNT)  
*Note:* The word ends with a *t* sound, and the vowel sound in the second syllable is as in *took*.
- Dacron** ['dekrɒn] (dă'krɒn) (DAY'-KRAHN)
- dais** ['deɪs] (dă'īs) (DAY'-ISS)  
A raised platform.
- demise** [di'maɪz] (dĭ-mĭz') (DIH-MYZ')  
Death
- demur** [di'mɜː] (dĭ-mŭr') (DIH-MUHR')  
To take exception.
- denier** [dɛn'je] (dĕn-yă') (DUN-YAY')  
A unit of fineness for rayon, nylon, and silk yarns. *Note:* This word is spelled the same as that which means "one who denies"; the context should make clear which of its meanings is intended.

- despot** ['dɛspət] (dĕs'pət) (DES'-PUHT)
- détente** [de'tant] (dā-tānt') (DAY-TAHNT')
- dialysis** [daɪ'æɪsɪs] (dī-āɪ'ī-sīs) (DY-AL'-IH-SIS)
- dichotomy** [daɪ'kʊtəmi] (dī-kōt'ə-mĕ) (DY-KAHT'-UH-MEE)  
Division into two (usually contradictory) parts or opinions.
- diminution** [dɪmə'nʊʃən] (dīm'ənōō'-shən) (DIM-UH-NOO'-SHUN)  
The act or process of diminishing.
- diocese** ['daɪəsɪs] (dī'ə-sīs) (DY'-UH-SIHS)
- diphtheria** [dɪf'θɪriə] (dīf-thīr'ē-ə) (DIFF-THIR'-EE-UH)  
*Note:* The *ph* is pronounced *f*.
- diphthong** ['dɪfəŋ] (dīf'thōng') (DIFF'-THONG)  
A combination of two vowel sounds; a glide.
- diva** ['dɪvə] (dĕ'və) (DEE'-VUH)  
An operatic prima donna, or leading singer.
- dossier** ['dasi,e] (dōs'ē-ā') (DAHS'-EE-AY)
- dour** [dʊr] (dōōr) (DUHR)  
*Note:* rhymes with *poor*) Silently ill-humored; gloomy.
- drought** [draʊt] (drout) (DRAWHT)  
*Note:* rhymes with *snout*)
- dysentery** ['dɪsɛntəri] (dīs'ən-tĕr'-ĕ) (DISS'-UN-TARE-EE)
- dyspepsia** [dɪs'pɛpʃə] (dīs-pĕp'-shə) (DISS-PEP'-SHUH)  
Indigestion.
- eczema** ['ɛksəmə] (ĕk'sə-mə) (EK'-SUH-MUH)  
An inflammation of the skin.
- Eire** ['ɛrə] (ār'ə) (AIR'-UH)  
The Gaelic name for the Republic of Ireland.
- emollient** [ɪ'mɒljənt] (ī-mōl'yənt) (IH-MAHL'-YUNT)  
An agent that softens or soothes the skin.
- Empire** [əm'pɪr] (ōm-pīr') (AHM-PEER')  
*Note:* Pronounced as indicated when referring to the dress or the artistic style of the First Empire of France, 1804–1815.
- encephalitis** [ɛn,sɛfə'laitɪs] (ĕn-sĕf'ə-lī'tīs) (EN-SEFF-UH-LY'-TISS)  
Inflammation of the brain.
- endocrine** [ɛndə'krɪn] (ĕn'də-kri'n) (EN'-DUH-KRIHN)  
Glandular; a gland.
- ennui** [ən'wi] (ōn-wĕ') (AHN-WEE)  
Listlessness and dissatisfaction resulting from lack of interest; boredom.
- en route** [ən'rut] (ōn rōōt') (AHN ROOT')
- ensemble** [ən'sambəl] (ōn-sōm'bəl) (AHN-SAHM'-BUHL)
- ensign** Two pronunciations:  
[ˈɛn,sain] (ĕn'sin) (EN'-SYN) A flag.  
[ˈɛnsən] (ĕn'sən) (EN'-SUN) A naval officer.

- entourage** [an'turaʒ] (ɔ̃n'tõ-rāzh') (AHN-TOO-RAZH')
- entrée** [ 'antre] (ɔ̃n'trā) (AHN'-TRAY)
- envoy** [ 'ɛnvɔɪ] (ɛ̃n'voi) (EN'-VOY)  
*Note:* Do not make the first syllable AHN, unless you are going to give the word its correct French pronunciation.
- Epiphany** [i'pɪfəni] (i-pɪf'ə-nē) (IH-PIFF'-UH-NEE)  
 A Christian festival held on January 6.
- epitaph** [ 'ɛpɪtæf] (ɛ̃p'i-tāf) (EP-IH-TAF)  
 An inscription on a tombstone; a tribute to a deceased person.
- epitome** [i'pɪtəmi] (i-pɪt'ə-mē) (IH-PIT'-UH-MEE)  
 One that is representative of an entire class or type; embodiment.
- era** [ 'ɪrə] (ɪr'ə) (IHR'-UH)
- err** [ɛ] (ûr) (ER)  
*Note:* Do not pronounce this as the word *air*.
- erudite** [ɛr'jʊdaɪt] (ɛr'yə-dīt) (E'-YU-DYT)  
 Deeply learned.
- euphemism** [ 'jufə,mɪzɪm] (yoo'fə-mɪz'əm) (YOU'-FUH-MIZ-UM)  
 A term substituted for one considered offensively explicit.
- exacerbate** [ɪg'zæsəbet] (ɪg-zās'ər-bāt) (IG-ZASS'-ER-BAYT)  
 To increase the severity of.
- exquisite** [ 'ɛk,sɪzɪt] (ɛk'skwɪ-zīt) (EK'-SKWIH-ZIT)  
*Note:* Do not place the stress on the second syllable.
- extraordinary** [ɪk'strɔrdɪnəri] (ɪk-strôr'-dn-ēr-ē) (IHK-STORR'-DIHN-AIR-EE)
- façade** [fə'sɑd] (fə-sād') (FUH-SAH'D')  
*Note:* In broadcast copy, the cedilla on the *c* is usually lacking.
- faux pas** [fo'pɑ] (fō pā') (FOH PAH')  
 A social blunder; a breach of etiquette.
- fiduciary** [fɪ'dʒʃɪəri] (fɪ-doo'shē-ēr'ē) (FIH-DOO'-SHE-AIR-EE)  
 Of, pertaining to, or involving one who holds something in trust for another.
- finite** [ 'faɪ,nɑɪt] (fɪ'nīt) (FY'-NYT)  
 Having boundaries; limited.
- foible** [ 'fɔɪbl] (foi'bəl) (FOY'BUL)  
 A minor weakness or failing of character.
- forecastle** [ 'fɒksl] (fōk'səl) (FOKE'-SUL)  
 The section of the upper deck of a ship located at the bow.
- forehead** [ 'fɔrɪd] (fôr'ɪd) (FOR'-IHD)  
*Note:* The *h* is not sounded.
- forte** Two words, spelled the same, but pronounced differently:  
 [fɔrt] (fört) (FORT) A person's strong point.  
 [ 'fɔrte] (fôr'tā) (FOR'-TAY) Music direction, meaning "loudly."  
*Note:* Do not say, "This is my FOR'-TAY."
- frijoles** [fri'holes] (frē-hō'lās) (FREE-HO'-LAYS)  
 A Spanish word for *beans*.

- fungi** [ˈfʌndʒaɪ] (fūnˈjī) (FUNˈ-*JY*)  
Plural of *fungus*. *Note:* The letter *g* is sounded differently in the two words.
- garage** [gəˈrɑːʒ] (gə-rāzhˈ) (GUH-RAHZHˈ)
- gauche** [goʃ] (gōsh) (GOOSH)  
*Note:* This word rhymes with the first syllable of *lotion*.
- geisha** [ˈgeɪʃə] (gāˈshə) (GAYˈ-SHUH)  
A Japanese woman trained to provide entertainment, especially for men.
- genre** [ˈʒɑnrə] (zhānˈrə) (ZHAWNˈ-*RUH*)  
Type; class.
- gestalt** [gəˈstalt] (gə-shtältˈ) (GUH-SHTAHLTˈ)  
A unified configuration that cannot be explained merely as the sum of its parts.
- Gethsemane** [ɡeθˈseməni] (gēth-sēmˈə-nē) (GETH-SEMˈ-*UH-NEE*)  
The garden outside Jerusalem where Jesus was arrested.
- gherkin** [ˈgɜːkɪn] (gūr-kīn) (GUHRˈ-*KIHN*)  
A small pickle.
- Gila** [ˈhɪlə] (hēˈlə) (HEEˈ-*LUH*)  
The name of a monster, national park, and river.
- gist** [dʒɪst] (jɪst) (*JIST*)  
The central idea of some matter.
- googol** [ˈguːɡɔl] (gōōˈgōlˈ) (GOOˈ-*GAHL*)  
The number 10 raised to the power 100; the number 1 followed by 100 zeros (from the new math).
- grograin** [ˈgrɔːɡreɪn] (grōˈgrānˈ) (GROWˈ-*GRAIN*)  
A heavy silk or rayon fabric with narrow horizontal ribs.
- gunwale** [ˈɡʌnəl] (gūnˈəl) (GUNˈ-*UL*)  
The upper edge of a ship's side.
- habeas corpus** [ˈheɪbiəs ˈkɔːrpəs] (hāˈbē-əs kōrˈpəs) (HAYˈ-*BEE-US KAWRˈ-PUHS*)  
A writ that may be issued to bring a person before a court or judge, having as its purpose the release of that person from unlawful restraint.
- hasten** [ˈhe sən] (hāˈsən) (HAYSˈ-*UN*)  
*Note:* The *t* is not sounded.
- hearth** [hɔːrθ] (hārth) (HAHRTH)
- hegemony** [hiˈdʒeməni] (hī-jēmˈə-nē) (HIH-JEMˈ-*UH-NEE*)  
Predominant influence of one state over others.
- Hegira** [hiˈdʒaɪˈrə] (hī-jīˈrə) (HIH-JYˈ-*RUH*)  
The flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina; any flight, as from danger.
- height** [haɪt] (hīt) (*HYT*)
- heinous** [ˈhenəs] (hāˈnəs) (HAYˈ-*NUS*)  
Grossly wicked or reprehensible.
- hiatus** [haɪˈetəs] (hī-āˈtəs) (HY-AYˈ-*TUS*)  
A gap or missing section.

- hierarchy** ['haɪə,rɑ:kɪ] (hī'ə-rār'-kē) (HY'-UH-RAR-KEE)
- hors d'œuvre** [ɔr'dʒv] (ôr dŭrv') (OR DURV')
- hyperbole** [haɪ'pɜ:bə,li] (hī-pŭr'bə-lē) (HY-PER'-BUH-LEE)  
An exaggeration or extravagant statement used as a figure of speech. *Note:* Do not confuse this word with the geometric term *hyperbola*.
- impotent** ['ɪmpətənt] (īm'pə-tənt) (IHM'-PUH-TUNT)  
*Note:* Do not place stress on the second syllable.
- imprimatur** [ɪmprə'mætʃr] (īm'prə-mätōōr) (IM-PRUH-MAH'-TOOR)  
Official approval or license to print or publish.
- impugn** [ɪm'pjʊn] (īm-pyōōn') (IHM-PYOON')  
To oppose or attack as false; criticize; refute.
- integer** ['ɪntɪdʒɜ] (īn'tī-jər) (IN'-TIH-JUHR)  
Any member of the set of positive whole numbers (1, 2, 3, . . .), negative whole numbers (-1, -2, -3, . . .), and zero (0).
- integral** ['ɪntɪgrəl] (īn'tī-grəl) (IN-TIH-GRUHL)  
*Note:* Do not place stress on the second syllable.
- Io** ['aɪo] (ī'ō) (EYE'-OH)  
A satellite of Jupiter, named for a maiden in Greek mythology who was loved by Zeus.
- irony** ['aɪrəni] (ī'rə-nē) (EYE'-RUH-NEE)  
*Note:* Avoid EYE'-ER-NEE.
- jeroboam** [dʒɛrə'boʊəm] (jēr-ə-bō'əm) (JEHR-UH-BO'-UM)  
A wine bottle holding about ¼ of a gallon.
- juvenile** ['dʒʊvənəl] (joo'və-nəl) (JOO'-VUH-NUHL)  
*Note:* JOO'-VUH-NYL is acceptable, but the word is seldom given that pronunciation by professional announcers.
- kibbutz** [kɪ'butz] (kī-bōōts') (KIH-BOOTS')  
A collective farm or settlement in modern Israel.
- lamé** [læ'me] (lāmă') (LA-MAY')  
A fabric having metallic threads in the warp or in the filling. *Note:* In broadcast copy, the accent mark may be missing—the context should tell you whether the copy refers to a cloth or to the condition of being lame.
- liaison** [,li,e'zən] (lē'ā-zōn') (LEE-AY-ZAHN')
- libation** [laɪ'beɪʃən] (lī-bā'shən) (LY-BAY'-SHUN)  
The pouring of a liquid offering as a religious ritual; an intoxicating beverage (informal usage).
- llama** ['jʌmə] (yă'mə) (YAH'-MUH)  
*Note:* In broadcast speech, it is helpful to use the Spanish pronunciation, as given here, to avoid confusion with *lama*, a Buddhist monk of Tibet or Mongolia.
- lozenge** ['lɔzɪndʒ] (lōz'īnj) (LAHZ'-INJ)

- macabre** [mə'kabrə] (mə-kä'brə) (MUH-KAH'-BRUH)  
Gruesome; ghastly
- Magi** ['medʒaɪ] (mā'jī) (MAY'-JY)  
The "wise men from the East" who traveled to Bethlehem to pay homage to the infant Jesus.
- mandamus** [mæn'deməs] (män-dā'məs) (MAN-DAY'-MUS)  
A writ used by a superior court ordering a public official or body or a lower court to perform a specified duty.
- Maya** ['mɑjə] (mä'yə) (MAH'-YUH)  
A member of a race of native peoples in southern Mexico and Central America.
- measure** ['meɜʒə] (mězh'ər) (MEHZH'-UR)  
*Note:* Avoid MAYZH'-UR.
- melee** ['mele] or [me'le] (mä'lā) or [mä-lā'] (MAY'-LAY) or (MAY-LAY')
- meringue** [mə'ræŋ] (mə-räng') (MUH-RANG')
- mien** [min] (mēn) (MEEN)  
One's bearing or manner.
- mnemonic** [ni'mɑnik] (nī-mōn'ik) (NIH-MAHN'-IK)  
Relating to, assisting, or designed to assist the memory. *Note:* The *m* is not sounded.
- moisten** ['mɔɪsɪn] (mɔi'sən) (MOY'-SUN)  
*Note:* The *t* is not sounded.
- Moog** [mog] (mōg) (MOHG)  
A music synthesizer. *Note:* It is *not* pronounced MOOG.
- mores** ['mɔrez] (mōr'āz) (MAWR'-AYZ)  
The accepted traditional customs and usages of a particular social group; moral attitudes.
- mot** [mo] (mō) (MO)  
A witticism or short, clever saying.
- mousse** [mus] (mōs) (MOOS)  
Any of various chilled desserts.
- myopia** [maɪ'ɒpiə] (mī-ō'pē-ə) (MY-O'-PEE-UH)  
A visual defect; nearsightedness.
- naïveté** [na,iv'te] (nä'ēv-tā') (NAH-EEV-TAY')
- naphtha** ['næfəθə] (näf'thə) (NAF'-THUH)  
*Note:* The *ph* is sounded as an *f*.
- née** [ne] (nä) (NAY)  
Born (used when identifying a married woman by her maiden name).
- niche** [nitʃ] (nīch) (NITSCH)  
*Note:* Rhymes with *rich*.

- nihilism** [ˈnaɪəl,ɪzəm] (nī'ə-līz-əm) (NY'-UH-LIZ-UM)  
In ethics, the rejection of all distinctions in moral value. Also, the belief that destruction of existing political or social institutions is necessary to ensure future improvement; extreme radicalism.
- Nisei** [ˈniseɪ] (nē'sā) (NEE'-SAY)  
One born in America of immigrant Japanese parents.
- nonpareil** [ˌnɑnpə'reɪl] (nōn'pə-rēl') (NAHN-PUH-RELL')  
Without rival; matchless; peerless; unequalled.
- non sequitur** [nɑn ˈsekwi:tʊr] (nōn sēk'wi-tōōr') (NAHN-SEK'-WIH-TOOR)  
An inference or conclusion that does not follow from established premises or evidence.
- nouveau riche** [nuvo ˈriʃ] (nōō-vō-rēsh') (NOO-VOH REESH')  
One who has recently become rich.
- nuclear** [ˈnukliə] (nōō'klē-ər) (NOO'KLEE-UHR)
- nuptial** [ˈnʌpʃəl] (nūp'shəl) (NUHP'-SHUL)
- objet d'art** [ɔbzɛ ˈdɑr] (ôb-zhĕ dār') (AHB-ZHAY DAR')  
An object valued for its artistry.
- obsequy** [ˈɒbsɪkwɪ] (ôb'si-kwi) (AHB'-SIH-KWEE)  
A funeral rite or ceremony. Often used in plural form, obsequies.
- often** [ˈɒfən] (ô'fən) (AWF'-UN)  
*Note:* The *t* is not sounded.
- oregano** [ə'regəno] (ə-rĕg'ə-nō') (UH-REG'-UH-NO)  
An herb. *Note:* The first syllable may be sounded as (O).
- paean** [ˈpiən] (pē'an) (PEE'-UN)  
A song of joyful praise or exultation.
- Pago Pago** [ˈpɑŋ, o ˈpɑŋ, o] (pāng'ō pāng'ō) (PAHNG'O PAHNG'O)  
The capital of American Samoa.
- Pall Mall** [ˈpɛl ˈmɛl] (pĕl'mĕl') (PELL'MELL')  
A street in London.
- palm** [pɑm] (pām) (PAHM)  
*Note:* In this word, alone or in combinations such as Palm Beach or palm oil, the *l* is not sounded. The *l* is sounded in *palmetto*, a small tropical palm.
- papier-mâché** [ˈpeɪə məʃeɪ] (pā'pər mə-shā') (PAY'-PER MUH-SHAY')  
*Note:* This word is almost universally Anglicized in broadcast speech.
- papyrus** [pəˈpaɪrəs] (pə-pī'rəs) (PUH-PY'-RUSS)
- paradigm** [ˈpærədəɪm] (pār'ə-dīm') (PARE'-UH-DYM)  
Any example or model. *Note:* The first *a* is sounded as in *pat*.
- paroxysm** [ˈpærək,sɪzəm] (pār'ək-sīz'əm) (PAR'-UK-SIZ-UM)  
A sudden outburst of emotion or action; a spasm or fit.
- passé** [pæ'seɪ] (pā-sā') (PA-SAY')  
*Note:* This word may appear without the accent mark in broadcast copy.
- pâté** [pɑ'teɪ] (pā-tā') (PAH-TAY')  
A meat paste (may appear without the accent marks).

**patent** Two pronunciations:

[ˈpetənt] (pāt'nt) (PAYT'UNT) Obvious.

[ˈpætənt] (pāt'nt) (PAT'-UNT) Right or title.

**pejorative** [pi'dʒɔrətɪv] (pī-jôr'ə-tīv) (PIH-JOR'-UH-TIV)

Disparaging; downgrading.

**per se** [ˈpɜː'se] (pûr'sā) (PER'SAY')

In or by itself.

**perseverance** [ˌpɜːsə'vɪrəns] (pûr'sə-vir'əns) (PER-SUH-VEER'-UNS)

**pestle** ['pestl] (pēs'əl) (PES'-UHL)

**petit** ['peti] (pēt'ē) (PET'-EE)

*Note:* The word, meaning “small” or “minor,” is pronounced as shown in combinations such as *petit larceny*, *petit four*, and *petit mal*.

**phlegm** [flɛm] (flēm) (FLEM)

Thick mucus.

**picot** ['piko] (pē'kō) (PEE'-KO)

An ornamental edging on ribbon or lace.

**pietà** [pje'tɑ] (pyā-tā') (PYAY-TAH')

A depiction of Mary with the Dead Christ.

**piety** ['paɪ,ɪti] (pī'ī-tē) (PY'-IH-TEE)

Religious devotion.

**pincers** ['pɪnsɜːz] (pīn'sɜːz) (PIN'-SERZ)

**piqué** [pi'ke] (pī-kā') (PIH-KAY')

A fabric. *Note:* This word may appear without accent marks in scripts, so do not confuse it with *pique*, which is pronounced *peek*.

**placebo** [plə'sibo] (plə-sē'bō) (PLUH-SEE'-BO)

A substance containing no medication, administered to humor a patient.

**potable** ['pɒtəbl] (pō-tə-bəl) (PO'-TUH-BUL)

Fit to drink; drinkable.

**potpourri** [popu'ri] (pō'pōō-rē') (PO-PUH-REE')

**primer** Two pronunciations:

[ˈprɪmɜː] (prīm'ɜːr) (PRIM'-ER) A textbook.

[ˈpraɪmɜː] (prīm'ɜːr) (PRYM'-ER) An undercoat of paint; an explosive.

**pseudo** ['sʊdo] (sōō'dō) (SOO'-DO)

**purée** [pju're] (pyōō-rā') (PYOO-RAY')

**Purim** ['pʊrɪm] (pōōr'īm) (POOR'-IHM)

A Jewish holiday celebrating the deliverance of the Jews from massacre by Haman.

**Qiana** [ki'ɑnə] (kē-ān'ə) (KEE-AHN'-UH)

A particular synthetic fabric.

**quay** [ki] (kē) (KEE)

A wharf.

- ragout** [ræ'gu] (ră-goo') (RA-GOO')  
A meat and vegetable stew.
- recoup** [ri'kup] (rĭ-kōōp') (RIH-KOOP')
- regime** [re'ʒim] (ră-zhēm') (RAY-ZHEEM')
- reprise** [ri'priz] (rĭ-prēz') (RIH-PREEZ')  
Repetition of a phrase, verse, or song.
- respite** ['respit] (rēs'pīt) (RES'-PIT)  
A temporary cessation or postponement.
- ribald** ['ribld] (rĭb'ald) (RIB'-ULD)  
Pertaining to or indulging in vulgar, lewd humor.
- riboflavin** ['raiboflevin] (rĭ'bō-flā'vĭn) (RY'-BO-FLAYV-IHN)  
The principal ingredient in vitamin B<sub>2</sub>.
- rodeo** ['rodi,o] (rō'dē-o') (RO'-DEE-O)  
*Note:* The Spanish pronunciation, RO-DAY'-O, is heard less and less in the United States.
- roof** [ruf] (rōōf) (cannot be accurately indicated with wire-service phonetics)  
*Note:* *Roof*, like *room* and *root*, uses the same vowel sound as the word *boot*.
- roué** [ru'e] (rōō-ā') (ROO-AY')  
A lecherous and dissipated man. *Note:* The accent mark may be missing in broadcast copy.
- rouge** [ruʒ] (rōōzh) (ROOZH)
- sachet** [sæ'ʃe] (să-shā') (SA-SHAY')  
A small bag containing perfumed powder.
- sake** ['saki] (să'kē) (SAH'-KEE)  
A Japanese rice wine.
- salve** [sæv] (sāv) (SAV)  
*Note:* the *l* is not sounded.
- sauté** [so'te] (sō-tā') (SO-TAY')  
*Note:* The accent mark may be omitted in broadcast copy.
- schism** ['sizm] (sĭz'əm) (SIHZ'-UM)
- schizoid** ['skit,sɔid] (skĭt'soid') (SKIT'-SOYD)
- sciatica** [saɪ'ætɪkə] (sĭ-āt'ĭ-kə) (SY-AT'-IH-KUH)  
Neuralgia of the sciatic nerve; a pain in the area of the hip or thigh.
- scion** ['saɪən] (sĭ'ən) (SY'UN)  
A descendant or heir.
- Scylla** ['sɪlə] (sĭl'ə) (SILL'-UH)  
A rock on the Italian side of the Strait of Messina, opposite Charybdis.
- segue** ['seg,we] (sĕg'wā) (SEG'-WAY)  
A transition from one program element to another (usually music) without overlap or pause.
- skein** [skən] (skān) (SKAYN)  
A loose coil of thread or yarn.

- slough** [slu] (slōō) (SLEW)  
A marsh.
- soften** ['sɒfən] (sô'fən) (SAW'-FUN)  
*Note:* The *t* is not sounded.
- sophomore** ['sɒfə,mɔr] (sôf'-ə-môr') (SAHF'-UH-MOR)  
*Note:* Sound all three syllables.
- soufflé** [su'fle] (sōō-flā') (SOO-FLAY')
- succinct** [sək'sɪŋkt] (sək-sīŋkt') (SUK-SINGKT')
- Succoth** ['sukot] (sōōk'ôṭ) (SOOK'-OT)  
A Jewish harvest festival.
- sukiyaki** [ski'aki] (skē-āk'ē) (SKEE-AHK'-EE)  
A Japanese dish of meat and vegetables.
- superfluous** [su'pɜfluəs] (sōō-pûr'flōō-əs) (SU-PER'-FLU-US)
- synod** ['sɪnəd] (sīn'əd) (SIN'-UD)  
A church council.
- taffeta** ['tæfətə] (tāf'ə-tə) (TAF'-UH-TUH)  
A glossy fabric.
- Tagalog** [tə'gʌlɔg] (tə-gă'lôg) (TUH-GAH'-LOG)  
A people native to the Philippines; their language.
- Terpsichore** [tɜp'sɪkəri] (tûrp-sīk'ə-rē) (TERP-SIK'-UH-REE)  
The Muse of dancing.
- tertiary** ['tɜʃi,ɛri] (tûr'shē-ēr-ē) (TER'-SHEE-AIR-EE)  
Third in place, order, degree, or rank.
- testosterone** [tɛs'tɒstərɒn] (tēs-tôs'tə-rôn') (TES-TAHS'-TUH-ROHN)  
A male sex hormone.
- Thames** [tɛmz] (tēmz) (TEMZ)  
A river of England.
- thyme** [taɪm] (tīm) (TYM)  
An herb.
- tiara** [tiərə] (tē-ār'ə) (TEE-AHR'-UH)  
A crownlike headpiece.
- tortilla** [tɔr'tɪjə] (tôr-tē'yə) (TAWR-TEE'-YUH)  
A thin, unleavened Mexican pancake.
- touché** [tu'ʃe] (tōō-shā') (TOO-SHAY')  
*Note:* The accent mark may be missing in broadcast copy.
- toward** [tɔrd] (tôrd) (TAWRD)  
*Note:* This is a one-syllable word.
- treacle** ['tri:kl] (trē'kəl) (TREE'-KUL)  
Molasses.
- trestle** ['trɛsl] (trēs'əl) (TRESS'-UL)
- tricot** ['triko] (trē'kō) (TREE'-KO)  
A soft cloth.

- troche** ['troki] (trō'kē) (TRO'-KEE)  
A small lozenge.
- trough** [trɒf] (trōf) (TRAWF)
- tsar** [zɑr] (zār) (ZAHR)  
Former ruler of Russia. The word is sometimes spelled *czar*, but both are pronounced the same.
- tulle** [tul] (tōol) (TOOL)  
A fine starched net of silk, rayon, or nylon.
- unguent** ['ʌŋgwənt] (ūng'gwənt) (UNG'-GWUNT)  
A salve.
- urethane** ['jʊrəθen] (yōōr'ī-thān) (YOOR'I-THANE)
- valance** ['væləns] (vāl'əns) (VAL'-UNS)  
A short, ornamental drapery hung across the top of a window or along a bed, shelf, canopy, or the like. *Note:* Do not confuse this word with a term from chemistry, *valence*, which is pronounced VAY'-LUNS.
- venal** ['vinl] (vē'nəl) (VEE'-NUL)  
Open or susceptible to bribery.
- venire** [vi'nairi] (vī-nī'rē) (VIH-NY'-REE)  
A panel of prospective jurors from which a jury is selected.
- vicar** ['vɪkə] (vīk'ər) (VIK'-ER)
- victual** ['vɪtʃ] (vīt'l) (VIT'-UL)  
Food.
- vicuña** [vai'kunjə] (vī-kōōn'yə) (VY-KOON'-YUH)  
A mammal of the Andes; the fleece of this animal. *Note:* The tilde may be missing in broadcast copy.
- vigilante** [,vɪdʒə'lænti] (vīj'ə-lān'tē) (VIDG-UH-LAN'-TEE)  
A member of an informal council exercising police power.
- vin ordinaire** [vɛ ɔrdi'nɛr] (vān ōr-dē-nār') (VAN AWR-DEE'-NARE)  
*Note:* The first *n* should be nasalized.
- virulent** ['vɪrjələnt] (vīr'yə-lənt) (VIHR'-YUH-LUNT)  
Extremely poisonous.
- vis-à-vis** [,vɪzə'vi] (vē'zə-vē') (VEEZ-UH-VEE)  
Face-to-face.
- viscount** ['vaɪ,kɑʊnt] (vī'kaʊnt') (VY'-KOUNT)  
A British peer.
- viscous** ['vɪskəs] (vīs'kəs) (VISS'-KUSS)
- voile** [vɔɪl] (voil) (VOYL)  
A sheer fabric.
- waistcoat** ['wɛskɪt] (wēs'kīt) (WESS'-KIHT)
- worsted** ['wɒstɪd] (wōōs'tīd) (WUHSS'-TIHD)

**yeoman** ['jɒmən] (yŏ'mən) (YO'-MUN)

**Yom Kippur** [jɑmkɪ'pʊr] (yäm-kĩ-pöör') (YAHM-KIH-POOR')  
The holiest Jewish holiday.

**Yosemite** [jo'semɪti] (yö-sēm'i-tê) (YO-SEM'-IH-TEE)  
A national park in California.



# Appendix C

## Phonetic Transcription

As an announcer, you face unique and challenging problems in pronunciation. In reading news, commercial, and classical-music copy, you will frequently encounter words of foreign origin, and you will be expected to read them fluently and correctly. As a newscaster, you will be expected not only to pronounce foreign words and names with accuracy and authority, but also to know when and how to Americanize many of them. Although British announcers are allowed to Anglicize categorically, you would be seen as odd or incompetent if you said *DON KWICKS'-OAT* for Don Quixote or *DON JEW'-UN* for Don Juan, as they do.

