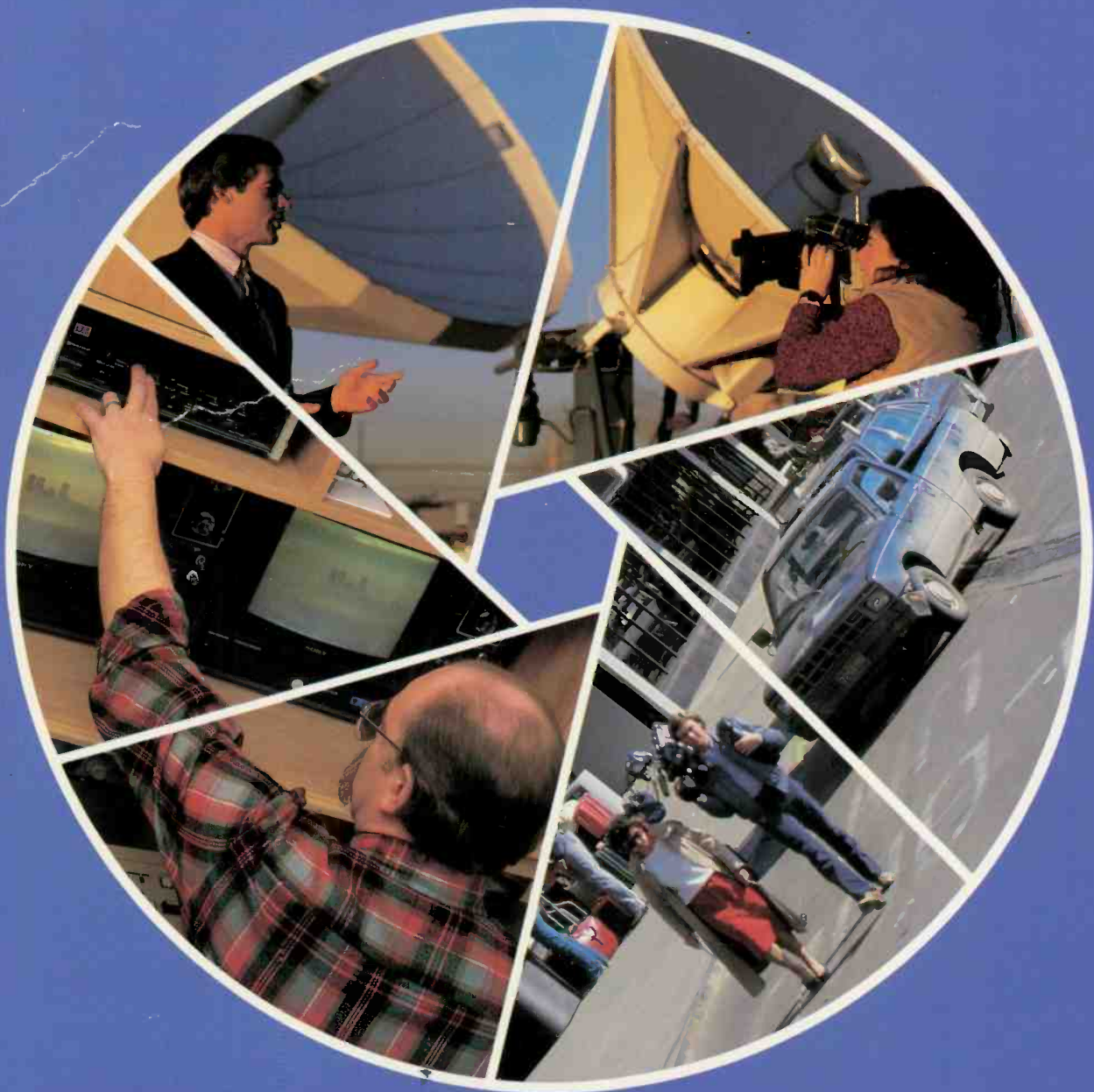
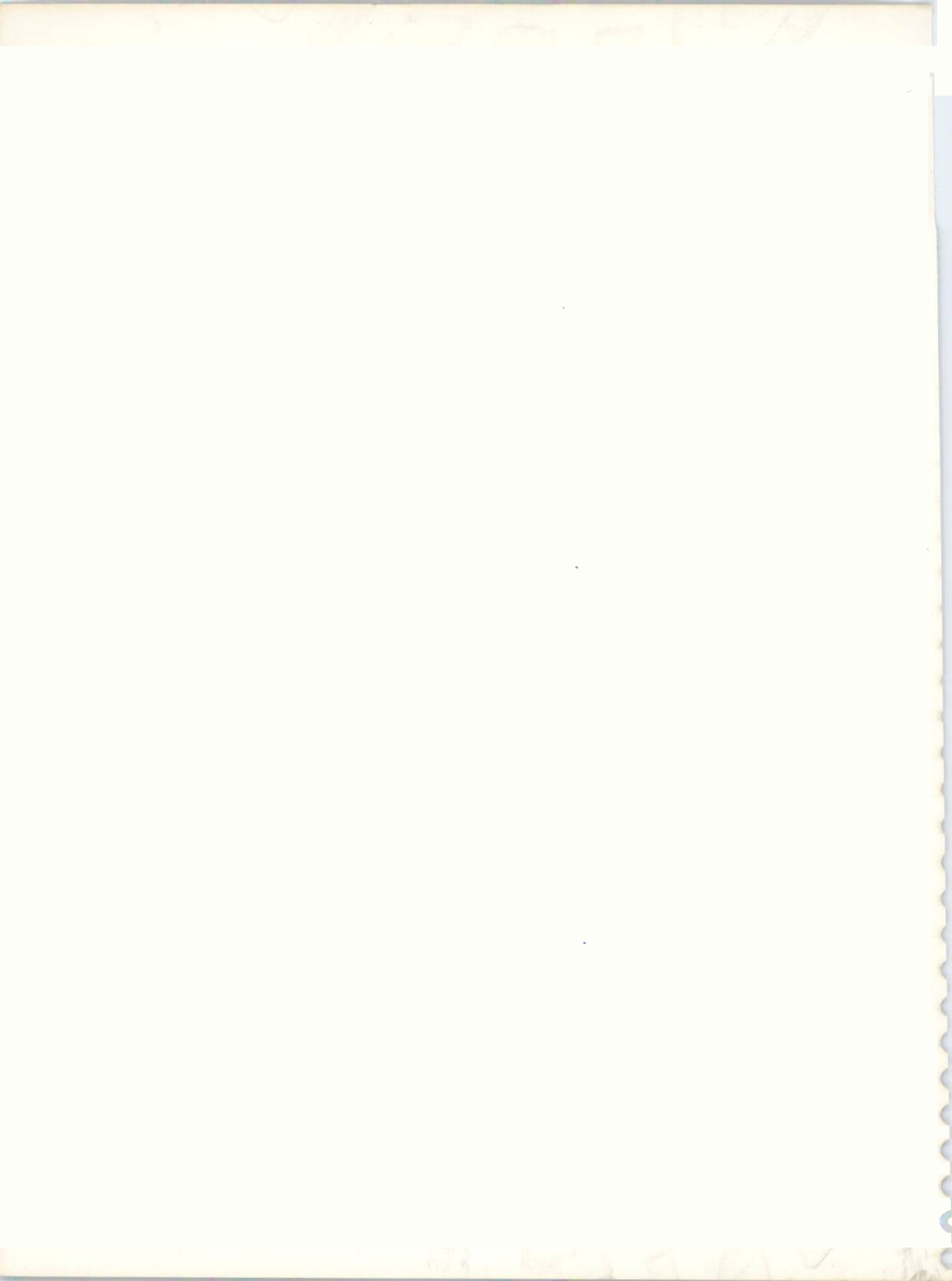


THE
BROADCAST
NEWS PROCESS THIRD EDITION



FREDERICK SHOOK / DAN LATTIMORE



THE BROADCAST NEWS PROCESS

3rd Edition

by

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Preface

Many observations can be made of broadcast news, but few will argue that among its most distinctive qualities is immediacy. A flick of the switch will let most consumers of broadcast news learn of a 20th century event, often as it happens. After 40 years of radio news had established the value of broadcast journalism, the decade of the 1960s established television news as a courier of immediacy in its own right, capable of attracting huge audiences. Nearly 40 million viewers watched John Glenn's 10-hour orbital flight in 1962, followed by even larger audiences for live coverage of the events that followed the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963. Television audiences kept swelling during the 1960s until, in 1969, they reached proportions of McLuhan's "global village" during live coverage of man's first landing on the moon.