Because English pronunciation is subject to few general rules, English is one of the most difficult languages to learn. In Spanish the letters *ch* are always pronounced as in the name *Charles*; in American English *ch* may be pronounced in the following ways:

*sh* as in *Cheyenne*

*tch* as in *champion*

*k* as in *chemist*

two separate sounds, as in the name *MacHeath*

There are many other examples. In the sentence "I usually used to use this," the letter *s* is sounded differently in the words *usually*, *used*, and *use*. The letter *a* is pronounced differently in the words *cap*, *father*, *mate*, *care*, *call*, *boat*, and *about*. Similar variations are seen for all other vowel sounds and most consonants as well. For example, *th* is pronounced differently in *Thomas*, *thought*, and *then*; *r* is pronounced differently in *run*, *fire*, and *boor*. Letters may at times be silent, as in *mnemonic*, *Worcester*, and *Wednesday*. At

other times, and for no logical reason, a word is correctly pronounced only when all letters in it receive some value, as in *misunderstood* and *circumstances*. The letters *ie* are sometimes pronounced “eye,” as in *pie*, and sometimes “ee,” as in *piece*. Two words with almost identical spellings, such as *said* and *maid*, can have quite different pronunciations. In short, the only constant in spoken American English is variation.

The whole problem of English pronunciation was reduced to its most obvious absurdity by George Bernard Shaw, who wrote *ghoti* and asked how this manufactured word was to be pronounced. After all attempts had failed, Shaw revealed that it was to be pronounced “fish”: the *gh* to be pronounced “f” as in *enough*, the *o* to be pronounced “ih” as in *women*, and the *ti* to be pronounced “sh” as in *motion*.

Of course, common words do not cause pronunciation problems. But try to determine the correct pronunciation of the following words—some quite familiar, others less so—according to your knowledge of language and any rules of pronunciation you may have learned:

quay	flaccid
dais	mortgage
interstices	gunwale
medieval	forecastle
brooch	egregious
cliché	phthisic

Now look up the correct pronunciation of these words in any standard dictionary. After checking the pronunciation, you will certainly agree that no amount of puzzling over them, and no rules of pronunciation, would have helped.

Correct American and Canadian pronunciation of English not only is inherently illogical but also changes with time and common usage, generally tending toward simpler forms. It is becoming more and more acceptable, for example, to pronounce *clothes* as KLOZ, to leave the first *r* out of *February*, and to slide over the slight “y” sound in *news* so that it becomes NOOZ.

If you have difficulty pronouncing words whose spelling offers little help, you may be doubly perplexed by American personal names and place names that are derived from foreign originals. As a sportscaster, for example, you cannot assume that a player named Braun gives his own name the correct German pronunciation,

“Brown.” He may pronounce it “Brawn” or “Brahn.” If, as a sportscaster, you tried to pronounce every foreign-derived name as it would be pronounced in the country of origin, your audience would wince every time you failed to use the established pronunciation.

American place names present the same problem. In Nebraska, *Beatrice* is pronounced BEE-AT'-RIS. In South Dakota, *Pierre* is pronounced PEER. In California, *Delano* is pronounced DUH-LANE'-O. In Kentucky, *Versailles* is pronounced VER-SALES'. In Georgia, *Vinenna* is pronounced VYE-EN'-UH. In the Southwest, Spanish place names are conventionally pronounced neither as the Spanish original nor as they seem to be spelled. For example, in California, the *San* in *San Jose* is pronounced as in *sand* rather than as Spanish speakers would pronounce it (as in *sonnet*), and HO-ZAY' is used rather than the Americanized JO-ZAY' or the Spanish HO-SAY'.

Because the only standard for pronouncing place names is the common practice of the natives of the region, you must be on guard to avoid error. All American and Canadian communities have special and capricious ways of pronouncing the names of streets, suburbs, nearby towns, and geographic landmarks. Radio and television announcers who are new to an area and consistently offend listeners with mispronunciations may not be around long enough to learn regional preferences. Los Angelenos pronounce *Cahuenga* KUH-WENG'-GUH, and in San Francisco, *Gough Street* is pronounced GOFF. In Arkansas, *Nevada County* is pronounced NUH-VAY'-DUH. In Georgia, *Taliaferro County* is pronounced TAHL'-UH-VER. Bostonians may not care if you mispronounce *Pago Pago* (correctly pronounced PAHNG'-GO PAHNG'-GO), but they will be annoyed if you pronounce *Quincy* as KWIN'-SEE rather than KWINZ'-EE.

It is not surprising that the problems inherent in the pronunciation of American English have given rise to various systems of phonetic transcription. Two of these systems are outlined here, and the third—the International Phonetic Alphabet—is discussed at length.

## Wire-Service Phonetics

Several news agencies provide radio and television stations with news stories, sending them via satellite and telephone lines to

teleprinters and computer terminals. When a word or a name that might cause pronunciation problems is transmitted, that word often is phoneticized—given a **pronouncer**—as in this example.

(SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA) THE ISLAND NATION OF VANUATU  
(VAHN-OO-AH' -TOO)—FORMERLY THE NEW HEBRIDES  
(HEB' -RIH-DEEZ)—WAS HIT TODAY BY A STRONG EARTHQUAKE.

Pronouncers are useful, but you should not rely on them completely. They are sometimes ambiguous and occasionally inaccurate. A few sounds defy accurate transcription. Wherever possible, check pronunciations in dictionaries, atlases, or other appropriate sources.

All of the symbols of wire-service phonetics appear in Table C.1, arranged in the same order in which they appear in the International Phonetic Alphabet. (Because we are dealing with speech sounds, alphabetic arrangement has no relevance.) Key words have been chosen for clarity, so most are quite commonplace. Two symbols are sometimes given for a single sound. For example, for the second vowel sound listed, I works well for the word *impel*, but IH works better for *bituminous*. If this word were transcribed as BI-TOO'-MUH-NUS instead of BIH-TOO'-MUH-NUS, a reader might pronounce the first syllable as the English word *by*.

With a little practice—and some ingenuity—you can make wire-service phonetics into a useful tool. The consonants are easiest to learn because most of them represent only one sound; the symbols T, D, S, Z, and M, for instance, can hardly cause confusion. Other consonant sounds need two letters to represent them, for example, TH (THIN), CH (CHAT), and SH (SHOP). One symbol, Y, is used for two sounds, one a consonant and the other a diphthong. As a consonant, it appears in the word *yeoman* (YO'-MUN); as a diphthong, it represents an entirely different sound, as in *sleight* (SLYT). The symbol TH is the most troublesome, for it represents the initial sounds in *think* and *then*. Context can help in some instances, but not all. It works for *hearth* (HAHRTH), but not *calisthenics*. Anyone seeing KAL-UHS-THEN'-IKS might read THEN as the common English word, and this is not the correct sound.

Some vowel sounds are a bit troublesome, but they usually can be differentiated by their contexts. The letters oo, for example

**TABLE C.1 Symbols of Wire-Service Phonetics**

Symbol	Key Word	Phonetic Transcription
<b>Vowels</b>		
EE	<i>believe</i>	(BIH-LEEV')
I or IH	<i>impel, bituminous</i>	(IM-PEL')
		(BIH-TOO'-MUH-NUS)
AY	<i>bait</i>	(BAYT)
E or EH	<i>pester, beret</i>	(PEST'-ER)
		(BEH-RAY')
A	<i>can</i>	(KAN)
AH	<i>comma</i>	(KAH'-MUH)
AW	<i>lost</i>	(LAWST)
O	<i>host</i>	(HOST)
OO	<i>Moorhead</i>	(MOOR'-HED)
OO	<i>pool</i>	(POOL)
ER	<i>early</i>	(ER'-LEE)
UH	<i>sofa</i>	(SO'-FUH)
<b>Diphthongs</b>		
Y	<i>lighting</i>	(LYT'-ING)
AU	<i>grouse</i>	(GRAUS)
OY	<i>oiling</i>	(OY'-LING)
YU	<i>using</i>	(YUZ'-ING)
<b>Consonants*</b>		
TH	<i>think</i>	(THINGK)
TH	<i>then</i>	(THEN)
SH	<i>clash</i>	(KLASH)
ZH	<i>measure</i>	(MEZH'-UR)
CH	<i>church</i>	(CHERCH)
J	<i>adjust</i>	(UH-JUST')
NG	<i>singing</i>	(SING'-ING)
Y	<i>yeoman</i>	(YO'-MEN)

\*The consonants P, B, T, D, K, G, F, V, S, Z, H, M, N, L, W, and R are pronounced as in English and therefore are not listed. The symbol G is always as in *green*, never as in *Gene*.

stand for vowel sounds in *food* and *poor*, which are not, of course, the same. Here is how context can help distinguish between them:

buoy (BOO'-EE)            boorish (BOOR'-ISH)

In these examples, the common words *boo* and *boor* tell which sound to give oo.

It is not for common words that wire-service phonetics were developed. Here are some typical words that might be given pronouncers by a wire service:

Beirut (BAY-ROOT')	Sidon (SYD'-UN)
Bayreuth (BY'-ROYT)	Coelho (KWAY'-LO)
Clio (KLY'-O)	Ojai (O'-HY)
Schuykill (SKUHL'-KIL)	Yosemite (YO-SEM'-IH-TEE)
Faneuil (FAN'-UHL)	Hamtramck (HAM-TRAM'-IK)

Obviously, your use of such phonetic transcription will be reserved for the few names and words in your copy that require you to turn to a dictionary, gazetteer, or similar reference work. Table C.2 offers suggested sources for correct pronunciations in several different problem categories.

**TABLE C.2 Sources for Correct Pronunciations of Personal Names and Place Names**

Category	Source
Names of persons	The individual featured in the story; failing that, members of the family or associates
Foreign names	Appropriate embassy or consulate
Foreign place names	<i>American Heritage Dictionary</i>
State or regional place names	State or regional historical societies or the state police or highway patrol
Names of members of legislatures	Clerk of the legislature

At times you will have to read a news story for which no pronouncers are given. When time permits, you should look up difficult or unfamiliar words in a dictionary, and do your own transcribing of them as in this example, done easily and quickly on a word processor:

(NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE) MEDICAL RESEARCHERS TODAY RE-  
VEALED A STUDY SHOWING THAT AS FEW AS TWO CUPS OF COF-  
FEE CAN CUT THE BLOOD FLOW TO YOUR BRAIN BY 10 TO 20  
PERCENT. DR. WILLIAM WILSON, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF  
PSYCHIATRY AT VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY, AND CO-AUTHOR OF  
THE STUDY, SAID: "WHILE THE BLOOD-FLOW REDUCTION DOES  
NOT SEEM SEVERE ENOUGH TO CAUSE PROBLEMS IN NORMAL IN-  
DIVIDUALS, IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER IT MAY INCREASE THE  
RISK OF TRANSIENT ISCHEMIC (IZ-KEE'-MIK) ATTACKS AND  
CEREBRAL INFARCTIONS (SEH-REE'-BRUHL IN-FARK'-SHUNZ)  
IN HIGH-RISK INDIVIDUALS OR THOSE RECOVERING FROM  
CEREBROVASCULAR (SEH-REE'-BRO-VAS'-KYU-LER) ACCI-  
DENTS." CAFFEINE COULD ALSO MAGNIFY THE EFFECTS OF  
CERTAIN DRUGS, SUCH AS THE DIET DRUG PHENYL-  
PROPANOLAMINE (FEN'-UHL-PRO-PAN-OHL'-UH-MEEN), WHICH  
ALREADY CONTAINS CAFFEINE.

Wire-service phonetics work well in this example, but there are times when the system will not work. There is simply no foolproof way to use the twenty-six letters of the English language to represent more than forty speech sounds. Furthermore, the wire-service system does not include symbols for most foreign speech sounds that do not occur in English. Until a few years ago, teletype machines were limited to the same symbols found on an ordinary typewriter. Today's teleprinters, however, could be programmed to reproduce any symbol desired, so the time may come when addi-

tional pronunciation symbols will be added to the twenty-six letters now in use. A good starting point would be to add these symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet:

[ð] for the initial sound in *then*

[ʊ] for the vowel sound in *good*

At the end of Appendix D, “Foreign Language Pronunciation,” there is news and commercial copy featuring names and words in a variety of foreign languages. For practice you should transcribe these names and words into wire-service phonetics and then read the copy aloud. Work with this and other practice copy until you find it easy to do phonetic transcriptions and can read them without errors or hesitation.

## Diacritical Marks

Dictionaries use a system of phonetic transcription that features small marks placed above the vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*, along with a few additional symbols for sounds such as *th* in *thin* and *zh* in *vision*. The *American Heritage Dictionary* uses these symbols:

ǎ	pat	ā	pay	âr	care	ä	father	oi	boy
ě	pet	ē	be					ou	out
ĩ	pit	ī	pie	îr	pier			hw	which
ö	pot	ō	toe	ô	paw				
õ	took	õ	boot						
th	thin	th	this						
Û	cut	ûr	urge						
zh	vision								
ə	about								

Diacritical marks are not totally standardized; there are variations from dictionary to dictionary. The *American Heritage Dictionary* uses seventeen symbols to indicate the vowel sounds of the English language. *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, on the other hand, uses more than twenty. If you decide to use diacritical marks to indicate correct pronunciation on your scripts, it is important to adopt one system of marks and stick with it. Going from one dictionary to another could be very confusing.

The system of phonetic transcription used in dictionaries has at least three important limitations. First, diacritical marks are rather difficult to learn and to remember. The publishers of most English-language dictionaries recognize this fact and place a guide to pronunciation on pages throughout the book. A second disadvantage is that diacritical marks were not designed for use by oral readers. The marks are small and vary only slightly in their configurations. When accuracy under pressure is demanded, diacritical marks often fail to meet the test. A final limitation of the method of transcription used in dictionaries is that the key words used may vary in pronunciation from area to area. To learn that *fog* is pronounced as *dog* may tell some Texans that “fawg” rhymes with “dawg” and a Rhode Islander that “fahg” rhymes with “dahg.”

Some modern dictionary publishers have developed rather sophisticated pronunciation guides. They have eliminated some ambiguity through the use of more standardized key words. Fairly extensive discussions of pronunciation, symbols to indicate foreign speech sounds not heard in the English language, and a few symbols from more sophisticated systems of phonetic transcription have been added.

## The International Phonetic Alphabet

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was devised to overcome the ambiguities of earlier systems of speech transcription. Like any other system that attempts to transcribe sounds into written symbols, it is not totally accurate. It does, however, come closer to perfection than any other system. Like diacritics, the IPA uses key words to indicate pronunciation, so if you speak with a regional accent (other than so-called standard broadcast speech), you may have difficulty making the IPA work for you.

The International Phonetic Association has assigned individual written symbols to all the speech sounds of the major languages of the world. Whether the language is French, German, or English, the symbol [e] is always pronounced “ay” as in *bait*. Speech sounds not found in English have distinct symbols: for example, [x] represents the sound *ch* in the German word *ach*, and [y] represents the sound *u* in the French word *lune*.

The IPA is not difficult to learn, but few professional announc-

ers use or have even heard of it. Most broadcast announcers get by with wire-service phonetics or diacritics, but those who want to excel in certain areas of news or sports announcing (international coverage or competitions) should learn and continue to practice with the IPA. Announcers at the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway, for example, were asked to pronounce the names of competitors from a great many nations, including Wang Xiluan of China, Ivar Michal Ulekleiv of Norway, Bernhard Gstrein of Austria, Mitja Kunc of Slovenia, and Eva Twardokens of the United States. It is unlikely that any announcer present knew the rules of pronunciation for all languages represented, so a good ear and an efficient system of phonetic transcription were necessities. The need for an effective system of transcription is also important for classical-music announcers.

This appendix presents a detailed exposition of the IPA. With the help of the IPA, you can learn the principles of French, German, Spanish, and Italian pronunciation, as presented in Appendix D.

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is a system for encoding the correct pronunciation of problem words, allowing efficient and accurate retrieval. The IPA may seem formidable at first, but it is actually easier to learn than the system of diacritical markings used in dictionaries. You will find many uses for the IPA, and if you intend to enter the field of broadcast performance, you should make a sincere effort to learn it. Because spoken language is the communication medium used by announcers, mastery of any aspect of human speech will benefit your work.

It is true that only a small number of professional announcers are familiar with the IPA, but it is also true that all would benefit from knowing and using it. Those who do not know the IPA usually follow the principles of wire-service phonetics, adding symbols of their own as necessity demands. Such a system is capable of handling most of the pronunciation problems that arise in a day's work, but it fails often enough to warrant being replaced by a more refined and accurate system.

The IPA has several advantages:

- It is an unvarying system of transcription in which one symbol represents only one speech sound.
- Every sound in any language, however subtle it may be, is given a distinctive symbol.

- Once the correct pronunciation of each sound is learned, there is almost no possibility of error because of regional dialect.
- The IPA is the most nearly perfect system of describing human speech sounds yet devised.

The IPA is used by music departments to teach lyric diction, both for English and foreign languages; speech departments use the IPA to teach dialects. Unfortunately, the IPA is seldom taught to those intending to become broadcast announcers, even though a knowledge of the IPA could spare announcers many embarrassing moments.

The *NBC Handbook of Pronunciation* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984) transcribes names of persons and places using IPA symbols. Many foreign language dictionaries and texts use the IPA to indicate correct pronunciation. *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*, by John S. Kenyon and Thomas Knott (Springfield, Mass.: G. & C. Merriam, 1953), transcribes exclusively into the symbols of the IPA. Both it and the *NBC Handbook of Pronunciation* are excellent sources of correct pronunciation of American and foreign place names and the names of famous composers, authors, artists, scientists, and political figures.

As is true of any system that connects speech sounds to symbols, the IPA defines each sound in terms of its use in a particular word. For example, the sound of the IPA symbol [i] is pronounced like the vowel sound of the word *bee*. This poses no problem where the key word is pronounced uniformly throughout the United States and Canada, but a distinct problem arises when there are regional variations in the pronunciation of a key word.

In learning the IPA, keep in mind that the speech sounds and the key words used in describing them are as in “Standard American” or “standard broadcast” speech. As stated in Chapter 4, deviations from this style of speaking are not substandard *unless* speech sounds are so distorted as to make comprehension a problem. While this chapter does not put forth “Standard American” as the only or best way to pronounce American English, it is necessary to use it to teach the IPA system of transcription. The system developed by the International Phonetic Association is based on speech sounds as formed by those who speak “what is vaguely called standard speech” (Kenyon and Knott, in *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*). The authors make it clear that “standard speech” is that spoken by Connie Chung, Bernard Shaw,

and Linda Ellerby. If you live in a region of the United States or Canada where Standard American is not spoken, you may experience some difficulty in learning the IPA symbols. If, for example, you live in the southeastern United States, and you pronounce the word *bait* as most Americans pronounce *bite*, then the key words used to explain the IPA may confuse you.

Use of the IPA will be reserved for the occasional word or name in your copy with which you're unfamiliar. After determining pronunciation by referring to a source—one suggested in Table C.2, or by other means that work for you, you can render it into IPA symbols directly above the unfamiliar name or word in your script. With practice, you should be able to read your script, problem word and all, with little chance of stumbling.

Here's an illustration of how this appears on a script:

THE MAYOR OF THE SMALL NORTH CAROLINA TOWN OF

['kɪmbɒltən]

KIMBOLTON SAID TODAY THAT HE IS SKEPTICAL ABOUT

REPORTS OF FLYING SAUCERS ABOVE HIS COMMUNITY.

A glance at *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* shows that Kimbolton is pronounced KIM-BOLT'-UN [kim'boltn] in the Ohio community of that name, but in the town of the same name in North Carolina it is pronounced KIM'-BUL-TUN ['kɪmbɒltən]. The correct pronunciation of the name of a town may seem of slight importance to some, but to a professional announcer it is a matter of pride to be as accurate as time and resources permit.

IPA symbols represent vowel sounds, diphthongs or glides, and consonants. This appendix covers only the sounds in American speech. Symbols for foreign speech sounds are discussed in Appendix D.

Remember that IPA is used to transcribe *sounds*. Pronounce the word as you transcribe it, breaking it down into its component sounds. In transcribing the word *broken*, for example, say to yourself the first sound, "b," then add the second, making "br," then the third, forming "bro," and so on. Because one sound in a word may condition the sound that precedes or follows it, you should use an additive system, rather than one that isolates each sound from all

others. Note, however, that this advice is meant for those in the early stages of learning to use the IPA. With practice and growing proficiency, you will be able to transcribe almost without conscious effort.

## Vowel Sounds

Vowel sounds are classified as front vowels and back vowels, depending on where they are formed in the mouth. The front vowels are produced through vibrations of the vocal folds in the throat and are articulated by the tongue and teeth near the front of the mouth. The back vowels are produced in the same manner but are articulated by the tongue and the opening in the rear of the mouth.

**The Front Vowels** The front vowels are summarized in Table C.3. Note that [a] is pronounced “aah,” as in the word *bath* as pronounced in parts of the northeastern United States. This sound is not usually heard in Standard American speech, but the symbol must be learned because it is a part of two diphthongs to be considered later.

If you pronounce each of these key words in turn, beginning at the top of the table and running to the bottom, you will find your mouth opening wider as you move from one sound to the next. As your mouth opens, your tongue is lowered and becomes increasingly relaxed.

The two front vowels [i] and [ɪ] require some elaboration. If you

**TABLE C.3 IPA Symbols for the Front Vowels**

Vowel Sound	IPA Symbol	Key Word	IPA Transcription of Key Word
“ee”	[i]	<i>beet</i>	[bit]
“ih”	[ɪ]	<i>bit</i>	[bɪt]
“ay”	[e]	<i>bait</i>	[bet]
“eh”	[ɛ]	<i>bet</i>	[bɛt]
“ah”	[æ]	<i>bat</i>	[bæt]
“aah”	[a]	<i>bath</i>	[bae]*

\*Eastern and British pronunciation only

look in some American dictionaries, you may be surprised to discover that the final sounds of words such as *busy* and *worry* are given the pronunciation [ɪ], as in *ill*. Now there can be no doubt that in Standard American, as well as in the speech of most other sections of the country, these words have a distinct “ee” sound. Kenyon and Knott, in *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*, take note of this fact but indicate that minor variations in the pronunciation of this sound are too complex to pin down. Like many other American dictionaries, Kenyon and Knott’s work uses the symbol [ɪ] for words in which the sound may actually be either [ɪ] or [i]. Thus they arrive at the pronunciation [ˈsɪtɪ] (SIH’-TIH) for *city*. Though it is doubtful that many Americans actually pronounce the word in this manner, most Americans do pronounce the final sound in the word somewhere between a distinct [ɪ] and a distinct [i].

It is worth noting at this point that the essential purpose of IPA is to help you transcribe words whose pronunciation may be unknown to you. The examples used here and throughout this chapter are included to make the IPA clearer to you, not because of any assumption that you actually have problems pronouncing words such as *busy* or *city*.

**The Back Vowels** Table C.4 presents the back vowels.<sup>1</sup> If you pronounce each of these vowel sounds in turn, you will find your mouth closing more and more and the sound being controlled at a progressively forward position in your mouth.

**The Vowel Sounds “er” and “uh”** Only two other vowel sounds remain, “er” and “uh,” which cause some trouble for students of phonetics. Consider the two words *further* and *above*. In *further*, two “er” sounds appear. Pronounce this word aloud and you will detect that, because of a stress on the first syllable, the two “ers” sound slightly different. The same is true of the two “uh” sounds in *above*. Because the first syllable of this word is unstressed and the second is stressed, there is a slight but definite difference between the two sounds. The IPA makes allowances for these differences by assigning two symbols each to the “er” and “uh” sounds:

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<sup>1</sup>The English language has many words with unsounded letters such as the final *b* in the key word *bomb* in Table C.4. You may experience an unconscious tendency to include these in phonetic transcriptions. You should remember, however, that you are transcribing *sounds*, not letters, and should disregard all letters not sounded in a word.

**TABLE C.4 IPA Symbols for the Back Vowels**

Vowel Sound	IPA Symbol	Key Word	IPA Transcription of Key Word
“ah”	[ɑ]	<i>bomb</i>	[bɑm]
“aw”	[ɔ]	<i>bought</i>	[bɔt]
“oh”	[o]	<i>boat</i>	[bot]
“ooh”	[ʊ]	<i>book</i>	[bʊk]
“oo”	[u]	<i>boot</i>	[but]

[ɜ] for a stressed “er,” as in the *first* syllable of *further* [fɜð'ɜ]  
 [ə] for an unstressed “er,” as in the *second* syllable of *further* [fɜðə]

[ʌ] for a stressed “uh,” as in the *second* syllable of *above* [əbʌv]  
 [ə] for an unstressed “uh,” as in the *first* syllable of *above* [əbʌv]

The unstressed “uh” sound is given a special symbol and name—[ə], the **schwa vowel**. Naturally, in a one-syllable word with an “uh” or an “er” sound, the sound is stressed. For this reason, in all one-syllable words, both “er” and “uh” are represented by their stressed symbols:

bird [bɜd]    church [tʃɜtʃ]    sun [sʌn]    come [kʌm]

Certain combinations of sounds may be transcribed in two ways, either of which is as accurate as the other. The word *flattery*, for example, may be transcribed either [ˈflætəri] or [ˈflætəri]. The difference in the way [ɜ] and [ər] are pronounced is imperceptible to most ears.

**Diphthongs** A diphthong is a combination of two vowel sounds, pronounced with a smooth glide from one sound to the other. If you say the “ow” of *how*, you will notice that it cannot be completed without moving the lips. There is no way of holding the sound of the entire diphthong; you can hold only the last of the two vowels of which it is formed. The diphthong in *now* is actually a rapid movement from the vowel [a] to the vowel [ʊ].

The diphthongs of American English are summarized in Table C.5. Note that the vowel [e], as in *bait*, is actually a diphthong, because its pronunciation in a word such as *say* involves a glide from [e] to [ɪ]. In other instances—in the word *fate*, for example—the [e] is cropped off more closely. Because it changes according to context, the [e] sound may be transcribed either as a pure vowel, [e], or as a diphthong, [eɪ]. It will be found both ways in various dictionaries and other works using the IPA.

**TABLE C.5 IPA Transcriptions for American English Diphthongs**

Diphthong	Pronunciation*	Key Word	IPA Transcription of Key Word
[aɪ]	A rapid combination of the two vowels [a] and [ɪ]	<i>bite</i>	[baɪt]
[aʊ]	A rapid combination of the two vowels [a] and [ʊ]	<i>how</i>	[haʊ]
[ɔɪ]	A rapid combination of the two vowels [ɔ] and [ɪ]	<i>toy</i>	[tɔɪ]
[ju]	A rapid combination of the two sounds [j] and [u]	<i>using</i>	[ʤuzɪŋ]
[ɪu]	A rapid combination of [ɪ] and [u]	<i>fuse</i>	[fɪuz]
[eɪ]	A glide from [e] to [ɪ]	<i>say</i>	[seɪ]

\*Note the subtle difference in the sounds of the diphthongs [ju] and [ɪu].

## Consonants

With only seven exceptions, the IPA symbols for consonant sounds are the same as the lowercase letters of the English alphabet. The consonants are therefore fairly easy to learn.