Immediacy is inherent to broadcasting. It has been that way since the earliest newscasts crackled over the airwaves, and the ensuing years have seen the personality of all broadcast news caught up in great changes. The days when broadcast newsrooms were made up of a couple of tattered chairs, a teletype, microphone and typewriter are history.

Modern broadcast journalism is trying to tackle events on a worldwide scale. Such a task demands more people, equipment and facilities. Newsrooms are being transformed into thousands of square feet of glittering monitors, banks of electronic data and weather and radio machines, while a new breed of journalist tries to cope with new techniques of satellite news gathering.

The initial investment at individual stations is backed by dozens of writers, reporters, videotape personnel, news producers, anchor personalities, engineers and editors. The total product is often complemented with mobile news cruisers, helicopters armed with microwave transmitters and two-way radios, and live broadcast gear that would consume the lifetime earnings of the average broadcast journalist.

The result, still not perfect, is a fast-paced operation that often summons strange looks from the person on the street, and profits for a money-minded management. But there is something more. This mish-mash of bodies and electronics is responsible for mass-informing a great deal of America's populace. All but the most remote human beings in America are now within range of a broadcast signal carrying news of the world.

Instantaneous coverage of most news events would not have been practical a few years ago. Now, it is common practice. New technical developments and familiarity with the medium have seen to this. And there has been one additional element — viewer acceptance and reliance on this new form of communication, broadcast journalism. It carries a good deal of responsibility and a double-barreled advantage — immediacy which establishes a high credibility factor. On-the-spot coverage tends to produce the effect of "what one sees and hears, one believes."

In the six decades of radio news, and the four decades of television news, journalists have helped develop perfection of the medium's own particular style. Yet, the medium remains imperfect and the best of broadcast journalism is perhaps still to be discovered.

If you are interested in contributing your unique skills and talents to the profession, this book offers you a starting point as you begin your career in broadcast news. Although the broadcast industry needs more good writers, competition is tough for the relatively few jobs

that are available. If you hope to compete in the job market, you will have to develop and polish your art and craft. Consequently, emphasis in this book is on professional writing and reporting skills. Regardless of which medium you enter, radio or television, you must master these two essentials of the journalism profession.

The broadcast media, radio and television, are unique hybrids that combine the techniques of theater, film-making and journalism — all rolled into one. You will have to adapt to the requirements of broadcast media if you are to communicate through them. This book is an attempt to help you adapt and grow into the basic writing and communication skills that are unique to the broadcast media.

Each chapter in this book contains both text and work material. Special boxes provide “how to” tips and other special information about the broadcast news process. Exercises at the end of each chapter are designed for in-class use, while assignments are provided for experiences outside the classroom. Both exercises and assignments are keyed to help you immediately implement the information given in each chapter.

The appendices provide important journalistic codes for your reference. Finally, the appendices include a section on “how to find your first job” with a sample resume provided. This section is included with the hope that you will become a successful broadcast journalist in the years ahead.

We are indebted in the preparation of this book to many individuals and broadcast news organizations. Although we are unable to list all who contributed, we are especially grateful for the contributions of KC, NC-TV, KUSA-TV and KHOW-AM, Denver; CBS news correspondent Charles Kuralt; NBC reporter, Bob Dotson; Denver radio and television news personalities Don Kinney, Roger Ogden, Bob Palmer, Art Newman, Bud Elliot; and news director Paul Rhodes, KCCI-TV, Des Moines. Professor John Walsh deserves special recognition for his contributions to the chapter on radio news. We also appreciate the assistance of Robert Hudson, Michigan State University, and Don Somerville, University of Colorado, who reviewed the manuscript and offered many helpful suggestions. Special thanks is also due Georgia Mosher for the many hours she invested in the editing, and special preparation of this manuscript, and to photographer Eric Bakke for many of the photographs we have used. Finally, we wish to thank our wives, Jean and Bonnie, for their constructive comments and continual support that helped make this book reality.

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Part I

Broadcast News Writing



1

Writing For Broadcast

The broadcast writer must cover the news of the world in fewer words than appear on a single page of many newspapers. A newspaper reader can scan an article over and over. On radio and TV, he will hear it only once.
Bob Palmer, Denver Television Anchorman

The challenge to the broadcast writer is to help a most often half-interested person become vitally interested in the news. Imagine hearing the following story beginnings in tonight's news:

- It was like a scene straight from Star Wars . . .
- Everyone knows how dry it's been in recent months, but few city residents knew how serious the drought has become until late this afternoon.
- Most of us would like to live to be 100, and today American scientists are saying it's possible.

If you're even a little interested in news, and most people are, such writing helps spur even more interest. With such writing you can gather and hold an audience, although obviously not all stories are suited to such treatment. Nevertheless, broadcast journalism demands complex writing skills because you must take a day's events, compress them into a few minutes, yet communicate the significant and interesting aspects of what has happened that day. You must learn how to communicate the essence of stories in the absence of sufficient time in a way that is accurate, succinct, interesting and full of imagery . . . and all this to an audience that will have only one chance to hear, *understand* and retain what you have said. Few writers without well developed skills are up to the task.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRINT AND BROADCAST JOURNALISM

How do you learn the skills to be a broadcast writer? You could begin in many ways, but first you must experience an obvious difference between print and broadcast journalism — a difference that is easily overlooked. When you write for newspapers, you are writing information that will be taken in through the eye. Newspaper readers never hear what you are trying to say; they only *see* your work.

A simple experiment that you should try before reading further offers dramatic proof of the difference between writing for print and broadcast.

Find a copy of any newspaper and read one article into the tape recorder. Now play back the recording. It probably sounds ponderous and artificial. That's because what you read into the recorder isn't the way people talk. Newspaper writing as we know it is still evolving after 200 years and it hasn't come close to meeting the demands for *hear* copy that broadcast journalism makes.

Now read the newspaper story to yourself until you understand it completely. Reflect for a few moments on the basic elements in the story, then turn on the tape recorder and ad-lib your version of the story without the help of notes or any other supporting material. As rough as the resulting product may be, you have just "written" in broadcast style. Now play back both stories and compare the story you ad-libbed with what you recorded verbatim from the newspaper.

Chances are your first ad-lib sentence (your "lead") is shorter than the newspaper lead. You may have mentioned only one or two of the 5 W's commonly found in newspaper leads — the Who, What, Where, Why, When (and sometimes, How) of the story. Your lead, as in the case of most broadcast leads, may have followed the form of introductory discussion that occurs between friends when news is first announced: "Did you hear what happened downtown today? A car crashed into an apartment house and killed a woman who was asleep in bed!"

Imagine telling your friend, as newspapers would, "Viola Jones, 85, of 415 Oak St., was killed late today when a car careened through the wall of an apartment house and came to rest atop the bed on which she was sleeping." Without doubt your friend would think you talked funny. Radio and television would sound funny too, if they talked that way.

When you write for broadcast, it helps to write the way you talk, although obviously more formal and precise than in everyday conversation. Radio and television are good friends to most people. Often we turn on the sets to hear a friendly voice tell us what's happening in the world. If the voice talked like a newspaper, we probably wouldn't listen long. Yet too often, writers overlook that those voices on the air must read words that are intended to be *heard* — more formal, obviously, than most routine conversation between friends, but much less formal and stilted than copy for print journalism.

Now back to your two versions of the newspaper article you recorded into your tape machine. Transcribe your ad-lib version at the typewriter and compare its length with the newspaper story. Chances are it is much shorter. True, you may have dropped some detail; newspapers are full of detail but that's because the eye can scan and rescan a story until its owner reaches the saturation point and is ready to move on.

In broadcast news the equivalent of story length is *time*, and broadcast media don't have much time. In a five-minute radio newscast you must subtract a minute for the commercial and 30 seconds or more for the intro, weather report and close, so you're left with only about three and one-half minutes in which to cram the news of the day. Even in a half-hour television newscast, after subtracting six to seven minutes for commercials, three and one-half minutes for weather, and up to four minutes for sports, you're left with about 16 minutes to tell your audience what's happening in the community and in the world. Your stories must be kept short if you're going to cover more than three or four events.

HOW THE EAR WORKS

Another reason for shorter stories in broadcast media lies in the way the ear works. The ear has less patience than the eye. It gets upset when you drone on and on with a story, or when you hurl fistfuls of detail in it. Newspapers are full of facts, numbers and figures.

A federal survey shows the number of meals served in public schools has dropped 18 per cent in the last 18 months as more families send sack lunches to school with their

children. The decline in the number of full price lunches has averaged nearly 12 percent, according to the survey, while the decline in the number of reduced-fare lunches has averaged 27 percent. Officials attribute the fall-off in total number of lunches served to a 25 percent increase in the cost of full-price lunches, which have been raised from 60 to 75 cents, and to a 400 percent increase in the cost of reduced price lunches which have jumped from 10 cents to 40 cents in the last 18 months. All increases are attributed to cutbacks in federal subsidies for school lunches.

Look closely at the story above. What does it really say? Could you understand the story without studying it? Broadcast writing will not tolerate such abstraction. Radio and television intentionally avoid such detail and opt instead for the delivery of more generalized impressions. Compare the same story for broadcast:

A federal survey shows parents are fighting cutbacks in government lunch subsidies with the brown bag. Officials say low income families have been hardest hit by reduced-price lunches that cost 30 cents more than they did a year and a half ago . . . an increase of 400 per cent. Families who can pay the full cost of meals spend 15 cents more per lunch than a year and a half ago . . . for an increase of 25 per cent. Nationally, the survey shows that sack lunches have replaced nearly one hot school lunch in five.

As another example, a newspaper story might report that public school teachers can earn an average annual salary of \$24,000 while parochial teachers earn an average of \$12,500 per year. The story might also report that the average yearly cost to educate a child in public schools is \$2,400 while the same average annual cost in parochial schools is \$1,100. Now try writing a simple broadcast story using the above facts:

The cost of education keeps climbing, but parochial schools seem to be holding the line. Figures released today show public school teachers in this area earn about 24-thousand dollars. That compares with parochial salaries that are a little more than half that —about 13 thousand dollars a year. Officials say it cost about 24-hundred dollars to educate a child in public schools this year . . . but less than half of that . . . about 11-hundred dollars a year in parochial schools.

Notice you have still used figures, but you have not crammed them into two sentences. You also have given your audience reference points by saying that parochial salaries are a little more than half the salaries in public schools, while the per-child cost of education is more than twice as high in public schools.

TREATING NUMBERS

The larger numbers become, the more abstract they loom to your audience. The word billions is thrown about by some writers almost as callously as by some public servants.

Try to imagine a billion of anything. Imagine how hard it must be for your audience to make sense of a story that talks about a \$24 billion increase in defense spending. Your calculator will show that \$24 billion is a yearly expenditure of close to \$800 per second, \$2,880,000 per hour, and nearly \$70 million a day! Somewhere within the story you can help the audience make sense of such figures by relating them with an eye toward understanding.

Help your audience make similar sense of figures by telling them that the new supersonic transport is the length of two football fields, instead of 200 yards or 600 feet long. Believe with a passion that broadcast media are lousy at abstraction and substitute vivid writing and imagery instead. Your writing will be more interesting and easier to understand.

Similarly, as you write for broadcast, remember that every unneeded word you lose is, in effect, a gain of time and clarity. Every word you eliminate without losing essential meaning saves a second or two that you can give to some other story. Every unneeded word is one less element that muddles your story's meaning. So write lean, be brief, choose powerful words that telegraph your message without getting bogged down in rhetoric.

WRITING TO AN AUDIENCE

Writing is both art and craft, but always it is an act of communication that requires not only a message but someone to hear it. You must have something to say to someone else, and *who* that *someone else* happens to be (your audience) helps determine *how you tell* (your style) *what you have to say* (your message).

To your considerations of *audience, style and message*, you should add a fourth element, *purpose*, to your consciousness as a writer — the question of why you are writing the story, why it is important, to whom it is important, and how your story will affect those who hear it. If you can keep these four essentials of audience, style, message and purpose clear in your mind, you will immediately be a more competent writer.

Who is your audience? It's anyone's guess if you think of your audience as a faceless crowd of people. If you work in radio, your audience at 7 a.m. might be made up of sleepy-heads at the breakfast table or commuters out fighting early morning traffic. Your audience might be a grandfather just waking up to your newscast, or a trucker hurrying down an interstate freeway. The point is, whatever the hour of the day, your audience is not a faceless mass. Your audience is a single human being much like yourself, and it is to this single human being that you must write. Writing to the "mass" audience, the faceless crowd, requires little commitment to communicate what others need to hear. It is much more efficient as you write to imagine your audience as a single person who quite often is beset by distractions that lure him from your message, whether the distraction is a crying baby, a stoplight, the doorbell or an article in the newspaper that just caught his eye.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Another consideration is your analysis of the station's *target audience*, a primary bloc of listeners or viewers with certain characteristics of age, economics or life style that give them a somewhat common identity. The station then offers programming calculated specifically to attract that audience.

The target audience of an easy-listening format FM radio station, for example, might be affluent "oldsters" prone to travel, investment and involvement in community cultural affairs. A hard rock station, on the other hand, might cater to a target audience of younger listeners between ages 18 and 30. Other stations may program primarily to reach black, Mexican-American or other minority audiences, or a "middle-of-the-road" audience of the primary buyers in our society between the ages of 18 and 49. Obviously, these audiences have different backgrounds, needs, and interests, and your writing can take such factors into account.

As a listener or viewer you sometimes can determine a station's target audience by assessing the nature of its commercials. When a football personality had his own sportscasts on a Kansas City, Missouri, station he pulled a high percentage of women viewers. Station ratings reflected a "bulge" in the number of women viewers during the 10 o'clock news when he began his sports show. The nature and choice of some stories within the sportscast were altered to reflect

women's interests (more women's tennis; some minor sports, etc.) and the increasing number of women in the audience was indicated by the increased number of commercials for women's products. Conversely, in radio, commercials for backpacks, bicycles, stereos and similar products may indicate that the station is reaching an intended target audience of young adults.

With your audience defined, you can begin to write in a meaningful way to all those single human beings out there who are trying to listen. The story you write is your message; the way you tell it is your style. Some stories are going to be humorous; others will be deadly serious. Some will entertain; others will inform. The nature of the story, its essence, will determine your style and how you treat the story.

ACCURACY

One of the essential qualities of fair reporting is accuracy. No station can maintain an image of journalistic integrity if news reports are consistently inaccurate. Missed facts, inaccuracies, mispronunciations, distortions of emphasis — all damage your credibility.

Inadequacies, half-truths and inconsistencies all raise questions in listener's and viewer's minds about the possibility of biased reporting. Traditionally, journalism has even come under attack for fair reporting. When your accuracy and fairness are above reproach, there still will be those among your audience who castigate you for reporting what happened, and others who will chastise you for not reporting what happened.

LETTER FROM SIXTH GRADER TO CBS NEWS

PRESIDENT RICHARD SALANT

Dear Mr. Salant:

I am writing to tell you the trouble your newscasters cause at our house. Often during the newscast my uncle shakes his fist and yells "You lying (genealogical expletive deleted)!" This upsets my aunt and any guests. Do your newscasters lie a lot?

Salant replied later in his Edward R. Murrow Address at Washington State University:

"Of course we do not deliberately set out to make people mad, and shake their fists at us while reflecting on our legitimacy, but it *is* our function to come to the truth as nearly as human fallibility permits — and since that is so, making people mad goes with the territory."

Given the nature of journalism, all this is natural and to be expected. Anyone in the news, whether public official or labor union leader, wants to be shown in a favorable light. Accurate reporting demands that you show people as they are, whether good or bad, and "let the chips fall where they may" when it comes to the impact and effect of your reporting. It will never be your role as a journalist to tell people what they would like to hear; it will be your job to tell the story as accurately as you can, even when the facts are unpleasant.