In general, consonants may be classified as either voiced or unvoiced. If you say aloud the letters *b* and *p*, adding the vowel sound “uh,” to produce “puh” and “buh,” you will notice that each is produced in exactly the same way, except that *b* involves **phonation** (a

vibration of the vocal folds) and *p* is merely exploded air, with no phonation at all. Because most consonants are related this way, they are listed here in their voiced-unvoiced paired relationships rather than alphabetically:

[p] is exploded air with no phonation, as in *poor* [pʊr].

[b] is a phonated explosion, as in *boor* [bʊr].

[t] is exploded air with no phonation, as in *time* [taɪm].

[d] is a phonated explosion, as in *dime* [daɪm].

[k] is exploded air with no phonation, as in *kite* [kaɪt].

[g] is a phonated explosion, as in *guide* [gaɪd].

[f] is escaping air with no phonation, as in *few* [fju].

[v] is escaping air with phonation, as in *view* [viu].

[θ] is escaping air with no phonation, as in *thigh* [θaɪ]. It is similar to the consonant [f] but has a different placement of the tongue and lips. The Greek letter theta is its symbol.

[ð] is escaping air but with phonation, as in *thy* [ðaɪ].

[s] is escaping air without phonation, as in *sing* [sɪŋ].

[z] is escaping air with phonation, as in *zing* [zɪŋ].

[ʃ] is escaping air without phonation, as in *shock* [ʃak].

[ʒ] is escaping air with phonation, as in *Jacques* (French) [ʒak].

[tʃ] is an unvoiced, or unphonated, combination of [t] and [ʃ]. It is pronounced as one sound, as in *chest* [tʃɛst].

[dʒ] is a voiced, or phonated, combination of [d] and [ʒ]. It is pronounced as one sound, as in *jest* [dʒɛst].

The following consonants have no pairings:

[h] is an unvoiced sound, as in *how* [haʊ].

[hw] is an unvoiced sound, as in *when* [hwɛn].

[m] is a voiced sound, as in *mom* [mɒm].

[n] is a voiced sound, as in *noun* [naʊn].

[ŋ] is a voiced sound, as in *sing* [sɪŋ].

[l] is a voiced sound, as in *love* [lʌv].

[w] is a voiced sound, as in *watch* [wɒtʃ].

[j] is a voiced sound, as in *yellow* [ˈjɛloʊ].

[r] is a voiced sound, as in *run* [rʌn].

*Some Common Consonant Transcription Problems* A few consonants are potential sources of confusion and deserve special consideration.

The word *fire* is usually pronounced [faɪə] in the United States and Canada but is frequently transcribed as [fair] by the authors of dictionaries and phonetics texts. The problem here is that the “r” sound in a word such as *run* is really quite different from the “r” sound in the word *fire*; that is, the “r” sound differs depending on its position in a word. There is another difference: the *r* in *boor* is different from the *r* in *fire*, even though both are in the same position in the word and follow a vowel sound. This difference stems from the fact that it is easy to produce [r] after the vowel [ʊ] but difficult to produce [r] after the diphthong [aɪ]. If you transcribe *fire* in the conventional manner as a one-syllable word—(fīr)/FYR/ [fair]—you must be careful, because the word can only be spoken with two syllables—/FY/ and /ER/ (fī) and (er) [fai] and [ə].

Another potential source of trouble is the plural ending. Years of conditioning have taught us that most plurals end in an “s,” though in actuality nearly all end in a “z” sound—*brushes, masters, dozens, kittens*, and so on. Make certain, when transcribing into IPA, that you do not confuse the two symbols [s] and [z].

The common construction *-ing* tends to make one think of a combination of [n] and [g] when transcribing a word like *singing*. Some students mistakenly transcribe this as [ˈsɪŋ,ɡɪŋ]. In IPA a distinct symbol, [ŋ], is used for the “ng” sound. The correct transcription of *singing* is [ˈsɪŋɪŋ]. Another common error is to add [g] after [ŋ]. To do so is incorrect.

The symbol [j] is never used to transcribe a word like *jump*. The symbol [dʒ] is used for the sound of the letter *j*. The symbol [j] is always pronounced as in *young* [jʌŋ], *yes* [jɛs], and *William* [ˈwɪljəm].

Note that many of the consonants change their sounds as they change their positions in words or are combined with different vowel sounds. You have already seen how the “r” sound does so. A similar change takes place in the “d” sound. Notice it in the first syllable of the word *dazed*. Because the initial *d* is followed by a vowel sound, [e], the *d* is sounded. But when the *d* appears in the final position of the word, it is merely exploded air and is only slightly different from the sound a *t* would make in the same position. The only way the final *d* could be sounded would be if a slight schwa sound were added.

**Syllabic Consonants** Three of the consonants, [m], [n], and [l], can be sounded as separate syllables without a vowel sound before or after them. Though the word *button* may be pronounced [bʌtən], in colloquial speech the [ə] sound is often missing, and the word is represented [bʌtŋ]. In such a transcription, the **syllabic consonant** is represented by a short line under the symbol. Here are transcriptions for a few other words using syllabic consonants:

*hokum* ['hokm̩]      *saddle* ['sædɫ]      *apple* ['æpɫ]

## Accent Marks

Polysyllabic words transcribed into IPA symbols must have accent marks to indicate the relative emphasis to be placed on the various syllables. The word *familiar* has three syllables, [fə], [mɪl], and [jə]. In Standard American the first of these syllables receives little emphasis, or stress, the second receives the primary emphasis, the third receives about the same degree of emphasis as the first.

The IPA indication of primary stress in a word is a mark ['] before the syllable being stressed.<sup>2</sup> In the word *facing* ['fesiŋ], the mark indicates that the first syllable is to receive the **primary stress**. If the mark is placed below and before a syllable, as in *farewell* [fə'rweɪl], it indicates that the syllable is to receive **secondary stress**. A third degree of stress is possible, but no mark is provided—this is an unstressed sound.

The word *satisfaction* will clarify the stressing of syllables. A continuous line drawn under the word indicates the degrees of stress placed on the syllables when uttering them:

sæt      ɪs      fæk      ʃən

It can be seen that there are three rather distinct degrees of emphasis in the word. This word would be transcribed [sætɪs'fækʃən]. The primary mark is used for the syllable [fæk] and the secondary mark for the syllable [sæt]; there is no mark on the two unstressed syllables, [ɪs] and [ʃən]. Because secondary stress varies from slightly less than primary stress to slightly more than the unstressed syllables in a word, the secondary accent mark is

<sup>2</sup>Note that this practice is the opposite of wire-service and dictionary phonetic transcription, where the stress mark comes at the end of the stressed syllable.

used for a wide range of emphases, although it is used only once per polysyllabic word.

The following list of related words (related either in meaning or in spelling) shows how accent marks are used in IPA transcriptions to assist in representing the correct pronunciation:

<i>consequence</i> ['kʌnsə,kwɛns]	<i>consequential</i> [ˌkʌnsə'kwɛnʃəl]
<i>overalls</i> ['ovɔ̃,ɔlz]	<i>overwhelm</i> [ˌovɔ̃'hwɛlm]
<i>interim</i> ['intɛɪm]	<i>interior</i> [ɪn'tɪriɔ̃]
<i>mainspring</i> ['men,spɪŋ]	<i>maintain</i> [men'taɪn]
<i>contest</i> (n.) ['kʌntɛst]	<i>contest</i> (v.) [kən'tɛst]
<i>Oliver</i> ['ɔlɪvɔ̃]	<i>Olivia</i> [o'liviə]
<i>invalid</i> (sick person) ['ɪnvəlɪd]	<i>invalid</i> (not valid) [ɪn'vælɪd]

Because the schwa vowel, [ə], and the vowel [ɔ̃] are by definition unstressed, they need no further mark to indicate stress. Because the vowel sounds [ʌ] and [ɜ̃] are by definition stressed, they, too, need no additional mark when they appear in a transcribed word. For example, the words *lover* [lʌvɔ̃] and *earnest* [ɜ̃nɛst] are transcribed without accent marks of any kind.



## PRACTICE

### Phonetic Transcription

For additional practice, transcribe any of the passages of this book into IPA symbols. When you have acquired some degree of proficiency with the IPA, begin transcribing from the daily news any names and words with which you are unfamiliar. Appendix D will help you determine correct pronunciation of names in some of the major languages, and gazetteers and dictionaries will give you correct pronunciations of unfamiliar words. To find the correct IPA transcriptions of unfamiliar words, use *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* or the *NBC Handbook of Pronunciation*.

## Summary of the IPA

For handy reference, all the IPA symbols used to transcribe Standard American speech are listed in Table C.6. Examples of words whose phonetic transcriptions contain each symbol are also given in the table.

**TABLE C.6 IPA Symbols for Sounds of Standard American**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Vowels</i>		
[i]	<i>beet</i> [bit]	<i>free</i> [fri] <i>peace</i> [pis] <i>leaf</i> [lif] <i>misdeed</i> [mis'did] <i>evening</i> ['ivniŋ]
[ɪ]	<i>bit</i> [bit]	<i>wither</i> ['wiðə] <i>pilgrim</i> ['pilgrɪm] <i>kilowatt</i> ['kiləwat] <i>ethnic</i> ['eθnik] <i>lift</i> [lift]
[e]	<i>bait</i> [bet]	<i>late</i> [let] <i>complain</i> [kəm'pleɪn] <i>La Mesa</i> [ ,lə'mesə] <i>coupé</i> [ku'pe] <i>phase</i> [fez]
[ɛ]	<i>bet</i> [bɛt]	<i>phlegm</i> [flem] <i>scherzo</i> ['skɛrtso] <i>Nez Perce</i> ['nez'pɛs] <i>pelican</i> ['pelɪkən] <i>bellicose</i> ['belɪ,kos]
[æ]	<i>bat</i> [bæt]	<i>satellite</i> ['sætlaɪt] <i>baggage</i> ['bæɡɪdʒ] <i>campfire</i> ['kæmp,faɪr] <i>Alabama</i> [ ,ælə'bæmə] <i>rang</i> [ræŋ]

**TABLE C.6 (Continued)**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Vowels (cont.)</i>		
[ɜː]	<i>bird</i> [bɜːd]	<i>absurd</i> [əbsɜːd] <i>early</i> [ɜːli] <i>curfew</i> [kɜːfju] <i>ergo</i> [ɜːgo] <i>hurdle</i> [hɜːdl]
[ɜ]	<i>bitter</i> [bɪtɜ]	<i>hanger</i> [hæŋɜ] <i>certificate</i> [sə'tɪfə,kɪt] <i>Berlin</i> [bɜ'liːn] <i>flabbergast</i> ['flæbɜ:gæst]
[ɑ]	<i>bomb</i> [bɑm]	<i>body</i> ['bɑdi] <i>collar</i> ['kɑlə] <i>pardon</i> ['pɑdn̩] <i>padre</i> ['pɑdre] <i>lollipop</i> ['lɑli,pɑp]
[ɔ]	<i>bought</i> [bɔt]	<i>fought</i> [fɔt] <i>longwinded</i> ['lɔŋ'wɪndɪd] <i>rawhide</i> ['rɔhaɪd] <i>Kennesaw</i> ['kenə,sɔ] <i>awful</i> ['ɔf]
[o]	<i>boat</i> [bɔt]	<i>closing</i> ['klɔzɪŋ] <i>Singapore</i> ['sɪŋgəpɔr] <i>tremolo</i> ['trɛmələ] <i>odor</i> ['ɔdə] <i>Pueblo</i> ['pwɛb,lə]
[ʊ]	<i>book</i> [bʊk]	<i>looking</i> ['lʊkɪŋ] <i>pull</i> [pʊl] <i>took</i> [tʊk] <i>tourniquet</i> ['tɜrni,ket] <i>hoodwink</i> ['hʊd,wɪŋk]
[u]	<i>boot</i> [buːt]	<i>Lucifer</i> ['lusɪfɜ] <i>cuckoo</i> ['ku,ku] <i>losing</i> ['luzɪŋ] <i>nouveau riche</i> [nuvo'riːʃ]

**TABLE C.6 (Continued)**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Vowels (cont.)</i>		
[ʌ]	<i>sun</i> [sʌn]	<i>lovelorn</i> ['lʌvlɔrn] <i>recover</i> [,rɪkʌvə] <i>chubby</i> ['tʃʌbi] <i>Prussia</i> ['prʌʃə] <i>hulled</i> ['hʌld]
[ə]	<i>sofa</i> [sofə]	<i>lettuce</i> ['letəs] <i>above</i> [əbʌv] <i>metropolis</i> [,mə'trɒpɪs] <i>arena</i> [ə'ri:nə] <i>diffidence</i> ['dɪfədəns]
<i>Diphthongs</i>		
[aɪ]	<i>bite</i> [baɪ]	<i>dime</i> [daɪm] <i>lifelong</i> ['laɪf'ləŋ] <i>leviathan</i> [lə'veɪəθən] <i>bicycle</i> ['baɪ,sɪkl] <i>imply</i> [,ɪm'plaɪ]
[aʊ]	<i>how</i> [haʊ]	<i>plowing</i> ['pləʊ,ɪŋ] <i>endow</i> [ˌen'dəʊ] <i>autobahn</i> ['auto,ban] <i>council</i> ['kaʊnsɪ] <i>housefly</i> ['haʊs,flaɪ]
[ɔɪ]	<i>toy</i> [tɔɪ]	<i>toiling</i> ['tɔɪlɪŋ] <i>oyster</i> ['ɔɪstə] <i>loyalty</i> ['lɔɪlɪti] <i>annoy</i> [ə'nɔɪ] <i>poison</i> ['pɔɪzən]
[ju]	<i>using</i> ['ju:zɪŋ]	<i>universal</i> [ˌju:nə'veɜ:sɪ] <i>euphemism</i> ['ju:fəməzɪzəm] <i>feud</i> [fju:d] <i>refuse</i> [rɪ'fju:z] <i>spew</i> [spju]
[ɪʊ]	<i>fuse</i> [fju:z]	
[eɪ]	<i>say</i> [seɪ]	

**TABLE C.6 (Continued)**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Consonants</i>		
[p]	<i>poor</i> [pʊr]	<i>place</i> [ples] <i>applaud</i> [ə'plɔd] <i>slap</i> [slæp]
[b]	<i>boor</i> [bʊr]	<i>break</i> [brek] <i>about</i> [ə'baʊt] <i>club</i> [klʌb]
[t]	<i>time</i> [taɪm]	<i>trend</i> [trɛnd] <i>attire</i> [ə'taɪr] <i>blast</i> [blæst]
[d]	<i>dime</i> [daɪm]	<i>differ</i> ['dɪfə] <i>addenda</i> [ə'dɛndə] <i>closed</i> [klozd]
[k]	<i>kite</i> [kaɪt]	<i>careful</i> ['kɛrfəl] <i>accord</i> [ə'kɔrd] <i>attack</i> [ə'tæk]
[g]	<i>guide</i> [gaɪd]	<i>grand</i> [grænd] <i>aggressor</i> [ə'grɛsə] <i>eggnog</i> ['ɛg,nɔg]
[f]	<i>few</i> [fju]	<i>finally</i> ['fainli] <i>affront</i> [ə'frʌnt] <i>aloof</i> [ə'luf]
[v]	<i>view</i> [viu]	<i>velocity</i> [və'lasəti] <i>aver</i> [ə'vɜ: <i>love</i> [lʌv]
[θ]	<i>thigh</i> [θaɪ]	<i>thrifty</i> [θrɪfti] <i>athwart</i> [ə'ɔwɔrt] <i>myth</i> [miθ]
[ð]	<i>thy</i> [ðaɪ]	<i>these</i> [ði: <i>although</i> [ɔl'do] <i>breathe</i> [brɪð]
[s]	<i>sing</i> [sɪŋ]	<i>simple</i> ['sɪmpəl] <i>lastly</i> ['læstli]

**TABLE C.6 (Continued)**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Consonants (cont.)</i>		
[z]	<i>zing</i> [zɪŋ]	<i>ships</i> [ʃɪps] <i>xylophone</i> ['zailə, fɒn] <i>loses</i> ['luzɪz] <i>dreams</i> [dri:mz]
[ʃ]	<i>shock</i> [ʃək]	<i>ashen</i> [æʃən] <i>trash</i> [træʃ]
[ʒ]	<i>Jacques</i> [ʒak]	<i>gendarme</i> ['ʒɑn'dɑ:m] <i>measure</i> ['meɪʒə] <i>beige</i> [beɪʒ]
[tʃ]	<i>chest</i> [tʃɛst]	<i>checkers</i> ['tʃɛkəz] <i>riches</i> ['rɪtʃɪz] <i>attach</i> [ə'tætʃ]
[dʒ]	<i>jest</i> [dʒɛst]	<i>juggle</i> [dʒʌɡl] <i>adjudicate</i> [ə'dʒʊdɪ, ket] <i>adjudge</i> [ə'dʒʌdʒ]
[h]	<i>how</i> [haʊ]	<i>heaven</i> ['hevən] <i>El Cajon</i> [ , el, kə'hɒn] <i>cahoots</i> [ , kə'huts]
[hw]	<i>when</i> [hwɛn]	<i>Joaquin</i> [hwa'kin] <i>whimsical</i> ['hwɪmzɪkəl]
[m]	<i>mom</i> [mɑm]	<i>militant</i> ['mɪlətənt] <i>amusing</i> [ə'mju:zɪŋ] <i>spume</i> [spjum]
[n]	<i>noun</i> [naʊn]	<i>nevermore</i> [ ,nevə'mɔ:] <i>announcer</i> [ə'naʊnsə] <i>sturgeon</i> ['stɜ:dʒən]
[ŋ]	<i>sing</i> [sɪŋ]	<i>English</i> ['ɪŋɡlɪʃ] <i>language</i> ['læŋgwɪdʒ] <i>pang</i> [pæŋ]
[l]	<i>love</i> [lʌv]	<i>lavendar</i> ['lævəndə] <i>illusion</i> [ɪ'luzən] <i>medial</i> ['mi:diəl]

**TABLE C.6 (Continued)**

IPA Symbol	Key Word	Other Words
<i>Consonants (cont.)</i>		
[w]	<i>watch</i> [wɒtʃ]	<i>wash</i> [wɒʃ] <i>aware</i> [ə'weə] <i>equestrian</i> [ɪ'kwɛstriən]
[j]	<i>yellow</i> ['jɛlə]	<i>William</i> ['wɪljəm] <i>Yukon</i> ['ju:kən]
[r]	<i>run</i> [rʌn]	<i>Wrigley</i> ['rɪɡli] <i>martial</i> ['mɑ:ʃəl] <i>appear</i> [ə'pɪə]



# Appendix D

## Foreign Language Pronunciation

Despite the fact that most people of the United States and Canada have their ethnic roots embedded in a foreign culture, most Americans are familiar with only one language—American English—while most Canadians are familiar with but two, English and French.<sup>1</sup> This lack of exposure to languages presents a problem to most announcers, who must read words and names of unfamiliar languages daily. News stories originating in any of a hundred different nations, featuring the names of places and people and organizations, must be read with accuracy and authority by professional news announcers. Announcers on classical-music stations must deal with Spanish, Italian, French, German, and Russian names and music titles. Commercials for a variety of goods and services—international restaurants, foreign tours, exotic perfumes, foreign films, and Oriental rugs, to name a few—often require the ability to pronounce foreign names and words. It is no exaggeration to state that your career as a professional announcer will be seriously handicapped unless you develop skill and ease in pronouncing words from at least the major modern languages of the world.

Several years of study of every major language would prepare you ideally for your work, but because time and capacities do not usually permit such thoroughness, the best option is to learn the

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<sup>1</sup>“Foreign” once meant “not native to the country of the speaker.” However “foreign” has negative connotations, as in “a foreign object in one’s eye.” We once spoke of “foreign students”; they now are “international students.” In this textbook, the term “foreign language” is neutral and simply means any language other than the language of this book.

rules of pronunciation of the languages you are most likely to need. This chapter provides a detailed discussion of Spanish, Italian, French, and German pronunciation and mentions other European and Asian languages. The practice section includes commercial and news copy drawing on several languages.

Although foreign pronunciation is stressed in this chapter, proper pronunciation for radio and television is not always the same as “correct” pronunciation. Conventional pronunciations of foreign cities, nations, personal names, and musical compositions are preferred on radio and television. Here are some examples:

City	Correct Pronunciation	Conventional Pronunciation
Paris	PAH-REE' [pa'ri]	PAIR'-IS ['pɛris] or ['pærɪs]
Copenhagen	KOEBN-HAU'-N [købŋ'haun]	KOPE'-UN-HAIG'-UN ['kɒpən,heŋŋ]
Berlin	BARE-LEEN' [bɛr'liŋ]	BER-LIHN' [bɛr'liŋ]

You are expected to use correct foreign pronunciation for certain words and to modify it for others. This recommendation amounts to knowing when it is correct to be incorrect.

There are three possibilities when you are pronouncing foreign or foreign-derived words:

1. You may pronounce them as the natives do in the country of origin.
2. You may modify them to conform to conventionally accepted usage.
3. You may completely Anglicize them.

There are few rules to guide you. The position that the correct pronunciation is *never* wrong offers no help. Even the most extreme advocate of correct pronunciation would admit that an announcer who says PAH-REE', FRAHS [pa'ri 'frās] sounds affected.

This chapter illustrates rules of pronunciation for several languages. Pronunciation is transcribed into the IPA as well as the less precise symbols of radio and television news services. Most European countries are made up of many once-independent states, and regional pronunciation variations abound. Rules given in this chapter follow those established by qualified natives as standard. Deviations are not necessarily substandard.

## Guidelines for Announcers

In the absence of *rules*, here are *suggestions* that reflect the practice of announcers in the United States and Canada. The guidelines are offered to bring order to a situation that is disorderly, so they do not promise answers to all pronunciation questions that may arise.

*Give the names of cities and countries the familiar pronunciation used in the United States.* The citizens of Germany call their country *Deutschland*; the word *Germany* is not even a German word. If it were, its German pronunciation would differ considerably from that used by Americans. There is no reason to apply German rules of pronunciation to the name *Germany*, or to call Germany *Deutschland*. Also, the correct Japanese pronunciation of Iwo Jima is EE-WAW'-DJEE-MAH [i'wɔdʒi,mɑ], but it is customary in the United States to say the technically incorrect EE'-WO DJEE'-MUH ['i,wɔ'dʒimə].

We usually *spell* names of foreign cities and countries as they are in their own countries but *pronounce* them in ways that are different from their “proper” pronunciations. This is no problem when the name is familiar, as Paris, Berlin, and Copenhagen are. The problem arises when a name that is relatively unknown to Americans—such as Srebrenica (SHRAY-BUH-NEETS'-UH) [ʃre,bə'nitsə], Mogadishu (MO-GUH-DEESH'-OO) [mɔgə'diʃu], or Azerbaijan (AHZ-ER-BY-ZHAHN') [ɑzɜ'baɪ'zɑŋ]—is suddenly thrust into the news. When rules do not help, you should check a pronunciation guide. Some may be found in broadcast stations, and others should be in your personal library. John S. Kenyon and Thomas Knott's *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* and the *NBC Handbook of Pronunciation* provide pronunciations of foreign place names for broadcast use.

*Pronounce the names of American cities that have foreign namesakes as the people who live there pronounce them.* Vienna, Versailles, Marseilles, Cairo, and Alhambra are all names of American cities, and none is pronounced like its foreign counterpart. Pronunciation guides will give you local pronunciations of these and other cities and towns.

*In pronouncing the names of foreigners, adopt one of the following rules.* (1) If the person's preference is known, use the preferred pronunciation. (2) If the person is well known and a conventional pronunciation has developed, use that pronunciation. (3) If the person is not well known and you do not know the person's preference, follow the rules of pronunciation for his or her language.

*In pronouncing American names derived from foreign names, adopt one of the following rules.* (1) If the person's preference is known, use that pronunciation. (2) If the person's preference is not known, pronounce the name the way other Americans of the same name do. For example, if the name is DuBois and the person is American, you will be safe pronouncing it DEW-BOYZ', rather than DUH-BWAH' as if it were French.

*In pronouncing the titles of foreign musical compositions, let the following rules guide you.* (1) If the title is in common use and the customary pronunciation is quite close to the original, use that pronunciation. (2) If the title is little known and has no conventional pronunciation, pronounce it according to the rules in its country of origin. Although it may sometimes be desirable to soften some foreign words slightly for American ears, you cannot in this instance go wrong by being correct.

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## Spanish Pronunciation

Spanish, unlike English, is a strictly phoneticized language. Once you have mastered the rules of Spanish pronunciation, you will know how to pronounce any Spanish word you see in print. Although a few letters have more than one speech sound, the surrounding letters in the word provide an infallible guide to their pronunciation.

### Stress

Spanish words have one strongly stressed syllable. All other syllables receive no stress at all. There is no such thing as secondary

stress; every syllable in a word is either stressed or not, with no middle ground.

Many Spanish words carry an accent mark over one of the vowels—for example, *médico*—and in this case the syllable with the accented vowel receives a strong stress. Unlike the accent marks in French, the Spanish accent mark does not affect the pronunciation of the vowel.

Two general rules govern words that carry no mark:

1. Words ending in a consonant other than *n* or *s* are stressed on the last syllable, such as *usted* [o'stɛd], *canal* [ka'nal], and *señor* [se'ɲor].
2. Words ending in *n*, *s*, or a vowel are stressed on the penultimate (next-to-last) syllable, such as *joven* ['xovən], *señores* [sen'jores], and *hombre* ['ɔmbre].

## Spanish Vowels

Spanish has five vowels: *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u*. Whether the vowel is stressed or unstressed, it seldom varies from its customary sound. The chief exceptions are *i* and *u* when they form part of a diphthong. No vowel ever becomes the schwa vowel [ə], as, for example, the letter *a* does in the English word *about*.

<i>a</i>	The vowel <i>a</i> is always pronounced “ah” [a], as in <i>father</i> . Examples: <i>balsa</i> ['balsa] (BAHL'-SAH); <i>casa</i> ['kasa] (KAH'-SAH).
<i>e</i>	The vowel <i>e</i> is pronounced “ay” [e], as in the English word <i>bait</i> , but it sometimes becomes more like “eh” [ɛ], as in <i>met</i> , depending on its context. When it has the “ay” sound, it is never prolonged and allowed to glide into an “ee” sound. Examples: <i>meses</i> ['meses] (MAY'-SAYS); <i>deberes</i> [de'beres] (DAY-BAY'-RAYS); <i>gobierno</i> [go'βjerno] (GO-BYEHR'-NOH).
<i>i</i>	The vowel <i>i</i> , except when part of a diphthong, is always pronounced “ee” [i], as in <i>machine</i> . Examples: <i>definitivo</i> [defini'tiβo] (DAY-FEE-NEE-TEE'-VO); <i>pipa</i> ['pipa] (PEE'-PAH).
<i>o</i>	The vowel <i>o</i> is usually pronounced “oh” [o], as in the English word <i>hoe</i> , but depending on

its context it may become more like “aw” [ɔ]. Examples: *contrata* [kon'trata] (KOHN-TRAH'-TAH); *pocos* ['pokos] (POH'-KOHHS); *hombre* ['ɔmbre] (AWM'-BRAY).

*u* The vowel *u*, when not part of a diphthong, is pronounced “oo” [u], as in *rule*. Examples: *luna* ['luna] (LOO'-NAH); *público* ['publiko] (POO'-BLEE-KO).

## Spanish Diphthongs

There are a number of diphthongs in Spanish. They are summarized in the following list:

- ia, ie, io, and iu* If you pronounce the sounds “ee” and “ah” together very rapidly, they form a sound very much like “yah.” A similar change occurs in rapidly saying aloud the two component sounds in *ie* (“yay”), *io* (“yo”), and *iu* (“you”). These sounds, called diphthongs because they are a combination of two vowels, are represented as follows in IPA: [ja], [je], [jo], [ju]. In pronouncing them, sound both component sounds but make sure that the *i* becomes [j]. Examples: *piano* ['pjano] (PYAH'-NO); *mientras* ['mjentras] (MYAYN'-TRAS); *naciones* [na'sjones] (NAH-SYONE'-AYS); *viuda* ['vjuda] (VYOO'-DAH).
- ei* The Spanish *ei* is pronounced “ay” [e], as in the English word *rein*. Example: *seis* [ses] (SAYSS).
- ai* The Spanish *ai* is pronounced “eye” [ai]. Example: *bailar* [bai'lar] (BY-LAHR'). (Note: At the ends of words, *ei* and *ai* are spelled *ey* and *ay*.)
- oi* The Spanish *oi* is pronounced “oy” [ɔi], as in *loiter*. Example: *heroico* [er'ɔiko] (EH-ROY'-KO).
- ua, ue, ui, and uo* In Spanish, *u* preceding another vowel is pronounced like *w* [w] in English. Examples: *cuatro* ['kwatro] (KWAH'-TRO); *punte* ['pwente]

	(PWEN'-TAY); <i>cuidar</i> [kwi'dar] (KWEE-DAR'); <i>cuota</i> ['kwota] (KWO'-TAH). (But note the exceptions under <i>gu</i> and <i>qu</i> .)
<i>au</i>	The Spanish <i>au</i> is pronounced "ow" [au]. Example: <i>autobus</i> [auto'bus] (OW-TOE-BOOS').
<i>eu</i>	The Spanish <i>eu</i> is pronounced by running "eh" [ɛ] and "oo" [u] together rapidly. Example: <i>deuda</i> [dɛ'uda] (DEH-OO'-DAH).