Accuracy will be demanded of you in many ways. In even the simplest stories, you will have to check and recheck the smallest details, verify that names, ages and addresses are complete and accurate; you will have to determine whether streets and rivers run in the directions that wire services and fellow writers claim; you will have to ascertain whether your use of statistics is fair or misleading; and you will have to find out whether "yesterday" in Paris is still "today" in the United States. If you are diligent in your commitment to honest, accurate reporting, your audience will trust you; it will seek out your station as a professional information source.

On a more personal level, accuracy is vitally important to newspeople for other reasons — inaccuracy is one way to lose your job or subject yourself and your station to costly lawsuits.

ATTRIBUTION

As a journalist, you should never take responsibility for predicting the future, or vouch for the accuracy of statements you cannot substantiate. Don't attribute statements unless you have a reason, and usually attribute less frequently than you would in print journalism (too much attribution interrupts continuity and makes the story more confusing), but be on the alert for statements that must be attributed:

1. Sodium phenobarbital injections provide a more humane way to dispose of pets than compression chambers.
2. Abortion is a return to primitive, barbaric values.
3. Continued imports of foreign oil will drive America bankrupt.
4. The gasoline shortage will cause many independent retailers to go out of business.
5. Carlson will withdraw as the nominee for highway director.

If you look again at the statements above, you can easily identify their controversial nature. As a journalist, why should you assume responsibility for reporting such information as gospel fact?

Example 1 calls for attribution to an *expert*, someone with the qualifications to state as fact that sodium phenobarbital injections are more humane than other pet disposal methods.

Statement 2 is an emotion-laden value judgment; either you must attribute the statement to a source or label your story as personal comment or an editorial.

Statement 3 places you in the position of crystal-gazer unless you attribute. Who says foreign oil imports will drive America bankrupt? Tell your audience who made the statement, then let your audience judge for itself the accuracy of the statement and the integrity of the source.

Statement 4 begs attribution in a similar way. Did an independent gasoline retailer make the statement, or did an economist or politician? Tell your audience.

Statement 5 fails to include the source as an essential part of the story. Only Mr. Carlson could decide to withdraw his name from nomination, so tell your audience that the source of the story made the announcement.

Beware of attribution when it's unnecessary, a situation that most often occurs when the source is obvious or obviously can be trusted.

Poor: According to Barbara Davidson, technical assistant for the Houston District Court, Judge Conrad Hill has deferred sentencing in the case until December 15th.

Better: Sentencing has been deferred until mid-December.

Equally futile is the practice of attributing sources that can be summarized in fewer words:

Marvin Atkins, acting assistant director of investigations for the St. Louis metropolitan strike force, said arresting officers took five suspected drug dealers into custody in the raid, including the 15-year-old daughter of a prominent St. Louis family.

CHANGE TO:

Police say they arrested five suspected drug dealers, among them the 15-year-old daughter of a prominent St. Louis family.

Newspapers often delay attribution until the end of the sentence, but broadcast stories usually *sound* more natural if you name the source at the beginning of the sentence.

Newspaper style attribution:

The Fort Worth area can expect an unusually chilly month, *according to the national weather service.*

Broadcast attribution:

The national weather service predicts an unusually chilly month in the Fort Worth area.

Be wary of the sound of your story anytime you place attribution at the end of the sentence. In broadcast attribution, as with all broadcast writing, sound, clarity and brevity are all important.

SAYS is a Helpful Word

If you recheck the examples of attribution in this chapter, you will see the word "says" has been frequently used. The word SAYS is a clean, simple substitution for the more pontifical STATED, ASSERTED, ACCORDING TO that appear often in newspaper writing. The word SAYS is also a clean way to reduce sentence length, as the following examples demonstrate. In each example the word SAYS substitutes nicely for the italicized words.

Johnson *further charged that* the city will experience a decline in property tax revenue.

CHANGE TO:

Johnson *says* the city can expect a decline in property tax revenue.

He *stated that* new laws are needed to provide authority to close down pornography shops.

CHANGE TO:

He *says* new laws are needed to close down pornography shops.

Or consider this problem and how it would sound in a news broadcast:

"I'm proud I was able to sail the Atlantic by myself, but now I'm just glad the voyage has come to an end."

Such wording might lead to confusion about who said what — the person in the news or the person reporting the news. An *indirect quote* here could ease you out of potentially confused reporting:

He says he's proud he managed to sail the Atlantic alone, but he's glad the voyage is over.

QUOTING THE SOURCE

The problem with quotation marks in broadcast copy is that no one can *hear* them. (Remember that no one in your audience ever sees broadcast copy.) The problem is to find acceptable ways of quoting news sources whether directly or indirectly.

The habit of early broadcasters was to tack on the awkward "quote" just before the direct quote was read and finish with an equally awkward "unquote" after they finished reading the direct quotation.

More acceptable and natural sounding are such phrases as:

Councilman Lee attacked the proposed power plant, calling it *in his words*, "a public health nuisance and a waste of tax dollars."

If you opted for the indirect quote in this example, you could say:

Councilman Lee says the proposed power plant would be a public health nuisance and a waste of tax dollars.

Use the direct quote if it adds emphasis or additional impact to your story, but use it sparingly and with discretion. Most often you can substitute attribution in which the name of the source is used at the beginning of the sentence that contains the quotation:

The President says, and *these are his words* . . . "No person shall go hungry in America."

General Electric *calls* the new silicone chips a "revolutionary discovery."

Soviet newspapers are asking for the execution of *what they call* "Israeli sympathizers."

OTHER ATTRIBUTION WORDS

When you write any story that requires attribution, you may be tempted to try word substitutes for the familiar "said," as used in the following example:

DOCTORS SAID THE NEW VACCINE MAY CAUSE CANCER.

"Said," as used in this example, is a neutral verb. It places no value of any kind upon the statement that follows. Equally neutral are the words "told" and "reported," which simply relate an act of communication without imposing any value on the statement communicated:

DOCTORS TOLD REPORTERS THE NEW VACCINE MAY CAUSE CANCER.
DOCTORS REPORTED THE NEW VACCINE MAY CAUSE CANCER.

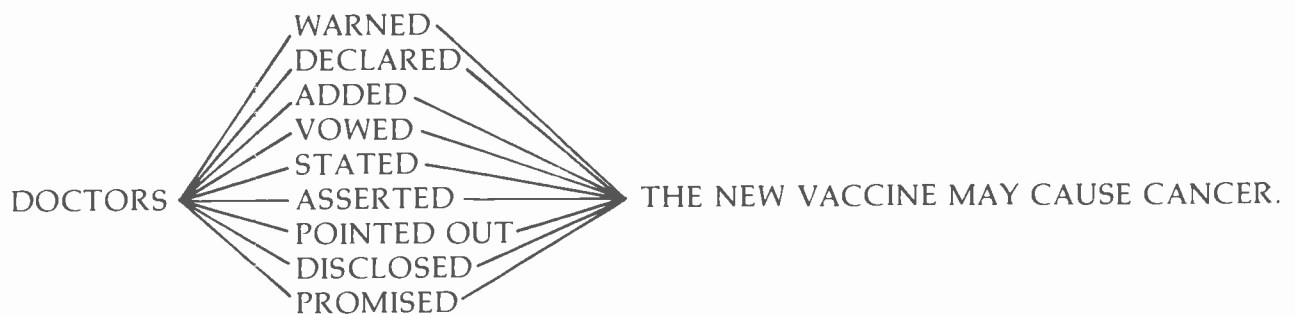
Beyond this point, attribution words begin to impose an editorial flavor to your writing because they tend to change the story's meaning.

Be particularly alert to changes in meaning when using the following words:

WARNED
DECLARED
ADDED
VOWED
STATED

ASSERTED
CONTINUED
POINTED OUT
DISCLOSED
PROMISED

The subtle changes in meaning become apparent when you substitute these words for the more neutral "said," "told," or "reported."



In the example above, WARNED is an acceptable word for attribution, but DECLARED sounds pompous. ADDED indicates that the possibility of cancer was given almost as an afterthought. VOWED is too strong because it implies a pomposity beyond the doctor's original intent. STATED is stiff and formal. ASSERTED sounds as if the writer is challenging the doctors' statement. POINTED OUT makes the statement sound as if it is secondary or peripheral. DISCLOSED makes the statement sound as if the doctors had exclusive information just now being made public, and PROMISED sounds more dire than the doctors may have intended the statement to be. Clearly, each word imparts a slightly different context to the information.

NAMES, AGES AND TITLES

Just as you treat attribution differently for broadcast, so must you treat names, ages and addresses differently. Remember that you are writing for the ear; you are writing copy that will only be heard and that must be communicated in easy-to-understand, conversational style. The best advice to follow in dealing with names, ages and titles is to write so there is little chance your audience will misunderstand. As a general rule, names are delayed in broadcast stories until you have prepared your listeners to be on the alert for the names. With some exceptions, titles and ages generally are placed before names, again so your stories sound more natural and more conversational. Imagine how sticky and meaningless the following story would sound on the air:

Surgeon General, William H. Shearer, announced today that Charles R. Mahaffey, 45, Chairman of the U-S Pharmaceutical Corporation, had succeeded Donald P. Ingraham,

64, President of the National Educational Media Association, as chairman of the educational advisory committee. The appointment is effective next month.

You can improve meaning dramatically if you delay names, ages and titles until the ear is ready for them:

The Surgeon General's office has appointed a new man to head its educational advisory committee.

In the lead you have announced that someone has been appointed to fill a position. If members of your audience are interested in this story, they are now alerted to pay attention for the name which you can now give them:

The new man is 45-year-old Charles Mahaffey, chairman of U-S Pharmaceutical.

In this identification of the name, notice that Mahaffey's age is placed before his name. Such treatment sounds more conversational than "Charles Mahaffey, 45, is Chairman of U-S Pharmaceutical Corporation." Notice an exception to the general rule of placing titles before the name in the paragraph above. You could just as easily write, however:

The position will be filled by U-S Pharmaceutical Chairman Charles Mahaffey. The 45-year-old appointee will replace current chairman Donald Ingraham next month.

Now put the story together in two of its possible forms and compare it with the original version:

The Surgeon General's office has appointed a new man to head its committee of educational advisors. He is 45-year-old Charles Mahaffey, Chairman of U-S Pharmaceutical. Mahaffey will take over from chairman Donald Ingraham next month.

— OR —

The Surgeon General's office has named a major corporation executive to head its committee of educational advisors. Named to head the post was U-S Pharmaceutical Chairman Charles Mahaffey. He replaces Donald Ingraham next month.

Notice that the stories above drop all reference to Surgeon General William H. Shearer and his middle initial. In this case, attribution is not essential and only adds to the story's complexity. The ages of the men involved in this story are optional; they can be added or deleted at your discretion.

Consider another example in the treatment of names and ages.

Mark J. Conley, 29, and Lester J. Callaway, 44, were injured in the crash. The two men, both of Plainsville, were reported in satisfactory condition at Pleasant Valley Memorial Hospital.

The story example above is dangerous to read on radio or television because it dumps unknown names on the audience before the audience is prepared to hear them. A better approach to the story for broadcast follows.

Two Plainsville men were injured in the crash. They are identified as 29-year-old Mark Conley and 44-year-old Lester Callaway. Both men are hospitalized in satisfactory condition.

This approach alerts your listeners that two people from their community were injured. If they are interested in listening for the names they are now prepared to do so. The ear is prepared a second time for the identities by the "cushion" phrase *They are identified as . . .* Such treatment sets up the ear twice and makes names and ages easier to catch. Note, also, that middle initials are omitted as unnecessary.

Exceptions to the rule of delaying names in the news occur when the names are well known. No one is likely to miss or misunderstand the president's name or that of a well-known politician, athlete or Hollywood celebrity. In such cases it is acceptable, sometimes preferable, to begin the story with the name because in such a case the well-known name helps catch a listener's attention.

Titles usually go ahead of the name when writing for broadcast. The exception occurs when long or unusually cumbersome titles are involved. Imagine trying to say on the air:

University of Wyoming Anthropology Department Chairman Doctor George Frison today announced discovery of an ancient Indian burial ground long hidden from modern-day man. The burial ground is located 10 miles north of Laramie, Wyoming, on a farm.

Such a long title would confuse your audience. You should change it instead to one of the following examples:

Doctor George Frison, anthropology department chairman at the University of Wyoming . . .

— OR —

Doctor George Frison, the head of anthropology at the University of Wyoming . . .

Remember, however, not to start the story with Doctor Frison's name. He is not the news, nor is his announcement of the anthropological discovery. The real news is the discovery itself and Doctor Frison's name is peripheral to the real substance of the story. Granted, the implications of his expert title lend credibility to the story, but do not alter the substance or nature of the event.

The story for broadcast:

Scientists today announced the discovery of an ancient Indian burial ground about 10 miles north of Laramie, Wyoming. The announcement was made by Doctor George Frison, the head of anthropology at the University of Wyoming.

VERB TENSE

Newspapers traditionally report the news in past tense, and the habit is easily enough transferred to writing for broadcast. What, after all, does it hurt to use words like said, reported, occurred, burned, announced and injured? The answer involves only a little common sense. Broadcast news is "now" and your stories will sound old and out of date if you dwell too often in the past tense.

News *sounds* more current and dynamic if you report in the present tense: Police *say* two persons *are being* questioned . . . The White House tonight *reports* new developments in the controversial question of . . . Firemen *are battling* a two-alarm fire that broke out late tonight . . .

Let's look at some other examples.

PRESENT TENSE: Striking coal workers hope a settlement can be reached tonight.

PAST PERFECT TENSE: Striking coal workers were reported hopeful a settlement could be reached tonight. (Is there a chance they are still hopeful?)

PAST TENSE: Striking coal workers hoped a settlement could be reached tonight.

Notice how the shift in tense subtly changes the meaning of the story and how, as you shift from present to past tense, the immediacy of the story is lost. Look especially at the sentence written in past tense. It sounds somewhat negative about hopes for a settlement. Present tense offers the broadcast writer an additional benefit — it helps keep sentences shorter. Sometimes present tense will sound awkward and artificial. If it does, don't hesitate to switch to past tense or to past perfect tense.

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
MIDDAY REPORT HERBICIDE () _____LIVE	SOME LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIALS THINK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS EXAGGERATED ITS WARNINGS ABOUT SMOKING MEXICAN MARIJUANA TAINTED WITH A DEADLY HERBICIDE. BUT CITY HEALTH SPOKESMEN SAY THEY DOUBT THAT EVEN HEAVY USE OF THE MARIJUANA IN QUESTION WOULD POSE A SERIOUS HEALTH HAZARD. LOCAL TOXICOLOGIST DR. DANIEL ROSENBAUM CALLS THE RECENT PUBLICITY . . . "A HYSTERICAL REACTION TO A RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT PROBLEM."

Figure 1-1. An example of broadcast news attribution.

ACTIVE VERSUS PASSIVE VOICE

Excessive use of passive voice in broadcast writing often is a sign of lazy thinking. Active voice, by contrast, results in more understandable copy, shorter sentences and dynamic expression. The differences are easy to distinguish:

If the subject of the verb receives the action, the verb is in the *passive voice*:

The burglar was shot three times by police.

If the subject of a verb is the doer of the action, the verb is in the *active voice*:

Police shot the burglar three times.

While active voice generally is more lively, specific and concise, passive voice is useful to place emphasis on the object of the action. Notice in the passive voice example that emphasis is placed on the burglar (the object of the action), while in the active voice example, emphasis is placed on the police (the doer of the action).

PHONETIC PRONUNCIATION

The news is loaded with “tongue-tanglers,” those innocent and sometimes not-so-innocent looking words that reflect unusual or difficult pronunciations. Any newscaster who hits these difficult words on the air without warning can hesitate, stumble or massacre the word completely. To avoid such problems, spell the word phonetically and put it in parentheses beside the offending word. Hyphenate between syllables and use capital letters to indicate where stress belongs.