## Spanish Consonants

<i>b</i>	At the beginning of a word or after <i>m</i> , the Spanish <i>b</i> is pronounced like the English <i>b</i> [b]. Examples: <i>bueno</i> ['bweno] (BWAY'-NO); <i>nombre</i> ['nombre] (NOHM'-BRAY). In other positions its sound is more like the English <i>v</i> , although it is produced with both lips instead of the upper teeth and lower lip. The IPA symbol for this sound is [β]. Example: <i>alabar</i> [ala'βar] (AH-LAH-BAHR'). (Note: There is no way of indicating this sound with conventional type, so <i>B</i> is used in the wire-service example.)
<i>c</i>	The Spanish <i>c</i> has two values: (1) Before <i>e</i> or <i>i</i> it is soft. Castilian speech—fairly standard in most of Spain—pronounces this as <i>th</i> in <i>thin</i> . In southern Spain and in Latin America it is pronounced as <i>s</i> in <i>say</i> . You should base your choice on the origin of the person or title, unless a large Spanish-speaking audience in your area would consider Castilian pronunciation affected. Example: <i>ciudad</i> [sju'dad] (SYOU-DAHD') or [ɛju'dad] (THYOU-DAHD'). (2) In all other positions, <i>c</i> is pronounced as in <i>car</i> . Examples: <i>cura</i> ['kura] (KOO'-RAH); <i>acto</i> ['akto] (AHK'-TOH). For the sound of "k" preceding <i>e</i> or <i>i</i> see <i>qu</i> .
<i>cc</i>	The first <i>c</i> is by definition hard, and because <i>cc</i> appears only before <i>e</i> or <i>i</i> , the second <i>c</i> is soft. Example: <i>acceso</i> [ak'seso] (AHK-SAY'-SOH) or in Castilian [ak'ɛso] (AHK-THAY'-SO).

- ch* The Spanish *ch* is pronounced as the *ch* [tʃ] in *church*. Example: *muchacha* [mu'tʃatʃa] (MOO-CHA'-CHA).
- d* At the beginning of a word or after *n* or *l*, the Spanish *d* is much like the English *d* [d]. Examples: *dios* [djos] (DYOS); *caldo* ['kaldo] (KAHL'-DO). In other positions it is more like a weak-voiced *th* [ð], as in *weather*. This sound is made by extending the tongue a short distance beyond the front teeth and thus weakening the sound. Example: *padre* ['paðre] (PAH'THRAY). (Note: This sound is still more [d] than [ð], so the [d] will be used in this appendix.)
- f* The Spanish *f* is pronounced like the English *f* [f]. Example: *flores* ['flores] (FLO'-RAYS).
- g* The Spanish *g* has two values: (1) Before *e* or *i*, a *g* is pronounced much like the German *ch* [x], as in *ach*, or the Scottish *ch*, as in *loch*. It is a guttural sound, with tightening and some rasp in the rear of the mouth but no vibration of the vocal folds. Examples: *general* [xene'ral] (KHAY-NAY-RAHL'); *gente* ['xente] (KHAYN'-TAY). (2) In all other positions, a Spanish *g* is hard, as in *gag*. Examples: *gala* ['gala] (GAH'-LAH); *largo* ['largo] (LAHR'-GO). (Note: Because the sound [x] does not occur in English, the wire services have difficulty transcribing it. Sometimes they use CH and sometimes KH. When CH is used there is no way of knowing whether [x] or [tʃ] is intended. The sound is transcribed as KH in this appendix, but you should be alert to the frequent inconsistencies in transcribing it in the wire-service practice material elsewhere in this book.)
- gu* When the sound of a hard *g* occurs before *e* or *i*, it is written *gu*. In this convention *u* is merely a marker and has no sound of its own. Example: *guia* ['gia] (GHEE'-AH).

<i>gü</i>	The two dots over <i>ü</i> when it is between <i>g</i> and <i>e</i> or <i>i</i> ( <i>gie</i> or <i>güi</i> ) indicate that <i>ü</i> is part of a diphthong, to be sounded like <i>w</i> . Example: <i>agüero</i> [a'gwero] (AH-GWAY'-RO).
<i>h</i>	Except in the combination <i>ch</i> , the Spanish <i>h</i> is an unsounded letter—the only one in the language. Examples: <i>habas</i> ['aβas] (AH'-BAHS); <i>adhesivo</i> [ade'siβo] (AHD-AY-SEE'-BO).
<i>j</i>	The Spanish <i>j</i> has a sound exactly like the first pronunciation of <i>g</i> given above. Example: <i>junta</i> ['xunta] (KHOON'-TAH).
<i>l</i>	The Spanish <i>l</i> is very similar to the English <i>l</i> , although the Spanish keep the rear of the tongue flat. Example: <i>labios</i> ['laβjos] (LAH'-BYOS).
<i>ll</i>	In Castilian Spanish, <i>ll</i> is pronounced much like <i>lli</i> [lj] in the English word <i>million</i> . However, in most parts of Latin America, <i>ll</i> is pronounced like <i>y</i> [j] in <i>yes</i> . Example: <i>calle</i> ['kalje] (KAH'-LYAY) or ['kaje] (KAH'-YAY).
<i>m</i>	The Spanish <i>m</i> is sounded just like the English <i>m</i> . Example: <i>cambio</i> ['kamβjo] (KAHM'-BYO).
<i>n</i>	Spanish has three pronunciations for the letter <i>n</i> . (1) Before <i>ca</i> , <i>co</i> , <i>cu</i> , <i>qui</i> , or <i>que</i> (that is, before any “k” sound) and before <i>g</i> or <i>j</i> , it is pronounced <i>ng</i> [ŋ] as in <i>sing</i> . Example: <i>tango</i> ['taŋgo] (TAHNG'-GO). (2) Before <i>f</i> , <i>v</i> , <i>p</i> , or <i>b</i> , it is pronounced like the English <i>m</i> . Example: <i>confiado</i> [kom'fjado] (KOM-FYAH'-DO). (3) In all other cases it is pronounced like the English <i>n</i> . Example: <i>manojó</i> [man'oxo] (MAH-NO'-KHO).
<i>nn</i>	This combination is rare in Spanish. Both <i>n</i> 's are sounded. Example: <i>perenne</i> [pe'ren:e] (PAY-RAYN'-NAY).
<i>ñ</i>	The Spanish <i>ñ</i> is pronounced <i>ny</i> [ɲ], as in the English word <i>canyon</i> . Example: <i>señor</i> [se'ɲor] (SAY-NYOR').
<i>p</i>	The Spanish <i>p</i> is pronounced like the English <i>p</i> . Example: <i>padre</i> ['paðre] (PAH'-THRAY).

- qu* The combination *qu* occurs only before *e* or *i* and is pronounced like the hard *c*, with *u* never sounded. Examples: *qué* [ke] (KAY); *aquí* [a'ki] (AH-KEE').
- r* The Spanish *r* has two values, neither of which is like the English sound. (1) At the beginning of a word or after *l*, *n*, or *s*, the tongue is trilled against the roof of the mouth. Examples: *rico* ['riko] (RREE'-KO); *honrado* [on'rado] (OWN-RRAH'-DO). (2) In other positions it is a single flip of the tongue against the roof of the mouth. Example: *caro* ['karo] (KAH'-RO).
- rr* The combination *rr* indicates a full trill rather than a single flip of the tongue.
- s* There are two pronunciations of the letter *s*. (1) Before *b*, *d*, *g*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, or *v*, it is pronounced like the English *z*. Example: *mismo* ['mizmo] (MEEZ'-MO). (2) In other cases it is pronounced like the English *s* in *sea*. Example: *cosa* ['kosa] (KOH'-SAH).
- sc* An *s* and hard *c*, or [s] plus [k], are always pronounced separately in both Castilian and non-Castilian. Example: *disco* ['disko] (DEES'-KO). In non-Castilian, *s* and soft *c*, being identical sounds, are merged. Example: *discernir* [diser'nir] (DEE-SAIR-NEAR'). In Castilian, *s* and soft *c*, which is actually [θ], are pronounced separately. Example: *discernir* [disær'nir] (DEES-THAIR-NEAR').
- t* The Spanish *t* is much like English *t*. Example: *trato* ['trato] (TRAH'-TOE).
- v* A *v* is sounded the same way as the Spanish *b*, with the same positional variations.
- x* The Spanish *x* is normally sounded like the English *x* [ks] in the word *veX*. Example: *próximo* ['proksimo] (PROCK'-SEE-MO). When *x* occurs before a consonant, Castilians pronounce it like the Spanish *s*. Example: *expreso* [es'preso] (ESS-PRAY'-SOH). The words for *Mexico* and *Mexican* are pronounced with

the *j* [x] sound: *México* ['mexiko] (MAY'-KHEE-KO).

*y*

The letter *y* is sounded much like the English *y* in *year*. Example: *yerba* ['jerba] (YEHR'-BAH). In certain instances, the letter *y* substitutes for the vowel *i*: (1) as the second element of a diphthong at the end of a word, as in *rey* [re] (RAY); (2) as the initial in a few proper names, as in *Ybarra* [i'bara] (EE-BAH'-RAH); (3) as the word for *and*, as in *pan y vino* [pani'vino] (PAHN-EE-VEE'-NO).

*z*

The letter *z* follows the rules for the soft *c*. Examples: *jerez* [xe'reø] (KHAY-RAYTH') (Castilian) or [xe'res] (KHAY-RAYSS') (Latin-American).

## Italian Pronunciation

Italian, like Spanish, has a phonetically strict spelling system. Although not quite as thorough as the Spanish system, in which the spelling tells you everything about the pronunciation of a word, it is a very businesslike system. Italian conventional spelling does not consistently mark stress, and in the unmarked words certain vowel qualities are undifferentiated. Aside from these uncertainties, Italian presents few difficulties.

### Stress

Italian words have one strongly stressed syllable, and the other syllables are completely unstressed. Unlike English, Italian has no half stresses. The relatively small number of words stressed on the last syllable are always marked with an accent over that vowel. Example: *sarà* [sa'ra] (SAH-RAH'). Most Italian words are stressed on the penultimate syllable. Example: *infinito* [infi'ni.to] (EEN-FEE-NEE'-TOE). Many words are stressed on the antepenultimate syllable.<sup>2</sup> Example: *medico* ['mediko] (MAY'-DEE-KOE). A few Italian

<sup>2</sup>The antepenultimate syllable is the third from the end of a word.

printing houses mark such words with a grave accent over the vowel in the syllable to be stressed, but this is not the general rule. In this appendix, an accent mark will be used to show stress on some syllable other than the penultimate. The grave accent will also be used to indicate an open *e* [ɛ] or an open *o* [ɔ], but this practice should cause no confusion, because syllables containing open *e* or open *o* are always stressed in Italian.

## Italian Vowels

Italian has seven basic vowel sounds but uses only the five letters *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* to represent them. Stressed or unstressed, each keeps its distinctive quality, though stressed vowels tend to be lengthened before single consonants; the first vowel of *casa* is longer than that of *cassa*, for example.

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| <i>a</i> | The vowel <i>a</i> is always pronounced “ah” [a], as in <i>father</i> . Examples: <i>là</i> [la] (LAH); <i>pasta</i> [ˈpasta] (PAH'-STAH).  |
| <i>e</i> | The Italian <i>e</i> varies from “ay” [e] to “eh” [ɛ]. Although there are ways of determining the correct pronunciation in each instance, the rules are too complex to be considered here. Most northern and southern Italians, including the best educated, use just one <i>e</i> , which may vary somewhat according to the consonants that precede or follow it. This pronunciation is understood and accepted everywhere. Where accent marks are given, the acutely accented <i>é</i> tells you that the pronunciation is [e], and the grave accent, <i>è</i> , tells you that the pronunciation is [ɛ]. Examples: <i>débole</i> [ˈdebole] (DAY'-BO-LAY); <i>prèsto</i> [ˈpresto] (PREH'-STOE). |
| <i>i</i> | The Italian <i>i</i> is much like the English <i>i</i> in <i>machine</i> . Example: <i>pipa</i> [ˈpipa] (PEE'-PAH).   |
| <i>o</i> | Speakers of Italian who distinguish between two <i>e</i> sounds also distinguish two qualities of <i>o</i> : a closed <i>o</i> [o], as in <i>go</i> , and an open <i>o</i> [ɔ], as in <i>bought</i> . Dictionaries sometimes indicate the closed <i>o</i> with an acute accent— <i>pólvere</i>  |

[ˈpolvere] (POHL'-VAY-RAY)—and the open *o* with a grave accent—*còsta* [ˈkɔsta] (KAW'-STAH). As with the open and closed *e*, the difference between the two varieties of *o* is minor, and most speakers who use only one *e* sound likewise use only one *o* sound.

*u* The vowel *u* is like the English *u* in *rule*. Examples: *luna* [ˈluna] (LOO'-NAH); *futuro* [fu'turo] (FOO-'TOO'-ROH).

## Italian Diphthongs

The Italian vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, and *u* form many different combinations to produce diphthongs. Although these may seem somewhat complex at first glance, they are quite easily mastered.

*ia* The diphthong *ia*, except when it follows *c* or *g*, is pronounced with *i* becoming “y” [j] and *a* retaining its regular pronunciation. Example: *piano* [ˈpjano] (PYAN'-NOH). When *ia* follows *c*, the *i* serves as a silent marker to indicate that *c* is soft, [tʃ] like the *ch* in *chair*: Example: *Ciano* [ˈtʃan,o] (TCHAH'-NOH). When *ia* follows *g*, the *i* again serves as a silent marker to indicate that *g* is soft, [dʒ] like the *g* in *gem*. Example: *Gianinni* [dʒa'nini] (DGAH-NEE'-NEE).

*ie* The diphthong *ie*, except for the few instances in which it follows *c* or *g*, is sounded with *i* becoming “y” [j] and *e* retaining its regular pronunciation. Examples: *pièno* [ˈpjeno] (PYAY'-NOH); *cielo* [ˈtʃelo] (TCHEH'-LOH). Like *ia*, *ie* following *c* or *g* serves to indicate that the soft pronunciation is to be used, and the *i* has no other function.

*io* The diphthong *io*, except where it follows *c* or *g*, is pronounced with *i* becoming “y” [j] and *o* retaining its regular pronunciation. After *c* or *g*, the *i* serves as a silent marker to indicate that the soft pronunciation is to be used. Examples: *Mario* [ˈmarjo] (MAHR'YO);

	<i>bacio</i> ['batʃo] (BAH'-TCHOH); <i>Giorgio</i> ['dʒɔrdʒo] (DGAWR'-DGOH).
<i>iu</i>	The diphthong <i>iu</i> , except where it follows <i>c</i> or <i>g</i> , is sounded with <i>i</i> becoming “y” [j] and <i>u</i> retaining its regular pronunciation. Following <i>c</i> or <i>g</i> , the <i>i</i> serves as a silent marker to indicate that the preceding sound is soft. Examples: <i>iuta</i> ['juta] (YOU'-TAH); <i>acciuga</i> [a'tʃuga] (AH-CHEW'-GAH); <i>giù</i> [dʒu] (DGOO).
<i>ai, oi, and ui</i>	These diphthongs are simply glides from <i>a</i> , <i>o</i> , or <i>u</i> to the “ee” sound. Examples: <i>mai</i> [mai] (MY); <i>pòi</i> [pɔi] (POY); <i>guida</i> ['gwida] (GWEE'-DAH).
<i>ua, ue, and uo</i>	In these diphthongs <i>u</i> becomes <i>w</i> (as in <i>will</i> ) and <i>a</i> , <i>e</i> , or <i>o</i> each retains its permanent sound. Examples: <i>guàio</i> ['gwaio] (GWAH'-YOH); <i>sàngue</i> ['saŋgwe] (SAHNG'-GWAY); <i>cuòre</i> ['kwɔre] (KWAU'-RAY).
<i>au</i>	The diphthong <i>au</i> is pronounced like <i>ow</i> [aʊ] in the English word <i>how</i> . Example: <i>Làura</i> ['laʊra] (LAU'-RAH).

## Italian Consonants

A crucial feature of Italian pronunciation is the occurrence of both single (or short) and double (or long) consonants. In Italian, a written double consonant always means a spoken double consonant. The nearest thing in English is the effect produced in two-word expressions such as *ought to*, *guess so*, or *sick cat*, which have counterparts in the Italian words *otto*, *messo*, and *seccare*. Note that this is not really a doubling of the sound as much as a prolonging of it. Before a double consonant (as in *canne*), a stressed vowel is perceptibly shorter than before a single consonant (as in *cane*). In the following discussion of the Italian consonants, many words will be listed without phonetic spellings for practice.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup>When transcribing Italian and German words into the IPA, a colon (:), referred to as a *length sign*, is inserted after a vowel or consonant symbol to indicate that its sound is prolonged, as in the Italian *figlio* ['fil:jo], and the German *lesen* ['le:zn].

- b* The Italian *b* is just like the English *b*. Examples: *barba, bianco, buono, bambino, babbo, sabbia, labbra*.
- c* The Italian *c* has two values: (1) Before *e* or *i*, it is soft, like *ch* [tʃ] in *church*. Examples: *cena, cènto, fàcile, Lècce, spicci, accènto*. When the soft *c* sound [tʃ] occurs before *a*, *o*, or *u*, it is written *ci* (as in *ciò*), and *i* is a silent marker, with no sound of its own. Example: *bacio* ['batʃo] (BAH'-TCHOH). (2) In all other positions, *c* is hard, like *c* [k] in *call*. Examples: *caldo, cura, clèro, bocca, sacco, piccolo*.
- ch* The combination *ch* occurs only before *e* or *i*, where it represents a hard *c* [k]. Examples: *che* [ke] (KAY); *vecchio* ['vek:jo] (VEHK'-KYOH).
- d* The Italian *d* is much like the English *d*. Examples: *dardo, càndido, freddo, iddio*.
- f* The pronunciation of *f* is just as in English. Examples: *faccia, fiato, fiume, gufo, bèffa, ràffio, soffiare*.
- g* The Italian *g* has two values: (1) Before *e* or *i*, it is soft, like the *g* in *gem* [ʤ]. Examples: *gènte, giro, pàgina, legge, viaggi, suggèllo*. When the soft *g* sound [ʤ] occurs before *a*, *o*, or *u*, it is written *gi* (as in *già*), and the *i* serves as a silent marker. Example: *Giovanni* [ʤo'van:i] (DGOH-VAHN'-NEE). (2) In all other positions, except as described below, *g* is hard, like the *g* in *good* [g]. Examples: *gamba, góndola, guèrra, lèggo, agganciare*.
- gh* The combination *gh* occurs only before *e* or *i*, where it represents a hard *g* sound [g]. Example: *ghiaccio* ['gjatʃ:o] (GYAHTCH'-OH).
- gli* The Italian *gli* is like the *lli* in *million*. When another vowel follows, as it usually does (in the next word when *gli* appears as the definite article *the*), the *i* is a silent marker. When *gli* occurs within a word, the consonant sound is always double. Remember that the *g*

in *gli* has no value whatsoever, and that, when *gli* is followed by another vowel, the *i* has no value. The entire sound, then, becomes [l] plus [j]. Examples: *figlio* ['fil:jo] (FEE'-LYOH); *paglia* ['pal:ja] (PAH'-LYAH); *pagliacci* [pa'ljatʃ:i] (PAH-LYAHCH'-CHEE); *gli altri* ['jaltri] (Y AHL'-TREE).

*gn* The combination *gn* is like the English *ny* [ŋ] in *canyon* (or the Spanish *ñ*). Within a word the sound is always double. Examples: *signore* [si'ɲ:ore] (SEEN-NYO'-RAY); *giugno* ['dʒuɲo] (JOON'-NYOH).

*h* Except in the combinations *ch* and *gh*, *h* is the only unsounded letter in Italian. In native words it occurs only at the beginning of four related forms of the verb *avere* (to have). The word *hanno*, for example, is pronounced exactly like the word *anno* ['an:o] (AHN'-NO).

*j* The letter *j* is not regularly used in Italian, except as a substitute for the letter *i* in proper names (*Jàcopo* for *Iàcopo*) or in a final position as a substitute for *ii* in plurals (*studj* for *studii*).

*l* The letter *l* can be pronounced like the English *l*, though Italians pronounce it with the tongue flat and unraised in the back of the mouth. Examples: *lavoro*, *lièto*, *Itàlia*, *giallo*, *bèlla*, *nulla*.

*m* The letter *m* is just like the English *m*. Examples: *mièle*, *mùsica*, *fame*, *mamma*, *gèmma*, *fiammiferi*.

*n* The Italian *n* is pronounced like the English *n*, including [ŋ] (*ng* as in *thing*) where it precedes hard *c* or hard *g*. Examples: *nòno* ['nɔno] (NAW'-NOH); *bianco* ['bjanɰko] (BYAHNG'-KOH); *inglese* [iŋ'gleze] (ING-GLAYZ'-AY).

*p* The pronunciation of *p* is much like the English *p*. Examples: *papa*, *prète*, *capo*, *dòppio*, *zuppa*, *appòggio*.

- q* The letter *q* has the same sound as hard *c* and is always followed by *u*, which is always sounded [w] as part of a diphthong. Examples: *quadro*, *quindi*, *dunque*, *quèrcia*. When this sound is doubled, it appears as *cq*. Examples: *acqua*, *nacque*, *acquistare*.
- r* Where a single *r* appears, it is manufactured with a single flip of the tongue tip against the roof of the mouth. Where double *r* appears, it calls for a trill of the tongue tip, as in Spanish. Examples: *Roma*, *rumore*, *dramma*, *carro*, *burro*, *orrore*.
- s* In most positions, the Italian *s* is pronounced like the English *s* in *sea*. Examples: *sole* ['sole] (SO'-LAY); *sfida* ['sfida] (SFEE'-DAH); *rosso* ['ros:o] (ROHS'-SOH). Before any of the voiced consonants, *b*, *d*, *g*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *r*, or *v*, the *s* is pronounced like *z* in *zoo*. Examples: *sbaglio* ['zbal:jo] (ZBAH'-LYOH); *disdegno* [di'zdeɲo] (DEE-ZDAY'-NYOH); *slancio* ['zlantʃo] (ZLAHN'-CHOH). A single *s* between vowels is pronounced either [s] or [z], with [s] generally preferred in Tuscany and [z] elsewhere. Examples: *casa*, *francese*, *còsa*.
- sc* Before *e* or *i*, *sc* is pronounced [ʃ] like *sh* in *shoe*. Within a word, it is pronounced twice. Examples: *scelto* ['ʃelto] (SHAYL'-TOH); *pesce* ['peʃ:e] (PAYSH'-SHAY). Before *a*, *o*, or *u*, it appears as *sci*. In this convention, the *i* is a silent marker. Examples: *sciame* [ʃame] (SHAH'-MAY); *asciutto* [a'ʃ:ut:o] (AHSH-SHOOT'-TOH). The spelling *scie* is pronounced the same as *sce*. In all other positions, *sc* is pronounced like *sk* in *ski*. Examples: *scale* ['skale] (SKAH'-LAY); *tasca* ['taska] (TAH'-SKAH).
- sch* The combination *sch* occurs only before *e* and *i*, where it represents *s* as in *say* plus hard *c* as in *come*. Example: *schiaivo* ['skjavo] (SKYAH'-VOH).

<i>t</i>	The Italian <i>t</i> is much like the English <i>t</i> . Examples: <i>tèsta</i> , <i>tòrto</i> , <i>triste</i> , <i>gatto</i> , <i>sètte</i> , <i>prosciutto</i> .
<i>v</i>	The Italian <i>v</i> is like the English <i>v</i> . Examples: <i>vivo</i> , <i>Verona</i> , <i>vuòto</i> , <i>bevve</i> , <i>òvvio</i> , <i>avviso</i> .
<i>z</i>	The letter <i>z</i> is ambiguous in Italian, representing both [ts], like <i>ts</i> in <i>cats</i> , and [dz], like <i>ds</i> in <i>beds</i> . In the initial position, there is no firm rule for its pronunciation. Examples: <i>zèlo</i> ['dzelo] (DZEH'-LOH); <i>zio</i> ['tsio] (TSEE'-OH). Internally, [ts] is general after <i>r</i> and <i>l</i> . Example: <i>fòrza</i> ['fòrtsa] (FAWR'-TSAH). A single <i>z</i> between vowels is [ts]. Example: <i>azione</i> [a'tsjone] (AH-TSYOH'-NAY).

## French Pronunciation

French, like English, uses complicated spelling conventions, including numerous superfluous letters, sequences of letters representing single sounds, several ways of writing one sound, and the use of one letter to represent several sounds. But on the whole, French spelling is more systematic than English, and with practice one can learn to read French words with an acceptable pronunciation.

### Stress

French words, as well as entire phrases and sentences, have about equal accent on each syllable up to the last one, which is a little more heavily stressed. In the name of the French composer *Debussy* [dəbysi], the syllable *-sy* gets a slight extra stress if you pause or stop after it but not if you do not.<sup>4</sup> In the sentence *Debussy est bien connu* (*Debussy is well known*), only the final sound of the phrase gets that extra bit of stress: [dəbysi ɛ bjɛ̃ kɔ̃ny].

<sup>4</sup>French *u* and German *ü* are both represented by the IPA symbol [y]. This sound does not occur in English, and no combination of English letters can approximate it phonetically. When sounds cannot be approximated with wire-service phonetics, no wire-service pronouncer is given.

## French Oral Vowels

French has three classes of vowel sounds: twelve oral vowels, four nasal vowels, and three semivowels. Because a single speech sound in French may have as many as six different spellings, the vowels, nasal vowels, and semivowels will be grouped by sound rather than alphabetically.

Many of the sample words include a sound somewhere between [o] (OH) and [ɔ] (AW). In IPA the symbol for this sound is [ɔ̃], but it is not much used in French dictionaries, so there is little point in using it here. Authoritative reference works use the symbol [ɔ] to describe *o* in *école* and *au* in *Paul*, even though the actual sound is probably closer to [o]. To avoid confusion, sample words will be transcribed as they are in standard reference works. As you become familiar with the French language, you may want to modify conventional transcriptions to suit your own standards of accuracy.

French has a number of speech sounds that do not occur in English, and each has been given an IPA symbol. Most of them are described here, but two need special explanation. The French tend to prolong a final *l* or *r* in an unvoiced, recessive manner. These sounds are especially noticeable when the words they are in terminate a phrase or are sounded separately. The IPA uses a small circle—[l̥] and [r̥]—to distinguish these from other *l* and *r* sounds. These symbols differ from the English syllabic consonant symbols [l] and [r], and they sound quite unlike anything in the English language. There is no truly satisfactory way of approximating these sounds in wire-service phonetics, but in this book they are represented as in these examples: *siecle* [sjek̥l̥] (SYEH-KL(UH)); *mettre* [met̥ʁ̥] (MET-R(UH)).

Table D.1 summarizes the pronunciation of the twelve French oral vowels.

The [ə], or “uh,” sound occurs also in nine common little words consisting solely of a consonant plus this vowel: *ce*, *de*, *je*, *le*, *me*, *ne*, *que*, *se*, and *te*. These are usually prefinal in a phrase, as in *je sais* [ʒəsɛ] (ZHUH-SAY) and *le roi* [lɔ̃ʁwa] (LUH-RWAH). If you listen carefully to a French speaker, you may decide that the vowel sound in each of these short words is closer to [œ] than to [ə]. Despite what your ears tell you, all standard French dictionaries transcribe these words with the schwa vowel. This practice will be followed here to avoid confusion, but you should be careful not to give these words a fully Americanized [ə] (UH) sound.