Three traffic deaths are reported this Memorial Day weekend near Saguache (Suh-WATCH), New Mexico.

Flood control experts expect the next trouble spot along tributaries flowing into the Arkansas (Are-KAN-sus) River.

The plane crash-landed just outside Cairo (KAY-roh), Illinois, killing all 58 persons aboard.

Audiences harbor strong feelings about correct pronunciation. The venerable Walter Cronkite became the subject of national debate in Ann Lander’s advice column for pronouncing FEB-roo-er-ee (February) FEB-yoo-wary.

Other readers took news commentator Paul Harvey to task for calling Ill-ih-NOY (Illinois) Ill-ih-NOISE, and berated NBC’s David Brinkley for saying ZOO-ology instead of ZOE-ology and HIGH-ness instead of HAY-ness for “heinous.”

Other readers were reminded of former Dwight D. Eisenhower who used to say NU-cue-lar instead of NU-clee-ar (nuclear), and of President John F. Kennedy who called Africa, Cuba and Alaska AF-ri-ker, CU-ber and A-LAS-ker.

PHONETIC SPELLING GUIDE

You can develop your own system for phonetic spelling, providing it is clear and understandable. You can imitate or adapt your own system from the following guide used by United Press International.

VOWELS

- A Use AY for long A as in mate.
 Use A for short A as in cat.
 Use AI for nasal A as in air.
 Use AH for short A as in father.
 Use AW for broad A as in talk.

- E Use EE for long E as in meet.
 Use EH for short E as in get.
 Use UH for hollow E as in the or le (French prefix).
 Use AY for French long E with accent as in Pathe.
 Use IH for E as in pretty.
 Use EW for EW as in few.

- I Use EYE for long I as in time.
 Use EE for French long I as in machine.
 Use IH for short I as in pity.

- O Use OH for long O as in note, or ough as in though.
 Use AH for short O as in hot.
 Use AW for broad O as in fought.
 Use OO for O as in fool, or ough as in through.
 Use U for O as in foot.
 Use UH for OUGH as in trough.
 Use OW for O as in how, or ough as in plough.

- U Use EW for long U as in mule.
 Use OO for long U as in rule.
 Use U for middle U as in put.
 Use UH for short U as in shut, or hurt.

CONSONANTS

- Use K for hard C as in cat.
- Use S for soft C as in cease.
- Use SH for soft CH as in machine.
- Use CH for hard CH or TCH as in catch.
- Use Z for hard S as in disease.
- Use S for soft S as in sun.
- Use G for hard G as in gang.
- Use J for soft G as in general.

Phonetic pronunciation helps the newscast flow smoothly and prevents the loss of credibility that occurs when the newscaster muffs a word that members of the audience are either familiar with or have heard pronounced correctly on competing stations.

Almost all states have unusual spellings and pronunciations that confuse the new employee, and beyond that foreign names continually crop up in the news to present new pronunciation problems. The wire services provide a list of phonetic pronunciations each day for foreign names and places in the news and most state broadcast organizations provide regional pronunciation guides.

TIME REFERENCES

Unlike newspaper readers, broadcast audiences cannot re-read the story or seek clarification if at first they do not understand a fact or figure. For this reason, broadcast writers use a slightly different style when referring to the time of day or week. The writer for print might say, for example, that "The meeting begins Thursday at 8 p.m." Knowing the broadcast audience will hear the information only once, the broadcast writer would strive for immediate clarity with a sentence to the effect, "The meeting begins tomorrow evening at eight o'clock." References to the days of the week are obscure and should be replaced whenever possible with such phrases as "day after tomorrow" and "one week from tomorrow."

A Time Reference in Newspaper Copy

The next liftoff is scheduled for 5:33 a.m., (EDT) March 16.

The Same Time Reference in Broadcast Copy

The next liftoff will be a week from tomorrow at 5:30 in the morning, Eastern Daylight Time.

Instant understanding is the immediate goal whenever the broadcast writer must make reference to time or to days of the week. The concern for audience understanding is the primary influence on writing style.

PLACE TIME REFERENCE NEAREST THE MAIN VERB

Broadcast copy generally flows better and sounds smoother if time references in a sentence are placed near the main verb. Read the following examples aloud and notice the effect that time reference placement has on the sound and rhythm of your copy.

The body was found in a ravine near Pueblo last month.
(verb) (time reference)

The body was found last month in a ravine near Pueblo.
(verb) (time reference)

Another officer was killed in a similar accident about a year ago.
(verb) (time reference)

Another officer was killed about a year ago in a similar accident.
(verb) (time reference)

The fire broke out at 11th and Central late this afternoon.
(verb) (time reference)

The fire broke out late this afternoon at 11th and Central.
(verb) (time reference)

You may not always wish to place time references nearest the main verb in sentences. Achieving a polished sound in your copy sometimes demands that you ignore the rule and place time references elsewhere within some of the sentences you are writing. You will seldom go wrong if you listen to the sound of your copy.

WORD USAGE

The newswriter draws from a full, varied vocabulary, rich in specific words that convey exact meaning and connotation. The writer understands differences in words for particular situations. For example, the word "government" is more neutral than the word "regime." If a word has more than one meaning, it is used in the correct context to avoid confusion. Consideration of the audience must be involved in the journalist's examination of word usage in the news story. Obviously the New York NBC radio audience is different from that of the locally-owned Waco, Texas station. The audiences have different backgrounds and interests, and the language used in each location must be tailored to that audience.

Generally, it is preferable to use the simple word rather than the complex, the concrete instead of the abstract, and the active rather than the passive voice. Avoid slang, foreign words, highly technical words or phrases, and cliches.

The following list of words and phrases is provided to indicate word usage preferred by journalists.

1. ACCEPT, EXCEPT. ACCEPT means to receive, while EXCEPT as a verb means to exclude, and as a preposition, EXCEPT means with the exception of.
2. AFFECT, EFFECT. AFFECT usually is the verb; EFFECT is the noun. However, EFFECT may be a verb when it means to bring about.
3. AFTERWARD, AFTERWARDS. Use AFTERWARD rather than AFTERWARDS. The same rule applies to TOWARD.
4. AGREE TO, AGREE WITH. You AGREE TO a proposed action and you AGREE WITH someone.
5. AGGREGATE. Do not use when meaning total. It's not a substitute for total, but means a group of distinct things gathered together.
6. ALLUDE, ELUDE. You ALLUDE to a movie (mention indirectly), and you ELUDE a tackler (escape).
7. AMONG, BETWEEN. Use AMONG when more than two are meant. Use BETWEEN with two only.

8. ANNUAL. If it is the first time, it cannot be ANNUAL.
9. AVERSE, ADVERSE. AVERSE is the verb meaning oppose (you are AVERSE to it). ADVERSE is the adjective meaning bad (ADVERSE weather).
10. BESIDES, BESIDE. BESIDE means at the side of, and BESIDES means in addition to.
11. BLOCK, BLOC. BLOC is a coalition or group with the same goal.
12. COMPOSE, COMPRISE. You COMPOSE things by putting them together. Once they are together, the object COMPRISES or includes various parts.
13. CONSENSUS. CONSENSUS means general agreement. Therefore, it is redundant to say CONSENSUS of opinion.
14. COUNCIL, COUNSEL. COUNCIL means an assembly while COUNSEL means to give advice.
15. COUPLE OF. You need the OF. Don't say "in a couple minutes."
16. DEMOLISH, DESTROY. They mean to do away with completely. There is no such meaning as partially DESTROYED or no need to say totally DEMOLISH.
17. DIE OF. One DIES OF an illness not from it. Also, a person DIES after an operation, not from or as a result of, or following, an operation.
18. DIFFERENT FROM. Things are DIFFERENT FROM each other, not different than.
19. DROWN. Don't say someone was DROWNED unless the victim's head was held under. Say: John Jones DROWNED last night, not John Jones was DROWNED.
20. DUE TO, OWING TO, BECAUSE OF. The last phrase is preferable.
21. ECOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT. ECOLOGY is the study of the relationship between organisms and ENVIRONMENT.
22. EITHER. It means one or the other, not both.
23. FARTHER, FURTHER. FARTHER applies to distance, and FURTHER means in addition to.
24. FLIERS, FLYERS. Airmen and handbills are fliers.
25. FLOUT, FLAUNT. FLOUT means to mock or to show disdain. FLAUNT means to display showingly.
26. FUNERAL SERVICE. A funeral is a service. Leave out service.
27. HEAD UP. Leave off the up. People HEAD committees; they do not HEAD UP committees. People make rules, they don't make them up. People take skiing lessons, etc.
28. HEALTHFUL, HEALTHY. HEALTHFUL means to cause health, while HEALTHY means possessing health.
29. IMPLY, INFER. The speaker IMPLIES while the hearer INFERS.
30. IN ADVANCE OF, PRIOR TO, BEFORE. Use BEFORE; it's more natural.
31. IT'S ITS. IT'S is the contraction for it is. ITS is the possessive pronoun.
32. LEAVE, LET. LEAVE alone means depart from or to isolate. LET means to permit or allow.
33. LESS, FEWER. LESS applies to situations using the singular form, while FEWER applies to the plural. "They have FEWER members now, and the chairman has LESS income."