At the end of many words, an extra *e* appears after another

TABLE D.1 French Oral Vowels

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	French Spelling	Examples
[ɑ]	Between <i>a</i> in <i>father</i> and <i>æ</i> in <i>bat</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>patte</i> [pat] (PAHT)
		<i>à</i>	<i>déjà</i> [deʒa] (DAY-ZHAH)
[ɑ]	Like <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>phase</i> [faz] (FAHZ)
		<i>â</i>	<i>pâte</i> [pat] (PAHT)
[e]	Like <i>e</i> in <i>they</i> but without the final glide	<i>e</i>	<i>parlez</i> [parle] (PAR-LAY)
		<i>é</i>	<i>été</i> [ete] (AY-TAY)
[ɛ]	Like <i>e</i> in <i>met</i>	<i>ai</i>	<i>gai</i> [ge] (GAY)
		<i>e</i>	<i>mettre</i> [mɛtr] (MET-R(UH))
		<i>ê</i>	<i>bête</i> [bet] (BET)
		<i>è</i>	<i>frère</i> [frɛr] (FREHR)
		<i>ei</i>	<i>neige</i> [neʒ] (NEHZH)
		<i>ai</i>	<i>frais</i> [frɛ] (FRESH)
[i]	Like <i>i</i> in <i>machine</i>	<i>aî</i>	<i>maître</i> [mɛtr] (MET-R(UH))
		<i>i</i>	<i>ici</i> [isi] (EE-SEE)
		<i>î</i>	<i>île</i> [il] (EEL)
		<i>y</i>	<i>mystère</i> [mistɛr] (MEES-TAIR)
[o]	Like <i>o</i> in <i>hoe</i> but with the final glide toward an "oo" sound omitted	<i>o</i>	<i>chose</i> [ʃoz] (SHOZ)
		<i>ô</i>	<i>hôtel</i> [otɛl] (O-TEL)
		<i>au</i>	<i>haute</i> [ot] (OAT)
		<i>eau</i>	<i>beauté</i> [bote] (BO-TAY)
[ɔ]	Like <i>ou</i> in <i>bought</i> but shorter	<i>o</i>	<i>école</i> [ekɔl] (AY-KAWL)
		<i>au</i>	<i>Paul</i> [pɔl] (PAUL)
[u]	Much like <i>u</i> in <i>rule</i>	<i>ou</i>	<i>vous</i> [vu] (VOO)
		<i>où</i>	<i>où</i> [u] (OO)
		<i>où</i>	<i>coûter</i> [kute] (KOO-TAY)
[y]	Pronounced with the tongue as for [i] but with the lips rounded as for [u]	<i>u</i>	<i>lune</i> [lyn]
		<i>û</i>	<i>flûte</i> [flyt]

TABLE D.1 (Continued)

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	French Spelling	Examples
[ø]	Pronounced with the tongue as for [e] (“ay”) but with the lips rounded as for [o] (“oh”)	<i>eu</i>	<i>feu</i> [fø] <i>vœux</i> [vø]
[œ]	Pronounced with the tongue as for [ɛ] (“eh”) but with the lips rounded as for [ɔ] (“aw”)	<i>eu</i> <i>œu</i>	<i>feu</i> [fø] <i>sœur</i> [sœr]
[ə]	The schwa vowel, a simple “uh” sound, like the sound of <i>a</i> in <i>about</i> (occurs mainly in prefinal syllables)	<i>e</i>	<i>semaine</i> [səmɛn] (SUH-MEN) <i>neveu</i> [nəvø]

vowel. This so-called mute *e* has no effect on the pronunciation. Examples are *épée* [epɛ] (AY-PAY) and *craie* [krɛ] (KREH) or (KRAY).

Certain spellings fail to distinguish between pairs of vowel sounds: *a* represents both [a] and [ɑ]; *e* and *ai* represent both [ɛ] and [ɛ̃]; *o* and *au* represent both [o] and [ɔ]; *eu* and *œu* represent both [ø] and [œ]. Following consonants often give clues—for example, [ɛ], [ɔ], or [œ] is always used before *r* in the same syllable and never [e], [o], or [ø]. However, there are few sure rules. Fortunately, it does not matter very much because the distinctions between two members of a given pair are rarely important in conversation, and many educated speakers of French do not scrupulously observe them.

## French Nasal Vowels

In producing the nasalized French vowels, which have no counterpart in English, the breath passes through the mouth and nose simultaneously, giving a quality sharply distinct from that of the oral vowels.

There is no way to signify these sounds with wire-service phonetics, so the pronunciations of words containing nasalized vowels are transcribed only in IPA symbols.

The nasal vowels are the sounds that result when [ɑ], [ɛ], [ɔ], or

[œ] precedes *m* or *n*. In such constructions, *m* or *n* is not pronounced but serves only to indicate that the preceding vowel sound is nasalized.

The nasal French vowels are summarized in Table D.2.

Kenyon and Knott's *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English* substitutes the symbol [æ̃] for [ɛ̃] and the symbol [ō] for [ɔ̃]. But most French dictionaries follow the practice given here. You should be aware, however, that the nasalized [ɛ̃] is actually closer in sound to the nasalized [æ̃] and that the nasalized [ɔ̃] is actually closer to the nasalized [õ].

**TABLE D.2 French Nasal Vowels**

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	French Spelling		Examples	
		Before m	Before n	Before m	Before n
[ɑ̃]	Nasalized [ɑ]	<i>am</i>	<i>an</i>	<i>chambre</i> [ʃɑ̃br̥]	<i>avant</i> [avɑ̃]
				<i>champagne</i> [ʃɑ̃paɲ]	<i>français</i> [frɑ̃sɛ]
		<i>em</i>	<i>en</i>	<i>temple</i> [tɑ̃pl̥]	<i>entente</i> [ɑ̃tɑ̃t]
				<i>semblable</i> [sɑ̃blabl̥]	<i>pensée</i> [pɑ̃sɛ]
[ɛ̃]	Nasalized [ɛ]	<i>im</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>simple</i> [sɛ̃pl̥]	<i>cinq</i> [sɛ̃k]
		<i>ym</i>	<i>yn</i>	<i>symphonie</i> [sɛ̃fɔ̃ni]	<i>syntaxe</i> [sɛ̃tæks]
		<i>aim</i>	<i>aïn</i>	<i>faïm</i> [fɛ̃]	<i>bain</i> [bɛ̃]
		<i>eim</i>	<i>eïn</i>	<i>Rheims</i> [rɛ̃:s]	<i>peintre</i> [pɛ̃tr̥]
[ɔ̃]	Nasalized [ɔ]	<i>om</i>	<i>on</i>	<i>sombre</i> [sɔ̃br̥]	<i>pont</i> [pɔ̃]
				<i>rompu</i> [rɔ̃py]	<i>bonbon</i> [bɔ̃bɔ̃]
[œ̃]	Nasalized [œ]	<i>um</i>	<i>un</i>	<i>humble</i> [œ̃bl̥]	<i>lundi</i> [lœ̃di]

## French Semivowels

In French, certain combinations of vowels or of vowels and consonants combine to form new sounds, summarized in Table D.3.

The combination *ill* is ambiguous, because it represents either the diphthong [ij], as in *fille* [fij] or *sillon* [sijɔ̃], or the sequence [il], as in *mille* [mil] (MEEL) or *village* [vilaʒ] (VEE-LAZH).

**TABLE D.3 French Semivowels**

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	French Spelling	Examples
[j]	Before a vowel, like English <i>y</i> in <i>yet</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>hier</i> [jɛr] (YEHR) <i>Pierrot</i> [pjɛrɔ] (PYEH-ROH)
		<i>ï</i>	<i>païen</i> [paijɛ̃]
		<i>y</i>	<i>payer</i> [pejɛ] (PEH-YAY) <i>yeux</i> [jø]
	After a vowel, like <i>y</i> in <i>boy</i>	<i>il</i>	<i>travail</i> [travaj]
		<i>ill</i>	<i>soleil</i> [solaj]
		<i>ll</i>	<i>Marseille</i> [marsej]
		<i>ll</i>	<i>faillite</i> [fajit] (FAH-YEET) <i>bouillon</i> [buʒjɔ̃] <i>fille</i> [fij] (FEE-YUH) <i>sillon</i> [sijɔ̃]
[w]	Like the English <i>w</i> in <i>win</i>	<i>ou</i>	<i>oui</i> [wi] (WEE) <i>ouest</i> [west] (WEST) <i>avouer</i> [avwe] (AH-VWAY)
[ɥ]	Pronounced with the tongue as for [j] but with the lips rounded as for [w] (occurs mainly before the letter <i>i</i> )	<i>u</i>	<i>suisse</i> [sqis] <i>nuit</i> [nuj] <i>cuir</i> [kɥir]

In the diphthong [jɛ̃], the nasal vowel is written *en*. Examples: *ancien* [ɑ̃sjɛ̃]; *rien* [rjɛ̃].

The diphthong [wa] is written *oi*, as in *loi* [lwa] (LWAH). When it is followed by another diphthong beginning with [j], the letter *y* is used instead of *i*, as in *foyer* [fwaje] (FWAH-YAY) and *joyeux* [ʒwajø]. The diphthong [wɛ̃] is written *oin*, as in *point* [pwɛ̃] and *joindre* [ʒwɛ̃dʁ].

## French Consonants

With a few exceptions, the French consonants do not represent as many different sounds as the vowels do; for this reason, they are considered alphabetically in the following discussion.

The letters *b, d, f, m, n, p, t, v,* and *z* represent one sound each in French and are pronounced much the same as in English. With some exceptions doubled consonants (such as *nn, rr,* and *tt*) have the same values as the corresponding singles.

- c* Before *e, i,* or *y* or with the cedilla (*ç*) before any vowel, *c* is soft as in *city* [s]. Examples: *cent* [sɑ̃]; *grâce* [ɡras] (GRAHSS); *cité* [site] (SEE-TAY); *présis* [presi] (PRAY-SEE); *ça* [sa] (SAH); *reçu* [rɛʃy]. Before *a, o, u,* or a consonant, or in a final position, or when it is without the cedilla, *c* is hard as in *cat* [k]. Examples: *calme* [kalm] (KAHLM); *encore* [ɑ̃kɔʁ]; *cri* [kri] (KREE); *siècle* [sjɛkl] (SYEH-KL(UH)); *sec* [sek] (SECK). Double *cc* represents [ks] or simply [k], depending on the following letter. Examples: *accident* [aksidɑ̃]; *accord* [akɔʁ] (A-KAWR).
- ch* The combination *ch* is usually like *sh* in *shoe* [ʃ]. Examples: *chapeau* [ʃapo] (SHAH-POH); *Chopin* [ʃɔpɛ̃]; *riche* [riʃ] (REESH); *marché* [marʃe] (MAR-SHAY). In a few newer words of Greek derivation, *ch* stands for hard *c*. Example: *psychologie* [psikɔlɔʒi] (PSEE-KAW-LAW-ZHEE) or (PSEE-KOH-LOH-ZHEE).
- g* Before *e, i,* or *y,* the French *g* is soft, like the English *z* in *azure* [ʒ]. Examples: *geste* [ʒɛst] (ZHEST); *mirage* [mirɑʒ] (MEE-RAZH); *agir* [aʒir] (AH-ZHEER). The combination *ge,* with a mute *e,* represents the soft English *g* before *a* or *o*. Example: *bourgeois* [burʒwa] (BOOR-ZWAH). Before other vowels or consonants (other than

- n*), *g* is hard, as in *gag* [g]. Examples: *garçon* [garsõ]; *goût* [gu] (GOO); *règle* [rɛgʎ] (REG-L(UH)). The combination *gu*, with a mute *u*, represents a hard *g* before *e*, *i*, or *y*. Example: *vogue* [vɔg] (VAWG) or (VOHG).
- gn* This combination is much like the English *ny* in *canyon* [ɲ]. Note that this represents a different sound from the similar [ɲ]. Examples: *mignon* [miɲõ]; *Charlemagne* [ʃarlɛmɑɲ] (SHAR-L(UH)-MAH-NY(UH)).
- h* Except in *ch* and *ph*, the letter *h* represents no sound at all. Examples: *histoire* [istwar] (EES-TWAHR); *honnête* [ɔnɛt] (AW-NET) or (OH-NET). Between two vowels, however, *h* indicates that the vowels form separate syllables rather than a diphthong. Example: *envahir* [ãvair] (three syllables, the nasalized “ah,” followed by “vah,” and completed with “eer”).
- j* The French *j* is pronounced like the English *z* in *azure* [ʒ], or the same as the French soft *g*. Examples: *jardin* [ʒardɛ̃]; *Lejeune* [ləʒœn].
- l* The letter *l* can be pronounced like the English *l*, although the French pronounce it with the tongue flat and not raised at the back. Examples: *lache* [laʃ] (LAHSH); *ville* [vil] (VEEL) (one syllable). (See also the earlier discussion of the final *l* [l].)
- ph* This combination is the same as *f*. Example: *philosophie* [filɔzɔfi] (FEE-LAW-ZAW-FEE) or (FEE-LOH-ZOH-FEE).
- q* The French *q* is pronounced like the English *k*. It is normally followed by *u*, which is always mute. Examples: *quatre* [katʁ] (KAHT-R(UH)); *cinq* [sɛ̃k].
- r* The letter *r* is pronounced by most speakers as a guttural sound, with tightening and vibration in the region of the uvula. Examples: *rose* [roz] (ROSE); *terre* [tɛr] (TEHR). (See also the earlier discussion of the final *r* [r].)
- s* An *s* between vowels is pronounced like the English *z* in *crazy* [z]. Examples: *désir* [dezir] (DAY-ZEER); *raison* [ʁɛzõ]; *Thérèse* [tɛrɛz] (TAY-REZ). A single *s* in other positions and double *s* are always like the English *s* in *sea* [s]. Examples: *Seine* [sɛn] (SEN); *message* [mɛsɑʒ] (MEH-SAZH).

- sc* Before *e*, *i*, and *y*, the combination *sc* is soft, as in *science*. Example: *descendre* [desãdʁ]. Elsewhere, it is pronounced as [s] plus [k]. Example: *escorte* [ɛskɔʁt] (ES-KAWRT) or (ES-KORT).
- x* The letter *x* is usually like the English *x* in *extra*. Example: *expliquer* [ɛksplike] (EX-PLÉE-KAY). An initial *ex* before a vowel becomes [gz]. Example: *exercice* [ɛgzɛʁsis] (EGGZ-AIR-SEES).

Consonants written at the ends of French words are often not sounded; examples are *trop* [tro] (TROH), *part* [par] (PAR), *voix* [vwa] (VWAH), and *allez* [ale] (AH-LAY). An exception is *l*, as in *national* [nasjɔnal] (NAH-SYOH-NAHL). Often *c*, *f*, and *r* are sounded at the ends of words, as in *chic* [ʃik] (SHEEK), *chef* [ʃɛf] (SHEF), and *cher* [ʃɛʁ] (SHAIR). When a final *r* is preceded by *e*, the *r* is usually silent and the vowel is like *e* in *they* [e]. Example: *papier* [papje] (PAH-PYAY).

All the consonant sounds are pronounced at the ends of the words when they are followed by mute *e*. Examples: *place* [plas] (PLAHS); *garage* [garaʒ] (GAH-RAZH); *rive gauche* [riv goʃ] (REEVE-GOASH). These include *m* and *n*, which before a final mute *e* are pronounced as in English, and do not indicate that the preceding vowel is nasal. Examples: *aime* [ɛm] (EM); *pleine* [plen] (PLEN). Contrast these with *faim* [fã] (*f* plus nasalized *eh*) and *plein* [plã] (*pl* plus nasalized *eh*).

The addition of *s* (often the plural sign) after a consonant with or without a mute *e* has no effect on pronunciation. Thus *places* is the same as *place*, *parts* is the same as *part*, and *temps* is the same as *temp*. Likewise, the addition of *nt* (a plural sign in verbs) to a word ending in a mute *e* does not change anything—*chantent* and *chante* are both pronounced [ʃãt] (*sh*, as in *shoe*, plus the nasalized *ah*, plus a final *t*).

A liaison, or a linking, occurs in spoken French when the ordinarily silent consonant at the end of a word is sounded before a word beginning with a vowel sound. In liaison, *d* is pronounced [t], *g* is pronounced [k], *s* and *x* are pronounced [z], and nasalized *n* is sometimes denasalized. Examples: *grand amour* [grãtãmur]; *sang impur* [sãkãpy:r]; *les autres* [lezotr] (LEH-ZOH-TR(UH)) or (LAY-ZOH-TR(UH)); *deux hommes* [døzɔm]; *mon ami* [mɔnãmi] (MON-NAH-MEE).

## German Pronunciation

The English spelling system contains a great many excess letters. French resembles English in this respect, but German, like Spanish and Italian, is economical in its spelling system, with every letter (or combination of letters) usually representing one sound.<sup>5</sup>

German is easier to pronounce than it may appear to be. Most long German words are simply combinations of stem words with prefixes and suffixes. Once you identify these elements, you know where to break each word into syllables. The formidable word *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*, for example, is easily divided into *Arbeits*, *gemein*, and *schaft* by anyone familiar with the way German words are put together. Also, all German nouns are capitalized, a practice which should help you identify parts of speech, making for better interpretation of German titles and phrases.

Most German words are accented on the first syllable, such as *stehen* ['ʃte:ən] (SHTAY'-N), though not when they begin with a prefix, such as *verstehen* [fɛr'ʃte:ən] (FER-SHTAY'-N). Words foreign to German are often accented on some syllable other than the first, to conform with their native pronunciation, for example, *Philosophie* [fi:lo:zo:'fi] (FEE-LOH-SOH-FEE'). In compound words, the first component is usually accented, *Götterdämmerung* ['gœtər,dɛmərʊŋ].<sup>6</sup>

The German syllable *en*, when final in a word or word component, is deemphasized so that it is nearly lost. The IPA syllabic consonant [ŋ] would be a fair way of representing this sound, but all standard German reference works transcribe it as [ən]. This practice will be followed for IPA transcriptions, but in wire-service phonetic equivalents, N without a preceding vowel sound will be used. Example: *geben* [ge:bən] (GAYB'-N).

<sup>5</sup>There can be no such thing as a "spelling bee" in German, Italian, or Spanish. The moment a word is spoken, anyone who knows the language will instantly know how it is spelled. This statement is true for any phonetic language.

<sup>6</sup>This word is impossible to represent with wire-service phonetics because of the unique way Germans sound the syllable *er* at the ends of words or word components. This sound is transcribed [ɔr] in IPA, but rendering it UHR or UR would be misleading. In German speech the "r" sound is almost completely lost, and the unaccented "uh" [ɔ] is nearly all that remains. The sound is quite different from the French [r], so the same wire-service phonetics cannot be used. Throughout this section the German *er* will be transcribed as (UH(R)): *Götterdämmerung* is (GUH(R)-TUH(R)-DEM'-MER-RUNG).

At the end of a word and when otherwise unaccented (as, for example, when it appears in an unaccented prefix), the German letter *e* is pronounced as the schwa vowel—that is, as an unaccented “uh,” the IPA symbol for which is [ə]. Examples: *sehe* [ˈze:ə] (ZAY'-UH); *gesehen* [gə'ze:ən] (GUH-ZAY'-N).

## German Vowels

German has four classes of vowel sounds: seven short vowels, seven long vowels, three diphthongs, and one special vowel that occurs only unaccented. Like the French vowels, they will be arranged according to sound rather than by their German spelling.

**German Short Vowels** The seven German short vowels are summarized in Table D.4.

Note that the German spelling generally indicates when an accented vowel is short by having two consonants or a double consonant after it.

**German Long Vowels** Table D.5 summarizes the seven German long vowels. A colon (:) is used to indicate that the preceding vowel or consonant sound is to be prolonged.

Note that German spelling has four ways of showing that an accented vowel is long. (1) The vowel is at the end of a word: *ja, je, schi*. (2) The vowel is followed by only one consonant: *Grab, haben, wen*. (3) The vowel is followed by an unpronounced *h*: *Kahn, gehen, ihn*. (4) The vowel is written double: *Staat, See, Boot*. (The long *i* is never doubled; *ie* is used as the lengthening sign, as in *Lieder*.) There are relatively few words in which long vowels are not indicated in one of these ways. Two exceptions are *Papst* [pa:pst] (PAH-PST) and *Mond* [mo:nt] (MOANT).

The double dot over *ä, ö, and ü* is called an umlaut. The old-fashioned spellings for these umlaut vowels are *ae, oe, and ue*, which still survive in a few names: *Baedeker, Goethe, Huebner*. You will also encounter these spellings when a type font has no special umlaut letters.

**German Diphthongs** The German diphthongs are summarized in Table D.6.

**TABLE D.4 German Short Vowels**

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	German Spelling	Examples
[a]	Like English <i>a</i> in <i>father</i> but much shorter	<i>a</i>	<i>Gast</i> [gast] (GAHST) <i>fallen</i> ['falən] (FAHL'N)
[ɛ]	Like English <i>e</i> in <i>bet</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>Bett</i> [bɛt] (BET) <i>essen</i> [ɛsən] (ESS'N)
	The spelling <i>ä</i> is used for this sound when the basic form is <i>a</i>	<i>ä</i>	<i>Gäste</i> [gɛstə] (GUEST'-UH) <i>fällt</i> [fɛlt] (FELT)
[ɪ]	Like English <i>i</i> in <i>hit</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>blind</i> [blɪnt] (BLIHNT) <i>Winter</i> ['vɪntər] (VIHN'-TUH(R))
[ɔ]	Like English <i>au</i> in <i>caught</i> but much shorter	<i>o</i>	<i>Kopf</i> [kɔpf] (KAHPF) <i>offen</i> ['ɔfən] (AWF'-N)
[œ]	Pronounced with the tongue as for "eh" [ɛ] but with the lips rounded as for "aw" [ɔ]	<i>ö</i>	<i>Köpfe</i> ['kœpfə] <i>öffnen</i> ['œfnən]
[ʊ]	Like English <i>u</i> in <i>put</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>Busch</i> [bʊʃ] (BUSH) <i>Mutter</i> [mʊtər] (MUH'-TUH(R))
[y]	Pronounced with the tongue as for "ih" [ɪ] but with the lips rounded as for "oo" [ʊ]	<i>ü</i>	<i>Büsche</i> ['byʃə] <i>Mütter</i> ['mytər]

## German Consonants

- b* As in English, but see the discussion on voiced and voiceless consonants that follows this list.
- c* Like English *k*. Rare in native German words.
- ch* In native German words, *ch* stands for two slightly different sounds. (1) After back vowels (*a*, *o*, *u*, or *au*), it is a sound like the *ch* in the Scottish word *loch*, in which the breath stream is forced through a narrow opening between the back of the tongue and the soft palate. The IPA symbol for this sound is [x], and wire services transcribe it as either CH or KH. Examples:

TABLE D.5 German Long Vowels

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	German Spelling	Examples
[a]	Like English <i>a</i> in <i>father</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>ja</i> [ja:] (YAH) <i>Grab</i> [gra:p] (GRAHP)
		<i>ah</i>	<i>Kahn</i> [ka:n] (KAHN)
		<i>aa</i>	<i>Staat</i> [ʃta:t] (SHTAHT)
[e]	Much like English <i>e</i> in <i>they</i> but without the final glide	<i>e</i>	<i>geben</i> [ge:bən] (GAYB'-N)
		<i>eh</i>	<i>gehen</i> [ge:ən] (GAY'-N)
	When spelled <i>ä</i> or <i>äh</i> , the pronunciation usually is still "ay" [e]	<i>ee</i>	<i>See</i> [ze:] (ZAY)
		<i>ä</i>	<i>Gräber</i> ['gre:bər] (GRAY'BUH(R))
[i]	Much like English <i>i</i> in <i>machine</i>	<i>ih</i>	<i>Kähne</i> ['ke:nə] (KAY'-NUH)
		<i>i</i>	<i>Schi</i> [ʃi:] (SHE) <i>Lid</i> [li:t] (LEET)
		<i>ie</i>	<i>Ihn</i> [i:n] (EEN) <i>Lieder</i> ['li:dər] (LEE'-DUH(R))
[o]	Like English <i>ow</i> in <i>blow</i> but without the final glide	<i>o</i>	<i>so</i> [zo:] (ZO) <i>oben</i> ['o:bən] (OB'-N)
		<i>oh</i>	<i>Lohn</i> [lɔ:n] (LOAN)
		<i>oo</i>	<i>Boot</i> [bo:t] (BOAT)
[ø]	Pronounced with the tongue as for "ay" [e] but with the lips rounded as for "oh" [o]	<i>ö</i>	<i>Römer</i> ['rø:mər]
		<i>öh</i>	<i>Löhne</i> ['lø:nə]
[u]	Much like English <i>u</i> in <i>rule</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>du</i> [du:] (DOO) <i>Mut</i> [mu:t] (MOOT)
[y]	Pronounced with the tongue as for "ee" [i] but lips rounded as for "oo" [u]	<i>ü</i>	<i>Brüder</i> [br̥y:dər]
		<i>ih</i>	<i>rühmen</i> ['ry:mən]

*Bach* [bax] (BAHKH); *Buch* [bu:x] (BOOKH). (2) After front sounds, including the front vowels [i], [ɪ], [ɛ], and so on, the sound is produced by forcing the breath stream through a narrow channel between the front of

TABLE D.6 German Diphthongs

IPA Symbol	Description of Sound	German Spelling	Examples
[ai]	Like English <i>ai</i> in <i>aisle</i>	<i>ei</i>	<i>Leid</i> [laɪt] (LIGHT)
		<i>ai</i>	<i>Heine</i> ['hainə] (HIGH'-NUH)
		<i>ey</i>	<i>Kaiser</i> ['kaɪzər] (KY'-ZUH(R))
		<i>ay</i>	<i>Meyer</i> ['maɪər] (MY'-UH(R))
[aʊ]	Like English <i>ou</i> in <i>house</i>	<i>au</i>	<i>Bayern</i> ['baɪərɪn] (BUY'-URN)
			<i>Haus</i> [haʊs] (HOUSE)
[ɔɪ]	Like English <i>oi</i> in <i>oil</i>		<i>Glauben</i> ['glaʊbən] (GLOUB'-N)
		<i>eu</i>	<i>Leute</i> ['lɔɪtə] (LOY'-TUH)
		<i>äu</i>	<i>Häuser</i> ['hɔɪzər] (HOU'-ZUH(R))

the tongue and the hard palate. Many Americans make this same sound (although considerably weaker) in pronouncing the *h* of such words as *hue*, *huge*, and *human*. The IPA symbol for this sound is [ç], but the symbol [x] has been accepted by many authorities (including Kenyon and Knott) to represent both sounds, and it will be used here. Examples: *ich* [ix] (IHKH); *München* ['mynxən]; *Bräuche* ['brɔɪxə] (BROY'-KHUH); *Bäche* ['bɛxə] (BEKH'-UH). In a few foreign words, *ch* stands for [k]: *Charakter* [kə'raktər] (KUH-RAHKT'-TUH(R)).

*chs*

Like English *ks*. Example: *wachsen* ['vaxsən] (VAHKS'N).

*ck*

As in English. Example: *Stück* [ʃtyk].

*d*

As in English, but see the discussion below on voiced and voiceless consonants.

*dt*

Like English *t*. Example: *Stadt* [ʃtat] (SHTAHT).

*f*

As in English. Example: *fahl* [fa:l] (FAHL).

*g*

As in English except as noted below and when it appears in a final *ig*, where it becomes the "ch" [x] sound. Example: *hungrig* ['hʊŋrɪx] (HOONG'-RIHKH).

*gn*

Both letters are sounded, as in the English name *Agnes*. Example: *Gnade* ['gna:də] (GNAH'-DUH).

- h* As in English, when it occurs initially in a word or at the beginning of an element in a compounded word. Examples: *Haus* [haʊs] (HAUS); *Rathaus* ['rɑ:t,haʊs] (RAHT'-HAUS). As mentioned previously, an unpronounced *h* is used as a mark of vowel length.
- j* Like English *y* in *youth*. Example: *jung* [juŋ] (YOONG).
- k* As in English.
- kn* Both letters are sounded, as in *acknowledge*. Example: *Knabe* ['knɑ:bə] (KNAH'-BUH).
- l* Can be pronounced like the English *l*, although it is spoken with the tongue flatter in the mouth.
- m* As in English.
- n* As in English.
- ng* Always like the English *ng* [ŋ] in *singer* and never like the English *ng* plus *g* [ŋg] in *finger*. Examples: *singen* ['ziŋən] (ZING'-N); *Hunger* ['huŋər] (HOONG'-UH(R)).
- p* As in English.
- q* Occurs only in the combination *qu*, pronounced [kv]. Example: *Quelle* ['kvɛlə] (KVEL'-LUH).
- r* Pronounced with a slight guttural trill at the back of the tongue (although some northern and western dialects use the front of the tongue).
- s* Like English *z*. Examples: *so* [zo:] (ZO); *Rose* ['rɔ:zə] (ROH'-ZUH). See also the discussion on voiced and voiceless consonants that follows this list.
- ss* As in English.
- sch* Like English *sh* in *shoe*. Example: *schon* [ʃɔn] (SHOWN).
- sp* At the beginning of a word or as part of a compound, *sp* is pronounced like English *sh* plus *p*. Examples: *springen* ['ʃprɪŋən] (SHPRING'-N); *Zugspitze* [tsu:kʃpɪtsə] (TSOOK'-SHPITZ-UH). Otherwise, it is pronounced like English *s* plus *p*. Example: *Wespe* ['vɛspə] (VES'PUH).
- st* At the beginning of a word or as part of a compound, *st* is pronounced like *sh* plus *t*: *Stück* [ʃtyk]; *Bleistift* ['blai'ʃtɪft] (BLY'-SHTIFT). Otherwise it is pronounced like English *st*. Example: *Westen* ['vɛstən] (VEST'N).
- t* As in English.
- th* Always like *t*. Example: *Thomas* ['to:məs] (TOE'MAHS).
- tz* Like *tz* in *Schlitz*.
- v* In German words, *v* is pronounced like English *f*. Example: *vier* [fir] (FEAR). In foreign words, it is pro-

nounced like the English *v*. Example: *November* [no:'vembər] (NO-VEM'-BER). See, however, the discussion that follows.

- w* Always like the English *v*. Example: *Wein* [vaɪn] (VINE).
- x* As in English.
- z* Always like the English *ts*. Example: *zu* [tsu] (TSOO).

German has five pairs of voiced-voiceless consonants—that is, consonants produced in the same way except that the first of each pair is pronounced with some vibration of the vocal folds, whereas the second of each pair is produced with the vocal folds open and not vibrating. These pairs are *b-p*, *d-t*, *g-k*, *v-f*, and *z-s*. Voiced *b*, *d*, *g*, *v*, or *z* occur chiefly before vowels. When one of these vowels stands at the end of a word or part of a compound or before *s* or *t*, it is automatically replaced by the corresponding voiceless sound, although the spelling is not changed. That is, in these positions—finally or before *s* or *t*—the letters *b*, *d*, *g*, *v*, and *s* stand for the sounds [p], [t], [k], [f], and [s], respectively. Note the following examples:

<i>Gräber</i> ['gre:bər] (GRAY'-BUH(R))	versus	<i>das Grab</i> [gra:p] (GRAHP)
<i>Räder</i> ['re:dər] (RAY'-DUH(R))	versus	<i>das Rad</i> [ra:t] (RAHT)
<i>tragen</i> ['tra:gən] (TRAHG'-N)	versus	<i>du trägst</i> [tre:kst] (TRAYKST)
<i>Motive</i> [mo:'ti:və] (MO-TEE'-VUH)	versus	<i>das Motiv</i> [mo:'ti:f] (MO-TEEF')
<i>lesen</i> ['le:zən] (LAYZ'-N)	versus	<i>er las</i> [la:s] (LAHS)

## Other Languages

News releases often feature names of people and places and other words in the languages of Asian, Middle Eastern, African, and Eastern European nations. As an announcer, you must be prepared to read names and other words from China, Japan, Russia, Iraq, and Israel, among others, with acceptable pronunciation and intonation. However, no extensive rules for pronouncing these languages are given here. The Chinese, Japanese, Hindustani, Arabic,

Hebrew, and Russian languages use alphabets unfamiliar to most of us. When words from those languages appear in newspapers or in broadcast copy, they have been transliterated into the Latin (Roman) alphabet in some phoneticized version of the foreign original. For example, the Russian name РИМСКИЙ-КОРСАКОВ is meaningless and unpronounceable to people not familiar with the Cyrillic alphabet, but when it is transliterated into *Rimsky-Korsakov*, no announcer needs to rely on Russian rules to pronounce it correctly. It would not be necessary to learn the rules of French or Spanish pronunciation if *Bizet* were transcribed as “Bee-zay” or if *hombre* were spelled in English-speaking countries as “ohm’bray.” In transliterating words from non-Latin alphabets, we do this kind of phoneticizing. Because we do not phonetically transliterate Western European words, their spelling can confuse us if we are not familiar with the appropriate rules of pronunciation.

Broadcast announcers conventionalize the pronunciation of non-Western languages to a greater degree than those of Western Europe. During his career in politics, Nikita Khrushchev was called KROOS’-CHAWF by American announcers. But the correct Russian pronunciation requires a very different initial sound, one not possible to indicate by wire-service phonetics and not easily reproduced by most Americans. The initial sound of this name is represented by [x] in the International Phonetic Alphabet and is sounded as the final sound in the German word *ach* or Scottish *loch*. In the IPA, the name Khrushchev is represented as [xruʃˈtʃɔf]. When Mikhail Gorbachev became the leader of the Soviet Union, broadcast announcers began saying his last name as GAWR’-BUH-CHAWF, even though correct pronunciation places stress on the last syllable, GAWR-BUH-CHAWF’. Americans apparently have been conditioned to expect nearly correct pronunciation of Western European words, but to settle for far less authentic pronunciation of languages that do not use the Latin alphabet.

## Chinese Pronunciation

A few comments must be made about Chinese pronunciation. For many years, American announcers were about as casually inaccurate in the pronunciation of Chinese names and words as they were and are about the pronunciation of Japanese or Russian words. Since 1979, when the People’s Republic of China adopted the Pinyin system of phonetic transcription, however, announcers have made

serious efforts to pronounce Chinese words with some degree of authenticity. With the adoption of the Pinyin system, *Peking* became *Beijing*, *Szechwan* became *Sichuan*, and *Sinkiang* became *Xinjiang*. Former Chinese leader *Mao Tse-tung* became *Mao Zedong*, while *Hua Kuo-feng* became *Hua Guofeng*. Most symbols used in the Pinyin system are easily mastered: *p*, *b*, *t*, *d*, *k*, *g*, and *f*, for example, are pronounced as in English. There are, at the same time, some surprises: *q* represents the *ch* in *church*, and *x* represents the *sh* in *shoe*. Sounds that may cause trouble have been transcribed into wire-service phonetics and IPA symbols in Table D.7.

The complete Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (CPA) is given in Table D.8. You can say the Chinese alphabet by pronouncing the initial sounds, as listed in the first column, with the vowel given in parentheses after each one.

Memorization of the Pinyin symbols would not be very helpful because they differ from wire-service phonetic symbols. It might, therefore, be more practical to use the table showing Pinyin symbols as the basis for your own transliteration into wire-service phonetics, as in the following examples. Note that each syllable gets equal stress.

Den Xiaoping	(DUNG SHAU-PING)
Mao Zedong	(MAO DSUH-DUNG)
Hua Guofeng	(HWAH GWA-FUNG)
Guangdong	(GWUN-DUNG)
Beijing	(BAY-JING)
Qinghai	(CHING-HY)
Zhejiang	(JAY-JUNG)

It also should be noted that some radio and television stations continue to use the older system of transliteration—the Wade-Giles system—so you should ask station management about local preference before attempting to read copy with Chinese names and words.

**TABLE D.7 Transcription of Chinese Using the Pinyin System**

Pinyin Symbol	Wire-Service Symbol	IPA Symbol
h	H (highly aspirated as in German <i>ach</i> )	[x]
q	CH (as in <i>chew</i> )	[tʃ]
x	SH (as in <i>she</i> )	[ʃ]
zh	J (as in <i>jump</i> )	[dʒ]
z	DS (as in <i>reads</i> )	[dz]
c	TS (as in <i>hats</i> )	[ts]
o	AW (as in <i>saw</i> )	[ɔ]
y	Y (as in <i>yet</i> )	[j]

**TABLE D.8 The Chinese Phonetic Alphabet (CPA)**

CPA <sup>1</sup>	IPA	Key Words
<b>Initials</b>		
<b>b (o)</b>	[b]	bay (devoiced <sup>2</sup> )
<b>p (o)</b>	[pʰ]	pay
<b>m (o)</b>	[m]	may
<b>f (o)</b>	[f]	fair
<b>d (e)</b>	[d]	day (devoiced)
<b>t (e)</b>	[tʰ]	take
<b>n (e)</b>	[n]	nay
<b>l (e)</b>	[l]	lay
<b>g (e)</b>	[g]	gay (devoiced)
<b>k (e)</b>	[kʰ]	kay
<b>h (e)</b>	[x]	hay
<b>j (i)</b>	[dʒ]	jeep (palatal <sup>3</sup> )
<b>q (i)</b>	[tʃ]	cheer (palatal)

**TABLE D.8 (Continued)**

<b>x (i)</b>	[ʃ]	<b>she</b> (palatal)
<b>zh (i)</b>	[dʒ]	<b>judge</b> (retroflex, <sup>4</sup> devoiced)
<b>ch (i)</b>	[tʃ]	<b>church</b> (retroflex)
<b>sh (i)</b>	[ʃ]	<b>shirt</b> (retroflex)
<b>r (i)</b>	[ʒ]	<b>leisure</b> (retroflex)
<b>z (i)</b>	[dz]	<b>reads</b> (devoiced)
<b>c (i)</b>	[ts <sup>4</sup> ]	<b>hats</b>
<b>s (i)</b>	[s]	<b>say</b>
<b>y (i)</b>	[j]	<b>yea</b>
<b>w (u)</b>	[w]	<b>way</b>
<b>Finals</b>		
<b>a</b>	[a]	<b>father</b>
<b>o</b>	[ɔ]	<b>saw</b> (approximately)
<b>e</b>	[ʊ]	<b>her</b> (British)
<b>i</b> (after <i>z, c, s, zh, ch, sh, r</i> )	[z, z]	
<b>i</b> (elsewhere)	[i]	<b>see</b>
<b>u</b>	[u]	<b>rude</b>
<b>ü<sup>5</sup></b>	[y]	French <b>tu</b> , German <b>fühlen</b> (i with rounded lips)
<b>er</b>	[ɚ]	<b>err</b> (American)
<b>ai</b>	[ai]	<b>eye</b>
<b>ei</b>	[ei]	<b>eight</b>
<b>ao</b>	[au]	<b>now</b>
<b>ou</b>	[ou]	<b>oh</b>
<b>an</b>	[an]	<b>can</b> (more open)
<b>en</b>	[ɛn]	<b>turn</b> (British)
<b>ang</b>	[aŋ]	German <b>Gang</b>
<b>eng</b>	[ʌŋ]	<b>sung</b>
<b>ong</b>	[uŋ]	German <b>Lunge</b>

TABLE D.8 (Continued)

<b>ia</b>	[ia]	Malaysia
<b>ie</b>	[iɛ]	yes
<b>iao</b>	[iau]	yowl
<b>iu</b>	[iou]	yoke
<b>ian</b>	[ien]	yen
<b>in</b>	[in]	in
<b>iang</b>	[iaŋ]	young (approximately)
<b>ing</b>	[iŋ]	sing
<b>iong</b>	[iuŋ]	German <b>jünger</b> (approximately)
<b>ua</b>	[ua]	guano
<b>uo</b>	[uɔ]	wall
<b>uai</b>	[uai]	wife
<b>ui</b>	[uei]	way
<b>uan</b>	[uan]	one (approximately)
<b>un</b>	[uən]	went (approximately)
<b>uang</b>	[uɑŋ]	oo+ahng
<b>üe<sup>5</sup></b>	[yɛ]	ü+eh
<b>üan<sup>5</sup></b>	[yan]	ü+an
<b>ün<sup>5</sup></b>	[yn]	German <b>grün</b>

<sup>1</sup>Saying the given sound plus the vowel in parentheses gives you the name of the letter. Thus you will be able to say the ABCs in Chinese.

<sup>2</sup>*Devoiced* means the vocal cords do not vibrate.

<sup>3</sup>*Palatal* means the front of the tongue touches the hard palate.

<sup>4</sup>*Retroflex* means the tip of the tongue is slightly curled.

<sup>5</sup>After j, q, x, and y, the two dots above **u** are omitted.



## **PRACTICE**

### **Pronouncing Spanish Words**

Practice pronouncing the following Spanish words:

Toledo	Ramírez	Cabezón
Guernica	San Sebastián	<i>Danzas españolas</i>
Falange	Albéniz	<i>Pepita Jiménez</i>
Cuernavaca	Manuel de Falla	Oviedo
Segovia	Granados	picante
García	Sarasate y Navascuéz	servicio



## **PRACTICE**

### **Pronouncing Italian Words**

Practice pronouncing the following Italian names and phrases:

Arcangelo Corelli	<i>Il barbiere de Siviglia</i>
Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina	<i>La cenerentola</i>
Ottorino Respighi	<i>L'Italiana in Algeri</i>
Gioacchino Rossini	<i>Tosca</i>
Domenico Scarlatti	<i>Chi vuole innamorarsi</i>
Giuseppe Tartini	<i>Il matrimonio segreto</i>
Beniamino Gigli	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>
Dusolina Giannini	<i>La finta giardiniera</i>
Franco Ghione	<i>Così fan tutte</i>
Giacomo Puccini	<i>La gioconda</i>



## **PRACTICE**

### **Pronouncing French Words**

Practice pronouncing the following French names and phrases:

Georges Bizet	Prosper Mérimée
Gabriel Fauré	Marcel Proust
Camille Saint-Saëns	<i>L'enfant prodigue</i>
Vincent d'Indy	<i>Danseuses del Delphes</i>
Maurice Chevalier	<i>Jardins sous la pluie</i>
Benoit Coquelin	<i>La demoiselle élue</i>
Rachel	<i>Le chant des oiseaux</i>
Guy de Maupassant	<i>Si mes vers avaient des ailes</i>



## **PRACTICE**

### **Pronouncing German Words**

Practice pronouncing the following German names and words:

Wolfgang Amadeus	Lebensgefährlich
Mozart <sup>7</sup>	<i>Dass sie hier gewesen!</i>
Franz Neubauer	<i>Die Götterdämmerung</i>
<i>Die schöne Müllerin</i>	<i>O fröhliche Stunden</i>
Dietrich Buxtehude	<i>Winterreise</i>
<i>Schmücke dich, o</i>	<i>Ein' feste Burg</i>
<i>liebe Seele</i>	<i>Der fliegende Holländer</i>
Max Bruch	Heinrich von Herzogenberg
Frühling übers Jahr	<i>Verklärte Nacht</i>

<sup>7</sup>Amadeus, being a Latin name, does not follow German rules of pronunciation.

**PRACTICE****Pronouncing Foreign Words**

The following practice material consists of commercials featuring foreign words and names. Additional practice material for pronouncing foreign languages is found at the end of Chapter 12.

CLIENT: Cafe Europa

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: When you think of good food, you probably think of Paris, Copenhagen, or Rome. But, now, right here in the center of America, you can find the best of European and Asian cuisine at a price that will surprise you. The Cafe Europa, on Highway 40 at White's Road, is under the supervision of Chef Aristide Framboise. Chef Framboise earned his Cordon Bleu at the famous Ecole des Quatre Gourmandes in Cannes, France. The chef's staff of European and Asian cooks has been personally trained for the exacting work of pleasing you, regardless of your culinary preferences. Whether you like poulet sauté marseillais or gedämpfte Brust, spaghetti all'amatriciana or calamares en su tinta, you'll thrill to your candlelit dinner at Cafe Europa. Dial 777-3434, and ask our

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maitre d' for a reservation soon. That's 777-3434, the Cafe Europa, at White's Road on Highway 40.

*Pronunciation guide:*

Aristide Framboise	(AR-EES-TEED' FRAM-BWAHZ')
Ecole des Quatre Gourmandes	(AY-KOHL' DAY KAT GOOR-MAHND')
poulet sauté marseillais	(POO-LAY' SO-TAY' MAHR-SAY-AY')
gedämpfte Brust	(GEH-DEMFT'-UH BRUST)
spaghetti all'amatriciana	(SPA-GET'-EE AL AHM-AH-TREECH-YAH'-NAH)
calamares en su tinta	(KAHL-AH-MAHR'-EES EN SU TEEN'-TAH)
maitre d'	(MET'-RUH DEE)

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CLIENT: Cafe Europa

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: How long since you've enjoyed a special evening of your own creation? Not a birthday. Not an anniversary. Not a holiday. But an evening you've set aside to tell that special someone, "I appreciate you!" The Cafe Europa is the perfect restaurant for this and all other very special celebrations. The Cafe Europa features delicacies from around the world. Sukiyaki from Japan. Nasi goereng from Indonesia. European cuisine includes pfannekoeken from Holland, chochifrito from Spain, and ratatouille from France. Or, perhaps you'd prefer an English rarebit or a German sauerbraten. Whatever your taste, you're sure to enjoy candlelit dining at Cafe L'Europa. Make a

date now, and call our maitre d' for a dinner reservation. Dial 777-3434, and prepare yourself for an unforgettable evening of dining at the Cafe Europa. Your significant other will appreciate your thoughtfulness.

*Pronunciation guide:*

sukiyaki	(SKEE-AHK'-EE)
pfannekoeken	(PFAHN'-KUK-UN)
ratatouille	(RAT-UH-TOO'-EE)
nasi goereng	(NAZ'-EE GEHR'-ING)
cochifrito	(COACH-EE-FREE'-TOE)
sauerbraten	(SOUR'-BRAHT-UN)

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CLIENT: Kuyumjian's Rug Bazaar

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Kuyumjian's has just received a large shipment of new and used Oriental rugs that must be sold at once. These rugs are being sold to settle tax liens against a major import firm. So, their misfortune is your gain. Here is your chance to own a genuine Oriental rug at a fraction of its regular cost. Gulistan, Kerman, Sarouk, Shiraz, and Baktiary rugs at unheard-of prices. Time does not permit a complete listing, but here are a few specials: a five-by-seven Faridombek in antique gold, only \$288. A three-by-five Feraghan in ivory and pistachio, just \$375. An extra-large, nine-

by-fourteen virgin wool Ispahan in ivory, \$1,000. Small Yezd, Oushak, and Belouj scatter rugs at less than \$100. All sizes are approximate, and quantities of each style are limited. Visit Kuyumjian's this week, and become the proud owner of an original, handwoven, virgin-wool Oriental rug. Kuyumjian's Rug Bazaar, on the downtown mall opposite the State Theater.

*Pronunciation guide:*

Kuyumjian's	(KY-OOM'-JUNZ)
Gulistan	(GOO'-LIS-TAHN)
Kerman	(KEHR'-MAHN)
Sarouk	(SAH-ROUK')
Shiraz	(SHEE'-RAHZ)
Baktiary	(BAHK-TEE-AR'-EE)
Faridombah	(FAHR-EE-DOME'-BAY)
Feraghan	(FEHR-AH-GAHN')
Ispahan	(EES'-PAH-HAHN)
Yezd	(YEZD)
Oushak	(OO'-SHAHK)
Belouj	(BELL-ODG')

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CLIENT: Hough's House of Fabrics

LENGTH: 60 seconds

ANNCR: Hough's House of Fabrics announces its annual spring fashion yardage sale. Beginning this Thursday and running for one full week, you can save dollars while you prepare for a colorful spring and summer. Synthetic fabrics that never need ironing, in a variety of textures and patterns—appliqué puff, crepe de Chine, etched peau di luna—your choice, only \$2.49 a yard. Or look for summertime sheers—batiste, voile, or crushed crepe—at just \$1.09 a yard. Hough's has a complete collection of dazzling Hawaiian prints, too. Wahini poplin, Kahului broadcloth, or Niihau jacquard weave—with prices ranging from 99 cents to \$2.89 a yard. And, yes, Hough's has patterns, notions, and everything else you need to create your wardrobe for the coming season. So, why don't you save money and get started on your own versatile and original spring and summer wardrobe right now? Remember, Hough's House of Fabrics, in the Northfield Shopping Center, just out of town on Marsh Road. That's Hough's—on Marsh Road. Sale ends a week from Thursday.

*Pronunciation guide:*

Hough's	(HUFFS)
appliqué puff	(AP-LIH-KAY' PUFF)
crêpe de Chine	(KREP DUH-SHEEN')
peau di luna	(PO DEE LUNE-UH)
batiste	(BA-TEEST')
voile	(VOIL)

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crepe	(KRAYP)
Wahini	(WAH-HEE'-NEE)
Kahului	(KAH-HOO-LOO'-EE)
Niihau jacquard	(NEE-EE-HOW' JUH-KARD')



# Appendix E

## Suggested Resources

The field of electronic communication is vast, and topics range from transient to permanent. Books devoted to equipment and its uses are the most vulnerable to change; books on voice and diction—for example—are far less short-lived. This bibliography lists many books on recent developments in the field of electronic communication. Other works cited relate to less fleeting aspects of our field and, while a number of these are no longer in print, they are likely to be found in your school's library because many are ageless classics.

Resources never before available to students of announcing may be found on the Internet, and this information, with few exceptions, is free to anyone with access to a computer, a modem, and a service provider.<sup>1</sup> The Internet fluctuates wildly as new web sites are opened, and older ones quietly disappear without notice. So, while many examples are presented here, you shouldn't rely on this *specific* information; use it as an indication of what's "out there," and do your own searching.

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<sup>1</sup>You don't need to be a computer whiz to find valuable information on the Internet, a world-wide network of computers. You need to know how to use a *modem*, a *web browser* (such as Netscape), and a *search engine* (Yahoo, Alta Vista, or other). Information is found on *web sites* or *web pages* that collectively contain an enormous amount of information.

## Chapter 1 Announcing for the Electronic Media

### Internet

For information about programs in electronic communication: use Yahoo to search “media,” “broadcasting,” “universities,” and then the title of the academic department. You’ll find up-to-date information on curricula, faculty, courses taught, entrance and degree requirements, available equipment and laboratories, and fees.

For FCC rules and regulations: access a local library, and search for “Government Agencies.” From this site, you can obtain current information about rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission.

### Books

Rivers, William L., Schramm, Wilbur, and Christian, Clifford G. *Responsibility in Mass Communication*, 3rd ed. New York: Harper & Row, 1980.

U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Published periodically. Available in U.S. Government bookstores and most college libraries—Scottsdale, AZ: Associated Book Publishers, Inc.

## Chapter 2 The Announcer as Communicator

### Internet

Audition tapes of top-flight voice-over announcers can be heard and recorded by way of an audio software program such as RealAudio. Also available are many voiced features heard on National Public Radio (see information under Appendix A).

### Books

Blythin, Evan, and Samovar, Larry A. *Communicating Effectively on Television*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1985.

Duerr, Edwin. *Radio and Television Acting: Criticism, Theory and Practice*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1972.

Tedlock, Dennis. *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.

## **Chapters 3 and 4 Voice Analysis and Improvement, and Pronunciation and Articulation**

### **Internet**

Begin with Alta Vista search engine: Enter “Voice Improvement” or “Voice and Diction” to locate newly-published books, articles, audiotapes, short courses of instruction, and seminars, including some low-cost government-sponsored workshops. Many listings are for voiced material, and may be downloaded and listened to with the RealAudio software program.

### **Books**

Anderson, Virgil A. *Training the Speaking Voice*, 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.

Cooper, Morton. *Change Your Voice, Change Your Life*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1986.

Keith, Michael C. *Broadcast Voice Performance*. Stoneham, MA: Focal Press, 1988.

McCallion, Michael. *The Voice Book*. New York: Theatre Arts Books, 1988.

Modisett, Noah F., and Luter, James G., Jr. *Speaking Clearly: The Basics of Voice and Articulation*, 3rd ed. Edina, MN: Burgess, 1988.

Morrison, Malcolm. *Clear Speech: Practical Speech Correction and Voice Improvement*, 3rd ed. Stoneham, MA: Heinemann, 1997.

- Rizzo, Raymond. *The Voice as an Instrument*, 2nd ed. New York: Odyssey Press, 1978.
- Sprague, Jo. *The Speaker's Handbook*, 4th ed. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1995.
- Stone, Janet and Bachner, Jane. *Speaking Up: A Book for Every Woman Who Talks*. New York: Carroll & Graf, 1994.
- Uris, Dorothy. *A Woman's Voice: A Handbook to Successful Public and Private Speaking*. Chelsea, MD: Scarborough House, 1974.
- Utterback, Ann S. *Broadcast Voice Handbook: How to Polish Your On-Air Delivery*. 2nd ed. Chicago: Bonus Books, 1995.
- Utterback, Ann S. *Vocal Expressiveness* (Broadcast Voice Series) Bonus Books, 1992.
- Wells, Lynn K. *The Articulate Voice: An Introduction to Voice and Diction*. 2nd ed. Scottsdale, AZ: Gorsuch Scarisbrick, 1993.

## Chapter 5 American English Usage

### Internet

Choose Alta Vista: Enter "American English Usage." Click on "Virtual Reference Sites (English Usage)." An alphabetical list of topics from "Art" to "Youth" appears. Click on "English Grammar" and then choose from a lengthy menu, including "A Word a Day" and "Common English Errors." With Yahoo, enter "Ebonics" for many descriptions and comments on this topic. Look also for "regional usage."

### Books

- Follett, Wilson. *Modern American Usage: A Guide*. Edited by Jacques Barzun. New York: Hill & Wang, 1966.
- Newman, Edwin. *Strictly Speaking*. New York: Warner Books, 1983.
- Safire, William. *I Stand Corrected*. New York: Times Books, 1984.

## Chapter 6 Broadcast Equipment

### Internet

Begin with Alta Vista: enter "Broadcast equipment." A listing of manufacturers includes several that will give detailed information about their products, such as a tapeless slow-motion video system. Add the name of a manufacturer or product, such as "Avid," for a description of that newsroom automation system.

### Books

Alten, Stanley. *Audio in Media*, 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1994.

Compesi, Ronald J., and Sheriffs, Ronald E. *Video Field Production and Editing*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997.

Nisbett, Alec. *The Use of Microphones*, 2nd ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1996.

Whittaker, Ron. *Video Field Production*. 2nd ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1996.

Zetti, Herbert L. *Television Production Handbook*, 6th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1997.

## Chapter 7 Performance

### Internet

Alta Vista: Enter "television scripts." You can then find and print complete scripts of many programs from "Xena: Warrior Princess" to "Monty Python." (Also see "Essays and Commentaries" under Appendix A.)

## Books

Ehrlich, Eugene H., and Hand, Raymond, Jr. *Handbook of Pronunciation*, 4th ed. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.

Hawes, William. *Television Performing: News and Information*. Stoneham, MA: Focal Press, 1991.

Malandro, Loretta A., et al. *Nonverbal Communication*, 2nd ed. New York: Random House, 1989.

McConkey, Wilfred J. *Klee as in Clay*, 3rd rev. ed. Lanham, MD: Madison Books, 1992.

## Chapter 8 Commercials and Public-Service Announcements

### Internet

There seems to be no source of commercial scripts on the Internet, but there is much information *about* commercials, including frank (and often biting) evaluations from *Advertising Age*. Begin with Yahoo: Click on "TV"; then on "commercials"; then on "50 best commercials" of the year of your choice; next, click on "ad reviews," and then choose the specific commercial for a commentary and evaluation.

### Books

Baker, Georgette. *You Too Can Be in Television Commercials*. Diamond Bar, CA: Talented, 1988.

Beardsley, Elaine Keller. *Working in Commercials*. Boston: Focal Press, 1992.

Blu, Susan, and Mullin, Molly Ann. *Word of Mouth: A Guide to Commercial Voice-Over Excellence*. Los Angeles: Pomegranate Press, 1992.

Blythin, Evan, and Samovar, Larry A. *Communicating Effectively on Television*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1985.

- Clark, Elaine A. *There's Money Where Your Mouth Is: An Insider's Guide to a Career in Voice-Overs*. New York: Back Stage Books, 1995.
- Cronauer, Adrian. *How to Read Copy: Professionals' Guide to Delivering Voice-Overs and Broadcast Commercials*. Chicago: Bonus Books, 1990.
- Fridell, Squire. *Acting in Television Commercials for Fun and Profit*, updated edition. New York: Crown, 1995.
- Peacock, James. *How to Audition for Television Commercials and Get Them*. Chicago: Contemporary Books, 1982.
- See, Joan. *Acting in Commercials*. New York: Back Stage Books, 1993.

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## Chapter 9 Interview and Talk Programs

### Internet

For transcripts of interviews by Terry Gross or Larry King (for instance), begin with Yahoo; Click on "News and Media." Enter the interviewer's name, click, and you'll see the title of the show. Select this, and then click on the transcript you want to study. You can *hear* some of these interviews with the RealAudio program, but you can do that by turning on your radio; a printout gives you the opportunity to *study* the skills of top interviewers as they cope in real time with unexpected answers or outrageous statements.

### Books

- Cohen, Akiba A. *The Television News Interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1987.
- Huber, Jack, and Diggins, Dean. *Interviewing America's Top Interviewers*. New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991.

## Chapters 10 and 11 Radio News and Television News

### Internet

Begin with Yahoo. For news copy, choose “News and Media,” then “Newswires.” Then choose and print stories from such agencies as Agence France-Presse, the Business Wire, Reuter’s, Panafrican News Agency, and Kyodo News from Japan—among many others. Remember though, you may use this material *only for practice*; unauthorized use is prohibited.