34. LIKE, AS. In general use LIKE to compare pronouns; use AS when comparing phrases or clauses containing a verb. However, like is increasingly being used as a substitute for as or as if in informal usage.
35. MARSHALL, MARSHAL. MARSHALL is correct only in a proper name. Otherwise use MARSHAL for verb or noun.
36. MEAN, AVERAGE, MEDIAN. Use MEAN instead of AVERAGE for the sum of components divided by number of components. MEDIAN is the number that has as many numbers above it as below it.
37. MEDIA, DATA, ALUMNI. Plural forms of medium, datum, and alumnus.
38. OPINION, ESTIMATION. OPINION is a judgment, and ESTIMATION is an evaluation or guess.
39. ORAL, VERBAL. Use ORAL when use of the mouth is involved and VERBAL when writing is used, although it may apply to both spoken or written words.
40. OVER, MORE THAN. OVER refers to the spatial relationships, while MORE THAN is used with figures.
41. PEDDLE, PEDAL. PEDDLE refers to selling, while PEDAL refers to some form of locomotion.
42. PRINCIPAL, PRINCIPLE. A rule of truth is a PRINCIPLE, while the first or dominant thing is the PRINCIPAL one.
43. RELUCTANT, RETICENT. If a person doesn't want to act, he is RELUCTANT. If he doesn't want to speak, he is RETICENT.
44. SINCE. SINCE is time-related, while BECAUSE is action-related.
45. THAT, WHICH. THAT tends to restrict the reader's thought and direct it in the way you want it to go. WHICH is non-sensitive and gives subsidiary information.
46. UNDER WAY, NOT UNDERWAY. But don't say something got UNDER WAY unless it's a ship. Say it began or started.
47. UNIQUE. Something that is UNIQUE is one of its kind. It can't be very, quite, rather, or somewhat UNIQUE.
48. UP. Don't use it as a verb.
49. USE ALL RIGHT, NOT ALRIGHT.
50. WHO'S, WHOSE. WHO'S is a contraction for who is. WHOSE is possessive.

GRAMMAR

While a detailed knowledge of grammar is helpful to the broadcaster, a *working* knowledge of the major grammatical principles is essential. The following list of 10 basic grammatical rules should provide a review for you as a beginning newscaster.

RULE NO. 1 Verbs must agree with their subjects in number and persons.

Example: We are; you are; he is; a bloc of voters is; a group of women is.

RULE NO. 2 Words intervening between the subject and verb do not affect the number of the verb.

Example: Improvements in security measures have increased travel costs.

RULE NO. 3 When the subject is one of the following words, the verb must be singular; anybody, each, every, everybody, nobody and either. Neither and none almost always require a singular verb.

Examples: Each of the news services has filed a story.
Neither of the senators plans to attend.

However, if neither is used to link plural nouns, a plural verb is used.

Example: Neither astronauts nor cosmonauts have visited the orbiting space station in three years.

RULE NO. 4 When the subject is a collective noun, consider the subject singular or plural depending on the meaning you wish to convey. If the meaning of the subject is a collective body, use the singular; however, if you are thinking of individuals within the collective body, use the plural.

Examples: The governor's staff is planning a victory celebration.

The governor's staff are listed individually by position.

RULE NO. 5 Verb tenses should indicate the correct sequence of action; therefore, a verb in a subordinate clause should be consistent with the verb tense in the main clause.

Example: When Governor Johnson finished the speech, he realized he had overlooked his minority constituency.

RULE NO. 6 Use active voice for most verbs. Passive voice may be used to emphasize the receiver of an action (such as the injured in a car accident), or to emphasize an indefinite statement.

Examples: Write, "The plane hit the tower," rather than, "The tower was hit by the plane." However, to emphasize the receiver of the action, you may write, "The woman was injured in the auto crash."

RULE NO. 7 Modifiers must be located closely enough to the word or phrases they modify for the reader to be able to distinguish clearly what they modify.

Incorrect example: The president said after the news conference he would return to Washington.

Correct example: After the news conference, the president announced he would return to Washington.

RULE NO. 8 Pronouns must refer to their antecedents.

Incorrect example: The senator told the investigator that his statement was incorrect.
(Whose statement does his refer to?)

Correct example: The investigator's statement was incorrect, the senator told him.

RULE NO. 9 The case of a pronoun must suit the function of the pronoun.

(1) Pronouns used as an object of the preposition must take the objective case.

Example: He came with me.

(2) A pronoun used as an appositive must agree with the word it explains.

Example: Only two reporters, John and I, could go to the speech. (I refers to the subject; therefore, the pronoun must be in the subjective case.)

(3) A pronoun modifying the gerund must take the possessive case.

Example: The station management appreciates your exercising restraint in reporting sensational news.

RULE NO. 10 Make the elements in a series grammatically parallel. Adjectives should be linked with other adjectives, adverbs with adverbs, infinitives with infinitives, and so forth.

Incorrect example:

The North Sea oil companies plan to install new drilling equipment, to hire additional employees, and computerize lab operations.

Correct example:

North Sea oil companies plan to install new drilling equipment, to hire additional employees and to computerize lab operations.

In the correct example all three of the companies' plans were put in the infinitive form.

IN CONCLUSION

Writing is both art and craft, a discipline which requires many skills to master. Those who write constantly sharpen their skills most rapidly, because good writing builds on practice. As you begin to sharpen your own writing skills, listen to radio and watch television. Decide for yourself what is good writing and what is not. Learn to discriminate, both in your own work and that of others. As your confidence builds and your skills increase, so will the quality of your writing.

Style Exercise

Name _____

Date _____

1-A

1. Using a pen or pencil, correct the following copy as it should appear on a radio-TV script.

Five memn are reported missing a in an avalanc he near Aspen, Colorado.

johnson said it would bet he first time in five year such an election hdas been called.

Unionworkers soy they'll strike if further jab cuts are announced.

At issue are recent tax cits for property owners outside city limits.

Daylight Savings time has finally arrived — noon too soon for local schools.

Local savings and loan firms durrently pay 5125 per cent interest on passbook accounts.

2. Rewrite to eliminate passive voice and wordiness.

EXAMPLE

The office was struck by a falling tree.

A falling tree struck the office.

Most workers are affected by the new tax laws.

Thousands of migratory workers are hired by growers each year.

Restrictions on sex and violence in prime time television were thrown out by a federal judge.

Style Exercise, Cont'd.

Name _____

Date _____

1-A cont'd.

Part of the reason for society's attitude toward alcoholism was verified last year by university scientists.

Unless voters come up with an answer, the schools will stay closed.

New budgets for the public schools were turned down four times in a row by area voters.

Officials say most damage was caused by flooding along two minor tributaries.

More than 22 million cattle were believed ready for slaughter this month, according to information made public by the National Beef Association today.

Sidewalks, landscaping, five-foot bike lanes separated by a one and one-half foot raised median, parking and two lanes of traffic are recommended for Peterson Avenue improvements.

The flu is thought by officials at the Disease Control Center to be of the Type-A variety, and they believe up to 10 million Americans could be struck this year by the disease.