### Books

Cremer, Charles F., Keirstead, Phillip O., and Yoakam, Richard D. *ENG: Television News* (McGraw-Hill Series in Mass Communication). New York: McGraw-Hill, 1995.

Fang, Irving. *Television News, Radio News*, 4th rev. ed. St. Paul, MN: Rada Press, 1985.

French, Christopher W., ed. *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual*, rev. ed. New York: Dell Publishing, 1990.

Gans, Herbert J. *Deciding What’s News: A Study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek and Time*. New York: Random House, 1989.

Graber, Doris A. *Processing the News*, 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994.

Hewitt, John. *Air Words: Writing for Broadcast News*, 2nd ed. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 1994.

Killenberg, George M., and Anderson, Rob. *Before the Story: Interviewing and Communication Skills for Journalists*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989.

MacDonald, R. H. *A Broadcast News Manual of Style*, 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 1994.

Shipley, Kenneth G., and Wood, Julie McNulty. *The Elements of Interviewing*. San Diego, CA: Singular Pub Group, 1995.

Tuchman, Gaye. *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality*. New York: Free Press, 1980.

## Chapter 12 Music Announcing

### Internet

There are several newsletters for DJs available by subscription. To find them, begin with Yahoo, select "News and Media," then click on "Radio." Enter "disc jockey newsletters." Choose "HotBot" at bottom of screen. When HotBot (a search engine) opens, scroll down to Oxbridge Directory of Newsletters. You'll find several from which to choose.

Also, Cosmo Rose, an East Coast drive time host, maintains a newsletter for music announcers. It's a free service with the proviso that "subscribers" must make regular contributions. To accept his invitation, send an e-mail request to: [almostradio@prodigy.com](mailto:almostradio@prodigy.com).

### Books

Apel, Willi. *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969.

Crofton, Ian, and Fraser, Donald. *A Dictionary of Musical Quotations*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1989.

Cross, Milton. *New Milton Cross' Stories of the Great Operas*. New York: Doubleday, 1955.

Cross, Milton, and Kohrs, Karl. *The New Milton Cross' More Stories of the Great Operas*. New York: Doubleday, 1980.

Keith, Michael C., and Krause, Joseph M. *The Radio Station*, 3rd ed. Stoneham, MA: Focal Press, 1996.

Lieberman, Philip A. *Radio's Morning Show Personalities: Early Hour Broadcasters and Deejays from the 1920s to the 1990s*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 1996.

Sadie, Stanley, ed. *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, reprint ed., 20 vols. Groves Dictionaries of Music, 1995.

## Chapter 13 Sports Announcing

### Internet

To find brief bios of ESPN sports anchors, begin with Yahoo. Click on "Sports" under "Recreation & Sports." Type in ESPN, and click on "Search." Click on ESPN under "Business & Economy: Sports: ESPN." Select "SportsCenter Shrine," then click on the name of the person whose bio you'd like to read. You'll get info on jobs held, sports covered, awards, education, etc.

Bios of regional sports network announcers may be found by entering "Sports networks" (instead of ESPN, as above), and then selecting from several regions listed. After selecting "Chicago" (for example), check "Announcer's Booth" for a list of available sketches.

### Books

Gunther, Marc, and Carter, Bill. *Monday Night Mayhem: The Inside Story of ABC's Monday Night Football*. New York: William Morrow, 1988.

Harwell, Ernie. *Tuned to Baseball*, reprint ed. South Bend IN: Diamond Communications, 1990.

Madden, John. *One Size Doesn't Fit All and Other Thoughts from the Road*. Avenal, NJ: Outlet Book Company, 1991.

Odums, R. I., et al. *Career Guide to Sports Broadcasting*. Rita Tessman, ed. Cleveland, OH: Guidepost, 1986.

Smith, Curt. *The Storytellers: From Mel Allen to Bob Costas: Sixty Years of Baseball Tales from the Broadcast Booth*. New York: MacMillan General Reference, 1995.

Smith, Curt. *Voices of the Game: The First Full-Scale Overview of Baseball Broadcasting*, updated ed. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992.

Spence, Jim, and Diles, Dave. *Up Close and Personal: The Inside Story of Network Television Sports*. New York: Macmillan, 1988.

## Chapter 14 Starting Your Announcing Career

### Internet

To find your way to a particular station, begin with the *BigBook* Directory. Enter station call letters, city, and state. Check “business name” button. Click on “look it up.” When the station is found, you’ll get its address and phone number. Click on the small highway sign next to the call letters, and a city map will appear, showing the station’s location.

### Books

Ellis, Elmo I. *Opportunities in Broadcasting Careers*. Lincolnwood IL: Vgm Career Horizons, 1992.

Pearlman, Donn. *Breaking into Broadcasting*. Chicago: Bonus Books, 1986.

Reed, Maxine K. and Reed, Robert M. *Career Opportunities in Television, Cable, and Video*, rev ed. New York: Facts on File, 1991.

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## Appendix A: Scripts to Develop Performance Skills

### Internet

The best examples of voiced material are found on National Public Radio and The Corporation for Public Broadcasting. For scripts of broadcast essays and commentaries, begin with Yahoo: Select “News and Media,” then choose “NewsHour With Jim Lehrer,” “All Things Considered,” “Morning Edition,” “Living on Earth,” or other offerings. If, for example, you want essays, you might select “Online NewsHour,” then “Essays and Dialogues,” and then one of the regular essayists—Richard Rodriguez, Clarence Page, Roger Rosenblatt, or Ann Taylor Fleming. A list of available essays will appear, which you may open, evaluate, and finally print to use for practice. You later may want to use RealAudio to hear the author read the script you’ve copied.

## Appendix B: Pronunciation Guide

### Books

*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 3rd ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

Ehrlich, Eugene H., and Hand, Raymond, Jr. *NBC Handbook of Pronunciation*, 4th ed. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.

## Appendix C: Phonetic Transcription

### Books

Kenyon, John S., and Knott, Thomas. *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*, 2nd ed. Springfield, MA: G. & C. Merriam, 1953.

## Appendix D: Foreign Language Pronunciation

### Books

Berlitz. *Russian Phrase Book & Dictionary*. Oxford, England: Berlitz, 1990; 4th printing, 1992.

Bras, Monique. *Your Guide to French Pronunciation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1975.

Bratus, B.V. *Russian Intonation*. Elkins Park, PA: Franklin Book Co., 1972.

Cox, Richard G. *The Singer's Manual of German and French Diction*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1970.

Jackson, Eugene, Geiger, Adolph, and Vanderslice, Robert. *German Made Simple*. New York: Doubleday, 1985.

Jackson, Eugene, and Lo Preato, Joseph. *Italian Made Simple*. New York: Doubleday, 1960.

Jackson, Eugene, Rubio, Antonio, and Lafontant, Julien. *French Made Simple*. New York: Doubleday, 1990.

Jackson, Eugene, and Rubio, Antonio. *Spanish Made Simple*. New York: Doubleday, 1984.

# Glossary

Terms are defined here only as they are used in this book. Many of the terms have additional uses and meanings not explained here.

**A/C or AC** Abbreviation for *Adult Contemporary*, a popular music category.

**abstraction ladder** S.I. Hayakawa's term for the fact that several terms usually are available for the same phenomenon, some precise and some abstract.

**account executive** A person who sells broadcast time for a radio station or an agency.

**actuality** A term used in radio news to refer to a report featuring someone other than broadcast personnel (politician, police inspector, athlete, or eyewitness) who provides an actual statement rather than one paraphrased and spoken by a reporter.

**ad-lib (noun, verb, or adj.) and ad lib (adverb)** To improvise and deliver spontaneously.

**Adult Contemporary** Descriptive of a format or type of music played on some radio stations, consisting of soft to moderate rock, ballads, and current hits.

**affricates** Speech sounds that combine a plosive (release of air as in saying the letter *p*) with a fricative (friction of air through a restricted air passage as in saying the letter *s*); an example is the "ch" sound in *choose*.

**AFTRA** Abbreviation for American Federation of Television and Radio Artists, the union made up of radio and television announcers whose work is either live or taped.

**AGC** Abbreviation for *automatic gain control*.

**AH** Abbreviation for *Adult Hits*, or *Hot Adult Contemporary*, a popular music category.

**aircheck** An audition tape, usually a portion of an actual broadcast.

**Album-Oriented Rock** A radio station format featuring all styles of rock music.

**allusion** An indirect but pointed, or meaningful, reference; "he is as subtle as Dirty Harry" is an allusion.

**alveolus** The upper gum ridge.

**ambient noise** Unwanted sounds in an acoustical environment (such as air conditioners, traffic noises, airplanes).

**ambient sounds** Normal background sounds that do not detract from the recording or the program and may even add to the excitement of the broadcast (such as crowd sounds at a sports event).

**amplitude** The strength of a radio wave.

**anchor** The chief newscaster on a radio or television news broadcast.

**announcer** Anyone who speaks to an audience through an electronic medium: radio or television transmission over the public airways, cable or other closed-circuit audio or video distribution, or electronic amplification, as in an auditorium or a theater. Announcers include newscasters, reporters, commentators, sportscast-

ers, narrators, “personalities,” disc jockeys, program hosts, and people who deliver commercial messages (as contrasted with those who act in dramatized commercials).

**AOR** Abbreviation for *Album-Oriented Rock*.

**AP** Abbreviation for *Adult Alternative*, a popular music category.

**AR** Abbreviation for *Album Rock*, a popular music category.

**Arrow** Derived from ARRO, standing for “all rock-and-roll oldies,” a music station format.

**articulation** The physical formation of spoken words by means of teeth, tongue, and lips working together with the soft palate, gum ridges, and each other to break up phonated sounds into articulate (or even inarticulate) speech sounds.

**AS** Abbreviation for *Adult Standard*, a popular music category.

**ASNE** Abbreviation for American Society of Newspaper Editors.

**aspirate** To release a puff of breath, as in sounding the word *unhitch*. Overaspiration results in a popping sound when sitting or standing close to a microphone.

**attenuator** A volume control on an audio console.

**attitude** An announcer’s position or bearing, made up of mindset, stance, point of view, and beliefs; similar to mood, but going deeper and connoting a relationship between the announcer and persons being addressed.

**audience demographics** See *demographics*.

**audio console** The control board that receives, mixes, amplifies, and sends audio signals to a recorder or a transmitter.

**audiotape cartridge** A cartridge of 1/4-inch audiotape that plays, rewinds, and cues itself.

**audition tape** An audio or videotaped collection of performances by an announcer, used to accompany a job application.

**automatic gain control** A device that automatically regulates the volume to maintain a consistent level.

**AWRT** Abbreviation of American Women in Radio and Television.

**back-announce** To identify songs and artists after the music has been played.

**barbarism** A blunder in speech; similar to a solecism.

**barter** The exchange of airtime for goods or services.

**BB** Script symbol for *billboard*, used to indicate to an announcer that an upcoming feature or event should be promoted.

**BEA** Abbreviation for Broadcast Education Association.

**beat check** Using a telephone to search for and tape news stories from a list of agencies, including the FBI, police and fire departments, local hospitals, the weather bureau, and airport control towers; also called the *phone beat*.

**Beautiful Music** A radio station format that features gentle or restful music from motion picture soundtracks, instrumental arrangements of old standards, and some stage musicals and operettas.

**bed** See *music bed*.

**beeper** Electronic beeping tones placed on the audio track of a videotape for cueing. Eight beeps are laid down, 1 second apart. The last 2 seconds of the electronic leader are silent, and the director, responding to the rhythm of the eight beeps, allows 2 more seconds to elapse before giving the next instruction to the technical director.

**beeper reports** News reports, either recorded or live, telephoned to a station, during which an electronic beep is sounded to let the person speaking know that a recording is being made. The beep is not used when station personnel are recorded and need not be used for others if they are told that they are being recorded or being broadcast.

**bending the needle** Causing the swinging needle of a VU or VI meter on an audio console to hit the extreme right of its calibrated scale, indicating to the operator that the volume of the sound being sent through the console is too high.

**best time available** A radio station advertising package that schedules commercials at the station's discretion, with a promise to broadcast them at the best available time slots.

**BG** Script symbol for "background," referring most often to background music.

**bidirectional** The pickup pattern of a microphone that accepts sounds from two of its sides.

**bilabial** Sounds articulated primarily by both lips, for example, the consonants *p* and *w*; also called *labial*.

**billboard** To promote an upcoming feature or event on the air.

**billing log** The name given by the sales and business departments to a radio station's program log, a listing, in sequence, of each element of the broadcast day, including commercials.

**blocking** Instructing performers in a television production as to when and where to stand, walk, and so on.

**BM** Abbreviation for *Beautiful Music*, a radio station format.

**board** In radio, an audio console; in television news operations, a large Plexiglas sheet on which the elements of a newscast are entered throughout the day.

**board fade** A lowering of the volume on an audio console, usually to the point of losing the sound altogether.

**boom** Short for "audio boom," a device for moving a microphone without allowing either its operator or the mic to be seen on the television screen. Most booms are mounted on movable dollies and have controls for moving the microphone in or out, up or down, or sideways. Television camera cranes are sometimes called booms.

**boosting** Strengthening an audio signal by means of an amplifier.

**box graphic** Pictures and words, contained in a rectangle, that symbolize a news story being delivered. The graphic usually is seen in the upper right or upper left of the television screen.

**brain** The computer used to program an automated radio station; also called a *controller*.

**BTA** Abbreviation for *best time available*.

**bulletin font** The oversized type produced by a printer or typewriter that prints scripts for television news broadcasts.

**bumper** The device used to move a television program from one element to another, as in a transition from the program to a commercial or from one segment of the program to another.

**calling the game** Giving a play-by-play description of a sports event.

**camera consciousness** The awareness on the part of a performer of the capabilities and limitations of the television cameras.

- cardioid** A type of microphone pickup pattern that is heart-shaped.
- cart** Short for “audiotape cartridge”; a loop of tape encased in a plug-in cartridge that automatically recues.
- cart machine** An electronic audio device that records and plays back (or sometimes only plays back) material for broadcast.
- cart with live tag** A commercial that begins with a recorded announcement, often with musical background, and ends with a live closing by a local announcer.
- carted commercials** Commercials dubbed to audiotape cartridges.
- carted music** Music selections transferred to audiotape cartridges. Most music stations have switched to digitally recorded play machines.
- carting** The act of dubbing, or recording on, an audiotape cartridge.
- CD** Abbreviation for “compact disc.”
- CG** Abbreviation for *character generator*.
- chain** A group of broadcast stations owned by one company or by a network.
- channel selector switch** A control on an audio console that enables the operator to select from two or more inputs.
- character generator** An electronic device used for creating titles, bar graphs, and many other graphics for the television screen.
- cheating to the camera** Positioning oneself to create the impression on screen of talking directly to another person, while presenting a favorable angle to the camera.
- CHR or CH** Abbreviations for *Contemporary Hit Radio*, a popular music category.
- chroma-key** An electronic system that makes it possible for one television scene to be matted in behind another. Chroma-keying is used to show a slide or some other graphic aid behind a news anchor, for instance. Blue is generally used for chroma-key matting.
- chronological résumé** A résumé that presents basic information on work experience in chronological order.
- clichés** Overused and worn-out expressions.
- clock** See *hot clock*.
- cluster** Two or more radio commercials played without intervening comment or program material; also called *commercial cluster* or *spot set*.
- CNN** Abbreviation of Cable News Network.
- co-anchors** Two or more announcers who share the role of chief newscaster on a radio or television program.
- cold copy** A script not seen by an announcer until the moment to read it has arrived.
- color** Comments made by a member of an announcing team to add an extra dimension to a live broadcast; usually consisting of human-interest anecdotes and informative, amusing, or unusual facts.
- combination résumé** A résumé that combines features of a competency-based and a chronological résumé; also called a *hybrid résumé*.
- combo operator** A radio disc jockey who does his or her own engineering.
- commercial cluster** See *cluster*.
- commercial sweep** A series of radio commercials, played without intervening program material.

**communicaster** Used by some radio stations to identify the host of a telephone call-in show.

**community billboard, community bulletin board, community calendar** Representative names for segments of airtime devoted to brief public service announcements.

**compact disk or CD** A small optical disk, on which digitally recorded music is stored.

**competency-based résumé** A résumé that stresses the skills an applicant possesses.

**compressor** An electronic device that keeps a sound signal within a given dynamic range.

**condenser microphone** A type of microphone that features a diaphragm and an electrode as a backplate.

**console** An audio control board.

**Contemporary Hit Radio** A radio station format that features the current top rock hits, sometimes interspersed with a few golden oldies; also known as *Top 40*.

**continuity book** A loose-leaf compilation of radio commercials in the order they are to be read or introduced (if on tape) by the announcer on duty; sometimes called *copy book*.

**continuity writers** Writers of broadcast scripts other than news scripts.

**controller** The computer that controls the programming of an automated radio system; also called the *brain*.

**cooperative commercials** Commercials used on both radio and television, whose cost is divided between a national and a local advertiser.

**copy book** See *continuity book*.

**copy sets** Multipart forms, complete with one-use carbon papers, used widely in television newsrooms to create as many as six duplicate scripts of a program.

**corporate media** See *industrial media*.

**correspondents** Reporters stationed some distance away from their stations or network headquarters.

**cover letter** The letter written to accompany a résumé or an audition tape.

**cover shot** A television shot that gives a picture of a medium-to-large area. On an interview set, a cover shot would include both interviewer and guest(s).

**crank up the gain** To increase the volume of sound going through an audio console.

**crescendo** An increase in the volume or intensity of an announcer's voice.

**cross fade** Manipulating the volume controls of an audio console so that one program sound fades out while another simultaneously fades in.

**crossplug** A pitch made by a disc jockey or talk program host to promote another program on the same station.

CU Television script symbol for "close-up."

**cue box** Small speaker in an audio control room or on-air studio that allows an audio operator to hear program elements as they are being cued up or previewed; sometimes called a "cue speaker."

**cue cards** Cards used in television to convey information or entire scripts to on-camera performers.

**cumes** Short for “cumulative ratings,” which indicate the number of people listening to or viewing a particular station at a given time.

**cut sheet** In radio, a listing that indicates how to edit one or more cuts from an audiotape to a tape cartridge; in television news operations, a form on which information about taped material is entered during editing by videotape engineers.

**cutaway shots** Reaction shots, usually of a reporter listening to a newsmaker, recorded at the time of an interview and later edited into a package to avoid jump cuts at points in the report where parts of the speaker’s comments have been omitted.

**CW or C/W** Abbreviations for *Country*, a popular music category. Despite the *W*, the format is referred to simply as “Country.”

**DAT** Abbreviation of *digital audio tape*.

**daypart** A term used by music radio stations to identify specific portions of the broadcast day, which may be *dayparted* into morning drive time, afternoon drive time, midday, nighttime, and overnight.

**DCM** Abbreviation of *digital cartridge machine*.

**debriefing log** A record kept by radio and television stations of information about the performance of guests and the degree of audience interest in them.

**decrescendo** A decrease in the force or loudness of an announcer’s voice.

**de-essing** The process of using a compressor to reduce sibilance.

**delegation switch** A switch on an audio console that allows its operator to send a signal to a selected channel.

**demographics** The profile of an actual or intended audience, including information on age, sex, ethnic background, income, and other factors that might help a broadcaster attract or hold a particular audience.

**denasality** A quality of the voice due to speaking without allowing air to pass through the nasal passage.

**depth of field** The area in front of a camera lens in which everything is in focus.

**design computer** A device for making television graphics. Most feature a keyboard, a monitor, an electronic tablet with stylus, and a menu of effects that it can produce.

**desk** A name used for the assignment editor in broadcast news operations.

**diacritical marks** The marks used by dictionaries to indicate pronunciation.

**diaphragm** The muscular membrane that separates the stomach from the lungs.

**diction** Same as *articulation* and *enunciation*.

**digital audio tape** One medium (a compact disk and a hard storage disk being others) for storing and later playing digitally recorded sound.

**digital cartridge machine** A tape player that records and plays digitally recorded sound.

**digital video effects (DVE)** Special effects produced by equipment that changes an analog video signal to digital, making it possible to manipulate images in many creative ways.

**diphthongs** Speech sounds that consist of a glide from one vowel sound to another; for example, the “oy” sound in the word *joy*.

**disc jockey** The person who identifies the music and provides pertinent comments on a popular music radio station.

**DJ** Abbreviation for disc jockey; sometimes spelled "deejay."

**donut commercial** A commercial with a recorded beginning and end and live material read by a local announcer in the middle.

**double out** A term used in radio production to warn an engineer that a speaker repeats the out cue in a particular tape. A sports coach, for example, may say "early in the year" both in the body of his comments and at the end of the cut; the warning *double out* is given so that the engineer will not stop the cart prematurely.

**drive time** Hours during which radio stations receive their highest audience ratings, usually 6–10 A.M. and 3–7 P.M.

**drugola** The acceptance of illegal drugs in exchange for such favors as promoting a recording produced by the supplier of the drugs.

**dubbing** Transferring audio- or videotaped program material to another tape; also, recording another person's voice onto the soundtrack to replace the voice of the person who is seen on the screen.

**DVE** Abbreviation for *digital video effects*.

**DVE machine** A device that can turn a video picture into a mosaic, swing it through space, make it shrink or grow in size, and achieve many other visually interesting effects.

**dynamic microphone** A rugged, high-quality microphone that works well as an outdoor or hand-held mic; also known as a *pressure mic*.

**earprompter** A small earpiece worn by a performer, used to receive instructions from a producer or director.

**ear training** Developing a sensitivity to sounds, especially spoken words, and the ability to detect even slight variations from accepted standards of pronunciation, articulation, voice quality, and other aspects of human speech. Ear training is an essential part of voice improvement.

**easy listening formula** A system for judging the clarity of a script that is to be broadcast.

**EFP** Abbreviation for *electronic field production*.

**egg-on-face look** The strained look of a performer who is trying to hold a smile while waiting for the director to go to black.

**elapsed time clock** A clock that shows how much time has been used up, rather than time remaining, in a broadcast segment.

**electronic field production** Any kind of videotaping using minicams and portable recorders and done on location.

**electronic news gathering** Producing news reports for television in the field, using the same kind of portable equipment employed in electronic field production.

**electrostatic microphone** An alternative term for a *condenser mic*.

**ELF** Abbreviation for *easy listening formula*.

**ellipses** A series of three or four periods to indicate an omission of words.

**Emergency Alert System** The FCC's replacement for the Emergency Broadcast System, a program that requires certain broadcast stations to notify the public in case of an emergency such as a tornado, forest fire, or toxic spill.

**ENG** Abbreviation for *electronic news gathering*.

**enunciation** Same as *articulation*.

**equalizer** A system that automatically controls sound by selecting frequencies to emphasize or to eliminate.

**equal time** A provision of the Communications Act that requires broadcast licensees in the United States to provide time on an equal basis for legally qualified candidates for office.

**ESPN** Abbreviation of Entertainment and Sports Programming Network.

**ET** A script symbol for "electrical transcription," which was an early term for a certain type of phonograph record, now used for any kind of disc recording.

**extemporaneous** Comments prepared in advance but delivered without a script or notes.

**fact sheet** An outline of information about a product or an event, from which a writer prepares a script for a commercial or public-service announcement.

**fade out** Using a *fader* or *potentiometer* to gradually reduce the sound until it no longer can be heard. The same term is used for the fading to black of a video signal.

**fader** A control on an audio console enabling an operator to increase or decrease the volume of sound going through the board.

**fairness doctrine** A former policy of the FCC that required broadcast licensees to devote air time to the discussion of public issues.

**fax** Abbreviation of "facsimile," the transmission of images or printed matter by electronic means.

**FCC** Abbreviation for *Federal Communications Commission*.

**Federal Communications Commission** The governmental agency that oversees broadcasting and other telecommunications industries in the United States.

**feedback** A howl or squeal created when a microphone picks up and reamplifies the sound from a nearby loudspeaker.

**fidelity** Faithfulness to an original sound, as in a recording of a live music performance.

**field reporter** A radio or television reporter who covers stories away from the station, as contrasted with anchors who perform on a news set.

**field voicer** A report from the field, sent live to a station by a reporter.

**flaring** Flashes on the television screen caused by reflection of studio lights or sunlight off some shiny object, such as jewelry.

**format** (1) A type of script used in television, usually a bare script outline; (2) the type of programming provided by a radio station (for example, an MOR format); (3) the layout of a radio or television script, or the manner in which dialogue, sound effects, music, and other program elements are set forth on the page.

**freelance** An announcer or other media performer who works without a contract or a long-term appointment.

**freeze** To remain motionless, usually at the end of a television scene.

**fricatives** Sounds created by the friction of air through a restricted air passage; an example is the sound of the letter *f*.

**functional résumé** See *competency-based résumé*.

**future file** A set of 31 folders (one for each day of the month) holding information about coming events so that they may be considered by an assignment editor for news coverage.

**gaffer's tape** The tape used to hold cables in place in television studios. (A *gaffer* is the chief electrician on a motion picture set.)

**gain** The degree of sound volume through an audio console.

**gain control** A sliding vertical fader or rotating knob used to regulate the volume of sound through an audio console.

**General American** The speech of educated citizens of the Midwest and Far West of the United States and of most of Canada; also called "broadcast speech" and "Standard American Speech."

**general-assignment reporter** A radio or television reporter who does not have a regular beat, or assignment.

**glide** In speech, a rapid movement or *glide* from one vowel sound to another, as in the "oy" sound in the word *joy*. Also called a *diphthong*, pronounced *dif-thong*.

**glottal consonant** The letter *h*, when uttered without vibration of the vocal folds.

**glottal stop** A speech sound produced by a momentary but complete closure of the throat passage, followed by an explosive release of air.

**Gold** A popular music station format that features classic rock and roll favorites.

**graveyard shift** Working hours that extend from midnight until 6:00 A.M.

**hand signals** Signals developed to communicate instructions to performers without the use of spoken words.

**happy talk** A derogatory term for a newscast featuring news personnel who ad-lib, make jokes, and banter with one another.

**hard copy** The printed copy of the output of a computer or word processor.

**hard news** Important stories that are usually unanticipated by a broadcast news department.

**hard sell commercial** A commercial that is characterized by rapid vocal delivery, high volume, and excessive energy.

**headline** To *tease* upcoming music selections on a radio show.

**headlines signal** A hand signal given by an announcer to tell the engineer that headlines will follow the news item currently being read.

**headphone jack** A receptacle on a tape recorder or audio console for connecting a headset.

**hemispheric** The pickup pattern of a microphone that accepts sounds within a half globe.

**hitting marks** Moving to an exact spot in television performance, usually indicated by tape placed on the floor or the ground.

**homers** Sports play-by-play announcers who show an obvious bias for the home team.

**horizontal spots** Radio commercials scheduled at about the same time across the days of the week.

**hot change** Words created by a character generator that jump from one word or phrase to another on the television screen.

**hot clock** A wheel used by music, satellite, and news radio stations to schedule program elements. At popular music stations, the hot clock indicates the types of music to be played during a typical broadcast hour (up tempo, golden oldie, current hit, etc.), and indicates precisely when local insertions (commercials, weather reports, or local news) may be made. News station hot clocks specify the timing of

headlines, news stories, weather and traffic reports, commercials, and other program components; also called the *clock*.

**hybrid résumé** A résumé that combines the features of a chronological and a competency-based résumé.

**hypercardioid** A microphone pickup pattern.

**I & I** Script symbol for “introduce and interview.”

**IDs** Brief musical passages used to identify an upcoming sports report, business report, or other feature; also called *sounders* or *logos*.

**IFB** Abbreviation for *interruptable foldback*.

**impromptu** A performance delivered with little or no preparation and without a script.

**in cue** The recorded words that open a segment of an interview that will be dubbed and used as part of a report.

**industrial media** Audiovisual presentations made for (and often by) corporations, government agencies, and similar entities and intended for internal use, usually for training purposes; usually referred to as “industrials.”

**industrials** See *industrial media*.

**inflection** The variation of the pitch of a human voice.

**infomercial** *Infomercials* typically are half-hour television sales pitches, with two or more announcers demonstrating such products as exercise machines, hair restorer, cooking equipment, fishing equipment, and beauty aids.

**informational interview** A conversation with an experienced broadcast executive for the purpose of gaining information about job-seeking.

**input selector switch** Control on an audio console that allows more than one program input (several microphones, for example) to be fed selectively into the same preamp.

**interdental** A speech sound made with the tongue between the upper and lower teeth, for example, the “th” sound in *thin*.

**International Phonetic Alphabet** A system of phonetic transcription that employs special symbols to denote pronunciations.

**interruptable foldback** A miniaturized earphone worn by news reporters and anchors and sportscasters. Instructions and cues are given over the IFB by producers and directors.

**in the mud** Expression used when the volume of sound going through an audio console is so weak that it barely moves the needle of the VU meter; the needle is said to be *in the mud*.

**in the red** Opposite of in the mud, *in the red* is the term used to describe sounds that are too high in volume. Other terms for this are *bending the needle* and *spilling over*.

**intro** Abbreviation of *introduction*.

**IPA** Abbreviation for *International Phonetic Alphabet*.

**jargon** The specialized vocabulary of a group such as computer technicians, athletes, military personnel, or a particular ethnic group.

**jock** Short for *disc jockey*.

**jump cut** A noticeable “jump” in the television picture when a portion of taped material has been edited out.

**keys** Images, usually lettering, keyed into a background image by a *character generator*.

**labial** A speech sound made primarily with the lips, for example, the sound of the letter *p*.

**labiodental** A speech sound requiring the lower lip to be in proximity to the upper teeth. Labiodental sounds are associated with the letters *f* and *v*.

**larynx** The part of the body connecting the trachea (or windpipe) and the pharynx (the area between the mouth and the nasal passages) and containing the vocal folds.

**lavalier microphone** A small microphone clipped to the dress, tie, or lapel of a performer.

**lead-in** The opening phrases of a taped or live report or the words used by a reporter to introduce a taped actuality or voicer.

**lead-out** The closing phrases of a taped or live report or the words used by a reporter in adding a conclusion to a taped actuality or voicer.

**LED** Abbreviation for *light-emitting diode*.

**level indicator** A device that shows graphically the amount of volume being sent through an audio console or to an audio- or videotape recorder.

**libertarian theory** A theory concerning the media that maintains that, except for defamation, obscenity, or wartime sedition, there should be no censorship of the news whatsoever.

**light-emitting diode** A device that indicates audio volume through the activation of a series of small lights.

**limiter** In audio operations, a device that limits the output volume, regardless of the strength of the input volume.

**liner notes** Notes prepared by a radio station executive, from which a disc jockey will promote a contest, an upcoming feature, or another disc jockey's show; sometimes called "liner cards."

**lingua-alveolar** A speech sound made with the tip of the tongue (or lingua) placed against the upper gum ridge (or alveolus), for example, the sound of the letter *t*.

**linguadental** A speech sound made with the tongue between the upper and lower teeth, for example, the initial sound in *thin*.

**linguapalatal** A speech sound made with the tip of the tongue nearly touching the upper gum ridge, for example, the sound of the letter *r*.

**linguavelar** A speech sound made when the rear of the tongue is raised against the soft palate (or velum) and the tip of the tongue is lowered to the bottom of the mouth, as in sounding the letter *k*.

**lip synch** Matching, or synchronizing, the movement of the lips with the speech sounds of the performer. This is achieved automatically with video equipment but is difficult when dubbing one performer's voice to the lip movements of another who is seen on-screen.

**live coverage** Reporting on a story as it happens, most often from the scene of the event.

**LMA** See *local marketing agreement*.

**Local Marketing Agreement (LMA)** In this practice, two or more radio stations enter into an arrangement in which they share facilities, staff, and equipment and, in some instances, even a frequency.

**logo** An aural or visual symbol used to identify a program, product, company, or similar entity. The famous CBS eye is the logo for that network. An aural logo is also called a *sounder*.

**looping** The dubbing of one person's voice onto the soundtrack of a tape to replace the voice of the person who is seen on the screen.

**major market** A city or metropolitan area with a potential viewing or listening audience of over 1,000,000.

**market** The reception area of a radio or television station, classified as major, secondary, or smaller.

**marking copy** Making notations on scripts as reminders of when to pause or to stress a word or phrase or to show phonetic transcriptions of difficult words.

**marks** Positions for television performers, usually indicated by small pieces of gaffer's tape on the floor of the studio or the ground at an exterior location.

**master pot** A control on an audio console, capable of raising and lowering simultaneously all sounds going through the board; *pot* is short for *potentiometer*.

**matte in** To combine electronically two pictures on the television screen without superimposing one over the other; see also *chroma-key*.

**menu** A listing of stored information available for retrieval through a computer workstation. Menus are tailored to the needs of news directors, reporters, play-by-play sports announcers, and talk-show hosts, among others.

**MERPS** Abbreviation for "multievent recorder/player systems," which are audio/video electronic cart machines.

**message design and testing** The process of determining in advance the objectives of a given program and then rating its degree of success after it is performed.

**mic fright** A fear of performing in front of a microphone.

**microcasting** Same as *narrowcasting*.

**microphone consciousness** An awareness of the capabilities and shortcomings of microphones.

**Middle-of-the-Road** A radio station format characterized by the playing of songs and orchestrations of moderate volume, tempo, and performance style.

**minicam** A small, lightweight, portable television camera and its associated equipment.

**minidoc** A short documentary, usually produced as a series for a radio or television news program.

**minus out** To eliminate the announcer's voice from the sound relayed back from a satellite to the announcer's IFB so that the 1½ second delay will not confuse the announcer.

**mixer** An audio console.

**MLB** Abbreviation for *Major League Baseball*.

**moiré effect** A wavering or shimmering of the picture on a television screen, due to patterns of small checks or narrow stripes on performers' clothing.

**monaural** A sound system featuring only one loud speaker.

**monitor pot** A control on an audio console enabling the operator to adjust the volume of sound coming from a monitor speaker without affecting the volume of sound being broadcast or recorded.

**monitor select switch** A switch on an audio console used to selectively monitor program and audition outputs.

**monitor speaker** A speaker in an audio control room that enables the operator to hear the material being broadcast or recorded.

**mood** A state of mind or emotion projected by a performer. Some typical moods are gloomy, joyous, cynical, elated, and festive. See also *attitude*.

**moonlighting** Working at odd jobs, usually at night, while holding down a permanent position.

**MOR** Abbreviation for *Middle-of-the-Road*.

**morgue** A collection of magazine and newspaper clippings, organized by topic and used for gathering background information for news stories and interviews.

**MOS** Script abbreviation for "man-on-the-street interview." (Despite efforts to avoid gender-specific references in broadcast terminology, this term is still used.)

**multidirectional microphone** A microphone that can be adjusted to employ more than one pickup pattern.

**multievent recorder/player systems (MERPS)** Audio/video computerized electronic cart machines. MERPS's memory and storage capacity permit it to perform a variety of functions once done by a cumbersome master reel.

**multi-images** A digital video effects device that changes the video signal from analog to digital; one of many options that DVE equipment offers is that of *multi-imaging*, splitting the screen into sectors, with each section containing a different visual image, or repeating the same video information in each cell.

**music bed** The musical background of a radio commercial, usually laid down before voices are added.

**music sweep** Several music recordings played back-to-back without interruption or comment by the DJ.

**musical IDs** Musical logos that identify a program or a program segment.

**muting relays** Devices that automatically cut off the sound from a monitor speaker when an announce mic in the control room is opened.

**NAB** Abbreviation for National Association of Broadcasters.

**narrowcasting** Programs not intended for large, heterogeneous audiences.

**nasality** A quality of the voice due to allowing air to exit through the nose, rather than the mouth, when speaking.

**nasals** Speech sounds that employ nasal resonance, such as *m*, *n*, and *ng*.

**National Public Radio** A network of noncommercial radio stations, established by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

**NBA** Abbreviation for *National Basketball Association*.

**news script** The copy from which news anchors work. News scripts may be seen by anchors as hard copy or as electronically generated copy seen on a prompter.

**news wheel** News station *news wheels* or hot clocks specify the timing of headlines, news stories, weather and traffic reports, commercials, and other program components; also called the *clock*.

**NFL** Abbreviation for *National Football League*.

**NHL** Abbreviation for *National Hockey League*.

**nonverbal communication** That part of a person's communication with others that does not involve speech, such as gestures, facial expressions, and so on.

**NPR** Abbreviation for *National Public Radio*.

**O & O** Abbreviation for *owned and operated*; refers to radio or television stations owned and operated by a parent network.

**off hours** The portion of a broadcast day, usually late night and very early morning, when the audience is least likely to be tuned in.

**off mic** Persons are said to be *off mic* when they speak outside the ideal pickup pattern of a microphone.

**OL** Abbreviation for *Oldies*, a popular music category.

**oldies** A term used in popular music radio programming to describe a genre of music. Comparable terms are *golden oldies*, *rock and roll classics*, and *solid gold*.

**omnidirectional** A microphone pickup pattern in which all sides will accept sound signals.

**on-air studio** The studio in which radio DJs and news anchors perform.

**on-air talent** Persons who perform on radio or television. The term usually is associated with music station announcing, but reporters, anchors, and voice-over performers also are *on-air talent*.

**opening up to the camera** Positioning oneself at a slight angle from a second person to present a favorable appearance to the camera.

**optimum pitch** The pitch at which a speaker feels most comfortable while producing the most pleasant speech sounds.

**orbiting spots** See *rotating spots*.

**out cue** The words that conclude a recorded and carted program segment, alerting an announcer that the carted segment has come to its conclusion. When editing audiotaped interviews or statements, an out cue indicates the final words spoken in a given segment, and tells the editor (usually the reporter) where to electronically or manually “cut” the tape.

**outro** A lead-out at the end of a radio or television news report, such as an actuality or a wrap.

**overmodulation** Excessive volume that distorts an audio signal.

**package** (1) A complete news report prepared by a field or special-assignment reporter, needing only a lead-in by an anchor; (2) a series of programs marketed to television stations as a unit.

**pan pot** Short for *panoramic potentiometer*.

**panic button** A control that allows a producer to cut off obscene or defamatory comments by a caller on a telephone talk show.

**panoramic potentiometer** A volume control that allows an operator to change the volume balance between two audio channels.

**payola** The accepting of money in return for playing certain songs on the air.

**PC** Abbreviation for “politically correct” or *political correctness*.

**peripheral vision** The ability to see out of the corners of the eyes, to see a hand signal, for example, without looking at the person giving it.

**personal attack, personal attack rule** A *personal attack* is a verbal attack, made during a broadcast, on “the honesty, character, integrity or like personal qualities” of another person. The *rule*, set forth by the Federal Communications Commission, requires broadcast licensees to notify those who are attacked and to inform them as to the ways in which they may reply.

**personality** A term sometimes used for a DJ, program host, or other popular entertainer.

- pharynx** The area between the mouth and the nasal passages.
- phonation** The utterance of speech sounds; articulation breaks up these sounds into recognizable speech.
- phone beat** See *beat check*.
- phone check** Using a telephone to search for and gather news stories from a list of agencies, including the FBI, police and fire departments, local hospitals, the weather bureau, and airport control towers; also called the *phone beat* and *beat check*.
- phone screener** A person, usually a producer or assistant producer, who receives telephone calls from listeners or viewers who want to talk with a program host and who attempts to eliminate calls from people who are obviously cranks or drunks or are too-frequent callers.
- phoneme** The smallest unit of distinguishable speech sound.
- pickup** The term *pickup* is used in at least three ways in voice-over recording work. If you stumble or slur a word, you are expected to pause, say “pickup,” pause again, and begin reading from the beginning of the sentence in which you stumbled. A *pickup session* is a recording session in which specific lines, recorded at an earlier session, are deemed unusable and must be recorded again. *Pickup* also refers to picking up one’s cue—in other words, speaking more closely on the heels of a line delivered by another performer.
- pickup arm** The arm on a turntable that contains the stylus; also called the *tone arm*.
- pickup cartridge** The pickup cartridge on an audio turntable contains a stylus and a mechanism that picks up vibrations on a phonograph record and transduces the vibrations into electrical energy.
- pickup pattern** The three-dimensional area around a microphone from within which sound is transmitted most faithfully, also referred to as the *polar pattern*.
- pickup session** See *pickup*.
- pitch** The property of a tone that is determined by the frequency of vibration of the sound waves. For humans, the slower the vocal folds vibrate, the lower the pitch of the voice.
- pitch “artist”** A type of announcer whose style is reminiscent of sideshow barkers and old-time medicine shows.
- platform speech** An exaggerated style of speaking, featuring overly precise articulation and a distinct “British” sound.
- play analyst** An announcer, usually a former star athlete, who works with a play-by-play announcer, providing insight and analysis of a game.
- play-by-play announcer** A sportscaster who describes the action of a game.
- playlist** Music approved by radio station management for playing at stipulated times.
- plosive** A speech sound manufactured by the sudden release of blocked-off air. In English, the plosives are *p*, *b*, *t*, *d*, *k*, and *g*.
- plugola** The free promotion of a product or service in which the announcer has a financial interest. (Reading or playing commercials that have been paid for is not illegal, even when the announcer has an interest in the product being advertised.)
- polar pattern** See *pickup pattern*.
- political correctness (PC)** A concept with a range of meanings but confined in this text to *language* that is sensitive and appropriate, as opposed to that which is hurtful or demeaning.

**polydirectional** A pickup or polar pattern that can be adjusted to operate with more than one pickup pattern. Same as *multidirectional*.

**popping** The sound made when a plosive is spoken too closely to a sensitive mic.

**postmortem** A meeting held after a broadcast to discuss what worked, what did not, and why.

**postproduction** Editing and other electronic manipulation of audio or videotapes after they have been recorded.

**pot** Short for *potentiometer*.

**potentiometer** A volume control on an audio console.

**preamplifier** An electronic device that boosts the strength of an audio signal and sends it to the program amplifier; often shortened to "preamp."

**presentation tape** An audition tape.

**press kit** An organized body of printed information prepared by political parties, law enforcement agencies, or sports teams, among others, for reporters, sportscasters, and others who may find such kits useful as they plan their stories or prepare for play-by-play game coverage.

**pressure microphone** A rugged professional microphone that features a molded diaphragm and a wire coil suspended in a magnetic field; also called a *dynamic microphone*.

**pressure zone microphone** A type of microphone that eliminates time lags between direct and reflected sounds.

**primary stress** The syllable in a spoken word that receives the emphasis. In the word *primary*, the first syllable receives the primary stress.

**prime time** That part of the broadcast day during which the radio or television audience is most likely to be tuned in.

**production console** An elaborate audio console with features not found (or needed) on on-air studio boards, including equalization and other signal processing options. A production console or board.

**production studio** A radio studio in which music is dubbed from discs to carts or DAT, station promos are recorded, and other program elements requiring a sophisticated audio setup are produced.

**program amplifier** An electronic device that collects, boosts, and sends sounds to a transmitter or tape recorder.

**program log** A listing of all commercials, public-service announcements, and program material broadcast by a station.

**promo** Short for "promotion"; any prepared spot that promotes viewing or listening to a station or a program broadcast by the station.

**prompter** Any of several machines that display a script before a broadcast performer; also called "prompting devices" or "teleprompters" (however, TelePrompTer is the brand name of one prompting system).

**pronouncer** The phoneticized pronunciation for a word or name included on wire-service copy.

**pronunciation** A way of speaking words. The particular accent used by persons in sounding words.

**prop** Short for "property"; any article other than sets or costumes used in a television production.

**property** An object that a performer holds, displays, or points to.

**PSA** Abbreviation for *public-service announcement*.

**public-service announcement** A radio or television announcement that promotes a charitable or nonprofit organization or cause.

**PZM** Abbreviation for *pressure zone microphone*.

**Q & A session** Question-and-answer session, a brief on-air discussion of a news story between an anchor and a reporter in the field.

**raw sound** Recorded or live sounds from the site of news stories that add to the “reality” of reports. Raw sounds include those of foghorns, crickets chirping, jet aircraft flying overhead, people chanting, and the sound of marching bands at a parade.

**real time** Whether live or recorded, *real time* refers to performances that are unedited and are heard or seen by an audience exactly as they are or were performed.

**recurrent** A term used in music radio to indicate selections that are just off the playlist.

**redundancy** Repetition of ideas or words or phrases, which is sometimes appropriate, as in repeating a telephone number to be called, and sometimes excessive, as in the term “joint partnership.”

**reporter** A person who reports news stories that occur away from a radio or television station; some categories are *field*, *general-assignment*, and *special-assignment reporters*.

**resonance** The intensification of vocal tones during speech as the result of vibrations in the nose and cheekbones.

**résumé** A written statement that includes work experience, qualifications, educational background, and interest areas, often submitted with employment applications.

**résumé tape** Same as *audition tape*.

**reveal** Words or phrases produced by a character generator and “revealed” one at a time on the television screen to match the points being made by an announcer.

**ribbon microphone** A sensitive, professional microphone that has a metallic ribbon suspended between the poles of a magnet; also referred to as a *velocity mic*.

**rip and read** To take news copy directly from a wire-service and read it on the air without editing it, marking it, or prereading it.

**robotic cameras** Television cameras programmed to move to predetermined positions without individual human operators.

**roll** Words or phrases produced by a character generator and moved from bottom to top on the television screen.

**ROS** Abbreviation for *run of station*.

**rotating potentiometers** Knobs on an audio console that are turned clockwise or counterclockwise to raise or lower the volume of sound; see also *vertical fader*.

**rotating spots** Commercial announcements whose time of broadcast varies throughout the week; also called *orbiting spots*.

**rotating table** The “table” on a record player that holds a disc and spins while a pickup stylus transmits sound from its grooves to another destination, such as a speaker or an audio console.

- RTNDA** Abbreviation for *Radio and Television News Directors Association*.
- rule of three** A theory that the impact of a statement is diluted by going beyond three words or phrases in a sequence.
- run of station** A system of scheduling radio commercials on a random basis at available times.
- run sheet** A run sheet, or *running log*, follows the established format of a news radio station and indicates the times at which you will give headlines, features, time checks, commercials, and other newscast elements or the times at which they will be played. The log may be on sheets of paper, on a computer screen, or on both.
- running log** A listing of the times at which every program element will be broadcast by a radio station.
- SA** Abbreviation for *Soft Adult Contemporary*, a popular music category.
- SAG** Abbreviation for the Screen Actors Guild, the union for those actors and announcers whose work is filmed (as opposed to taped).
- SAT PIC** Abbreviation for "satellite picture," a view of the earth's weather sent from a satellite.
- scannable résumé** A résumé specially formatted for scanning by a potential employer.
- scener** A live or taped radio news report on a breaking event.
- schwa vowel** In phonetic transcription, the *schwa* vowel represents an unaccented "uh" sound, as the last syllable in *sofa*. It is transcribed as an inverted "e," depicted as [ə].
- secondary market** An area with a potential broadcast audience of between 200,000 and 1,000,000 viewers or listeners.
- secondary stress** Multisyllabic words usually have different degrees of stress, as in the word *secondary*. SEC receives primary stress, ON is unstressed, DAR receives secondary stress, and Y is unstressed.
- segue** To broadcast two elements of a radio program back-to-back without overlap or pause. The first sound is faded out, and the second is immediately faded in.
- semivowels** Speech sounds similar to true vowel sounds in their resonance patterns. The consonants *w*, *r*, and *Y* are the semivowels.
- separates** The term used by the Associated Press for individual sports stories.
- set** Two or more songs played back to back without intervening commentary by the DJ.
- SFX** Script symbol for "sound effects."
- sibilance** The sound made when pronouncing the fricatives *s*, *sh*, and sometimes *z*. Excessive sibilance is exaggerated by sensitive microphones.
- signature** Same as a *logo* or *ID*.
- simile** A figure of speech in which two essentially unlike things are compared, as in "a meal without salad is like a day without sunshine."
- simulcast** The simultaneous broadcasting of the same program over an AM and an FM station, or over a radio and a television station.
- situationer** In most television news operations, news directors, producers, reporters, directors, and other key members of the news team meet to discuss and plan upcoming newscasts. A list of available stories, called a situationer, is handed out, and the stories are discussed one by one as decisions are made as to what sto-

ries to cover, who is to gather each report, and the order in which the stories will be broadcast.

**slate** An audio and/or visual identification of a taped television program segment that is included at the beginning of the tape and provides information about the segment—its title, the date of recording, the intended date of showing, and the number of the take.

**slip start** A method of starting to play a cued-up phonograph record by allowing the turntable to rotate while the operator's hand holds the disc motionless and then releasing the disc.

**slug commercial** A hard-hitting commercial, usually characterized by high volume, rapid reading, and frenetic delivery.

**slug line** The shortened, or abbreviated, title given to a news event for identification purposes.

**smaller market** An area with a potential audience of fewer than 200,000 viewers or listeners.

**social responsibility theory** A theory concerning the media that charges journalists with considering the potential consequences of their coverage of the news.

**soft news** News stories about scheduled events, such as meetings, briefings, hearings, or news conferences, that lack the immediacy and urgency of hard news.

**soft sell commercial** A commercial that features restrained announcer delivery and (usually) a melodious musical background.

**solecism** A blunder in speech.

**SOT** Script symbol for "sound on tape."

**sound bite** A brief statement made on-camera by someone other than station personnel; equivalent to an actuality on radio.

**sounder** A short, recorded musical identification of a particular radio program element, such as a traffic, sports, or weather report; also referred to as an *ID* or *logo*.

**sounds** Recorded statements introduced as part of radio news stories. Sounds include actualities, wraps, sceners, and voicers.

**special-assignment reporter** A radio or television reporter who specializes in one aspect of news gathering, such as crime reporting, politics, environmental issues, or news from a particular geographic area.

**speech personality** The overall quality of a person's voice, which makes one instantly recognizable to friends when speaking on the telephone.

**spilling over** Another expression for bending the needle.

**spot** Another term for a commercial.

**spot set** A cluster of commercials played one after the other.

**Standard American Speech** That manner of pronouncing words used by educated persons in the Midwest and Far West of the United States and Canada.

**stand-up** A direct address made to a camera by a television reporter at any time within a news package, but almost always for the closing comments.

**stash** A term used for songs that are not on a radio station's current playlist but are occasionally played.

**station ID** Short for "station identification."

**station logo** A symbol, either aural or visual, by which a station identifies itself.

**status-conferral function** The concept that the media of radio and television confer exalted status to those who appear on them.

**stereo** A two-or-more-speaker sound system. Abbreviation of “stereophonic.”

**sting** Abbreviation of “stinger;” a sharp musical chord used to highlight a transition or draw attention.

**stop set** A cluster of commercials played one after the other.

**stringer** A free-lance reporter who is paid only for stories chosen and used by a station’s news department.

**studio cards** Cards used in television to convey information or entire scripts to on-camera performers.

**stylus** Part of a tone arm pickup cartridge, the needle.

**super** Short for “superimposition,” the showing of one picture over another on the television screen.

**supercardioid** A microphone pickup pattern used chiefly in television boom mics. Also called *hypercardioid*.

**sweep** The playing of several songs consecutively, without intervening comment by the DJ.

**sweetening** Electronically treating music, during recording and in postproduction, to improve the sound quality.

**switchable** A microphone that features a switch that changes the pickup pattern of the mic. Also called *multidirectional* and *polydirectional*.

**switcher** (1) The video console that allows an operator to cut, dissolve, and perform other electronic functions; (2) the title given to the person who operates such a console.

**syllabic consonant** The consonants *m*, *n*, and *l*, which can be sounded as separate syllables without a vowel sound preceding or following them. In phonetic transcription, the word *saddle* can be transcribed as [‘sædl], with the line under the letter *l* indicating that it is sounded as a separate syllable.

**tag** To make closing comments at the end of a scene or program segment.

**take a level** To speak into a microphone prior to broadcast or recording so that an audio engineer can adjust the volume control.

**takes** Any number of attempts to record a program segment successfully.

**taking camera** In a multiple-camera television production, the camera that is “on” at a specific moment.

**talk-back microphone** The mic located in a control room that allows the audio operator to speak to people in other production areas, such as studios or newsrooms.

**talking head** A derogatory term for a television shot featuring a close-up of a speaker addressing the camera.

**talk station** A radio station, usually an AM station, that features a number of talk and telephone call-in shows daily.

**tally light** A red light mounted on the top of a television camera that, when lit, indicates the *taking camera*.

**TAP** Abbreviation for *total audience plan*.

**tape cart** A cartridge of 1/4-inch audiotape that rewinds and recues itself.

**tape cart players** Machines that play quarter-inch audiotapes that are looped inside a cartridge and that automatically rewind as they are played.

- target audience** The intended audience for a program or a commercial.
- tease** A brief promotion of a program or an upcoming segment of a program.
- telegraphing a movement** A subtle indication by a television performer who is about to move, stand, or sit. Directors and camera operators need such warnings to follow movements effectively.
- tempo** A speaker's rate of delivery.
- tight shot** A close-up shot.
- time code** A means of marking each frame of a videotape for later editing.
- time-delay system** A means of delaying material being broadcast live (such as a radio call-in talk show) to permit intervention if someone uses profanity or makes other unacceptable comments.
- tone arm** The device on a turntable that holds the pickup cartridge and its stylus. The stylus "rides" the grooves of a record and converts the vibrations into electrical energy.
- Top 40** A radio station format that rotates the top hits of the day, usually interspersed with golden oldies; also called *Contemporary Hit Radio*.
- toss** To turn the program over to a co-anchor, a weather reporter, or another member of the broadcast team with a brief ad-libbed transitional statement.
- total audience plan** A system for distributing commercial messages over three or more dayparts.
- trachea** The windpipe.
- traffic department** The personnel at a broadcast station who schedule the placement of commercials.
- transduction** The conversion of sound waves into electrical energy.
- trash television** Television talk shows that regularly use intimidation, obscenity, vulgarity, and controversial and unsubstantiated statements to attract an audience that seeks cheap thrills.
- turntable** The "table" on a record player that holds a disc and spins while a pickup stylus transmits sound from its grooves to another destination, such as a speaker or an audio console.
- UC** Abbreviation for *Urban Contemporary*.
- unidirectional** A microphone pickup pattern in which sound is accepted from only one direction.
- unphonated** Speech sounds that don't employ vibrations of the vocal folds, as in the plosive sounds *p*, *b*, *t*, *k*, and *g*.
- unvoiced consonants** The consonants of spoken English that do not involve the vibration of the vocal folds. Examples are *p*, *t*, *k*, and *f*.
- uplink** A transmitter that sends a signal to a satellite and is often part of a mobile van.
- Urban Contemporary** Radio station formats that reflect the ethnic makeup of the urban areas they serve.
- variable equalizer** A filter that enables an audio console operator to eliminate undesirable frequencies, such as those associated with scratches on a record.
- velocity microphone** See *ribbon microphone*.
- velum** The soft palate.

**vertical fader** A sliding lever on certain audio consoles that is moved up or down to raise or lower the volume of sound.

**vertical spots** Radio commercials scheduled at various times on a given day.

**videotape recorder** Any of several types of electronic recording devices that record and store picture and sound for later playback or editing.

**VI meter** Short for "volume indicator meter," which registers the volume of sounds through an audio console.

**virgule** A slash, used by some announcers to indicate a pause when marking broadcast copy for delivery.

**viscous damping** The tone arm of a record player uses a silicone fluid in a hydraulic mechanism to prevent it from making sharp or sudden movements. The fluid is *viscous* and the *damping* acts as a restraint.

**vitality** The enthusiasm and high energy level of a performer.

**vocal folds, vocal cords** A part of the speech mechanism that vibrates to generate sounds. The rate of vibration determines pitch and the amount of energy behind the vibration determines the loudness of the sound produced.

**voice quality** The way your voice sounds, including such characteristics as resonance, thinness, timbre, nasality, huskiness, and tone.

**voiced consonants** The consonants of spoken English that require the vibration of the vocal folds. Examples are *b, d, g,* and *v*.

**voice-overs** Taped performances in which the announcer is not seen.

**voicer** A carted report from a radio news reporter.

**volume** In audio terms, *volume* or *amplitude* refers to the relative strength (magnitude) of a sound signal.

**vowel** A pure phonated tone that can be held indefinitely without moving the articulators, for example, the sound "ah" in *father*.

**vox pop** Abbreviation of *vox populi*, Latin for "voice of the people." Newscasts often feature brief expressions of opinion elicited from passersby. The term "man on the street" (MOS) is seldom used for such collections of opinion because of its gender bias.

**VTR** Abbreviation for "videotape recorder."

**VTR SOT** Abbreviation for "videotape, sound on tape."

**VU meter** Short for "volume unit meter," a part of an audio console that shows, by means of a swinging needle, the volume of sound going through the board.

**wheel** Another term for a *clock*, or *hot clock*.

**wild spots** Radio commercials guaranteed by a station to be played at some point within a designated block of time.

**windpipe** The windpipe, also called the *trachea*, is a tube, slightly longer than four inches, that extends from the larynx to the lungs.

**wipe** An electronic effect in which one picture appears to push another off the television screen.

**WNBA** Abbreviation for *Women's National Basketball Association*.

**woodshedding** The careful study, marking, and rehearsing of broadcast copy before performance.

**working combo** Performing both announcing and engineering functions for a radio broadcast.

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**wowing** The distorted sound when a record or tape is run at an incorrect or inconsistent speed.

**wrap** A recorded report from the field in which a radio news reporter provides a lead-in and a lead-out, “wrapped around” an actuality; also called a “wraparound.”

**WX** Script symbol for “weather report.”

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