Writing Exercises
Chapter 1

Name _____

Date _____

1-B

1. Rewrite the following story to make it conform to broadcast style:

Jonathan Jones, 39, shot and killed his wife Joan, 40, while alone with her in their house today. Police arrested Jones on second degree murder charges.

2. Rewrite the following sentence in a way that will alert your audience to pay attention for the names. Include the men's ages, according to broadcast style, as part of the sentence.

The victims are identified as Joseph Jones, 43, and Samuel Smith, 27, both of Lenexa.

3. Rewrite the following story into a presentation suitable for broadcast. Pay attention to the need for attribution.

Water quality in the city will be degraded if local industry is allowed to dump waste water, untreated, into nearby rivers. A group of concerned citizens, at a public hearing on water quality, made that assertion last night at a County Land Use Commission hearing.

4. Rewrite the following sentence in broadcast style to make it understandable for a broadcast audience.

Persons seeking information can call 491-6484 Monday through Saturday, eight a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and noon to 10:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Word Usage Exercises
Chapter 1

Name _____

Date _____

1-C

Directions: Underline the correct word usage.

1. The new Arab proposals are UNIQUE/SOMEWHAT UNIQUE to past peace initiatives.
2. Farmers will GO UP/GO to Denver tomorrow in a tractor parade to emphasize their new demands.
3. New IRS regulations say it is ALL RIGHT/ALRIGHT to not declare your first one-hundred dollars in interest income.
4. Authorities still haven't found the man WHOSE/WHO'S responsible for the slaying that occurred last night.
5. Imi Singan today FLOUTED/FLAUNTED new atomic weapons before citizens of Shurnga in a display of power.
6. Correspondent Lamn witnessed George Sming's FUNERAL/FUNERAL SERVICE, and files this report.
7. Mark Milty volunteered to HEAD UP/HEAD the Republican Platform committee, after a chaotic meeting.
8. College graduates find jobs easier to land BECAUSE/SINCE they've attended school.
9. The finance committee is a committee THAT/WHICH legislators find challenging to work on during legislative meetings.
10. Today's school board meeting BEGAN/GOT UNDERWAY to the shouts of hecklers.
11. ITS/IT'S now time for the five o'clock channel eight news with Buzz Langer and gang.
12. The court ordered police to LET/LEAVE black demonstrators alone after three police-related killings.
13. The new AMC Ute demonstrated LESS/FEWER problems than any other four-wheel drive vehicle.
14. Stock market trends look LIKE/AS IF the current recession is over.
15. Pastor Paul's prayer had a calming EFFECT/AFFECT on the audience.
16. All parties EXCEPT/ACCEPT the Cubans agreed to withdrawal from embattled Zinger.
17. AFTERWARD/AFTERWARDS the new Revised Standard Version Bible translation will be read to close the worship service.

18. A HEALTHY/HEALTHFUL vacation idea is a fun-filled week in beautiful Arizona where the sun shines daily.
19. Congressman Knoll's speech IMPLIES/INFERS that he opposes abortions, his opponents claim.
20. Amtrak advises advance reservations PRIOR TO/BEFORE/IN ADVANCE of departure time.
21. New employees are DIFFERENT FROM/DIFFERENT THAN their predecessors SINCE/BECAUSE they don't drink.
22. Sheriff's officers found the victim DROWNED/WAS DROWNED while alone in the municipal swimming pool.
23. BECAUSE OF/DUE TO/OWING TO the Argentine earthquake, Senator Hill never did travel there.
24. In a COUPLE/COUPLE OF minutes we'll have a special report from Washington.
25. New atomic weapons can TOTALLY DEMOLISH/DESTROY mankind, Pentagon officials claim.
26. Surgeon General William Jaans reports more Americans DIE FROM/DIE OF cancer caused by cigarettes than from ALL other illness combined.
27. "It is my OPINION/ESTIMATION that historians will be kinder to Smith than we were."
28. High school ORAL/VERBAL English scores indicate ignorance of basic English.
29. MORE THAN/OVER fifty percent of all Americans go on vacations each year.
30. Snowmobiles may TOTALLY DEMOLISH/DESTROY the ECOLOGICAL/ENVIRONMENTAL habitat of the wild zulu bird.
31. The new anti-obscure law won't allow EITHER FILMS OR MAGAZINES/FILMS EITHER.
32. Persuasive Air Force FLYERS/FLIERS are soliciting new enlistments in Hooterville.
33. "Babe Ruth did more to FARTHER/FURTHER baseball than almost anyone," said Baseball historian Rex Schimpf.
34. The FIRST/FIRST ANNUAL energy meet took place in Willoughby Convention Center today.
35. The drought continues to be AVERSE/ADVERSE TO good skiing conditions in the Colorado Rockies.
36. Farmers claim their strike will BLOCK/BLOC the flow of fresh produce onto supermarket shelves.

Word Usage Exercises cont'd.

Name _____

Date _____

1-C cont'd.

37. Dorn National Bank plans to build BESIDE/BESIDES the Smith University campus.
38. COMPOSING/COMPRISING the new administration will be many cronies of President-elect Snucker, claims his defeated opponent Johnston.
39. Tonight the Los Angeles City Council reached a CONSENSUS/CONSENSUS OF OPINION to not renew the Raiders football lease.
40. COUNSEL/COUNCIL is available for anyone accused of a misdemeanor, claims New York District Attorney Jones.
41. New PEDAL/PEDDLE technology will reduce wear and tear on this vital part of a bicycle.
42. The chief PRINCIPAL/PRINCIPLE of Christianity is eternal life.
43. Reporters noted a RETICENCE/RELUCTANCE by President Clasquinn during the news conference.
44. The AGGREGATE/TOTAL national debt today reached five-billion dollars, according to Treasury Secretary Sullivan.
45. AGREEING TO/AGREEING WITH the Israeli position is blocking further Middle East negotiations . . .
46. Bank robbers ELUDED/ALLUDED police after they triggered the vault alarm.
47. Unemployment is highest AMONG/BETWEEN the 20 to 30 age group, the government reports.
48. New elected officials will include a town mayor, council and MARSHALL/MARSHAL.
49. The MEAN/AVERAGE 1987 family income of thirty thousand dollars is less than the 1986 AVERAGE/MEDIAN income of thirty-two thousand dollars.
50. The FIRST ANNUAL/FIRST CVU ALUMNUS/ALUMNI meeting is scheduled for tomorrow in Detroit.
51. New government DATA/DATUM show television to be the most watched MEDIUM/MEDIA.

Grammar Exercises
Chapter 1

Name _____

Date _____

1-D

Directions: Edit the following sentences to conform with Associated Press Radio/TV style. Correct all errors.

1. These advantages, in addition to the clear presentation and simple style, makes this a stylebook you will want for your newsroom.
2. The finest cameras and most skilled cinematographers are used by this station.
3. When the letter you sent to the Business Office was not forwarded, there was naturally some confusion between their accounting division and I.
4. Neither of these possibilities were explained in your query to the station manager.
5. We were pleased to learn that the crowd at your tour were so enthusiastic about the new control room.
6. If anyone else was in his beat, they would do the same thing.
7. The Videotape editor who had sent three orders and two requests for extra cassettes were visited by our representative.
8. Beginning her report Monday, she found she would not be through until the following week.
9. The reporter of the story and not the three accountants who supplied the facts and cost estimates believe the charge is necessary.
10. This crusade was conducted to reduce the number of fatal highway accidents at the end of the year which was successful.
11. Believing the man was innocent, the case was dismissed by the judge.
12. Employing such communication media as newspapers, radio and television, the campaign platform of the party was presented.

Grammar Exercises
Chapter 1

Name _____

Date _____

1-D cont'd.

13. I don't believe anyone besides the reporter checks the copy as carefully as himself.
14. The newsroom staff were planning to attend the local Community Chest Luncheon at which the results of our newspaper's giving was to be announced.
15. Everybody in our radio station want to express their appreciation to you for your thoughtfulness.



2

Writing The News Story

"Every news story should have structure and conflict, problem and denouement, rising action and falling action, a beginning, a middle and an end."
Reuven Frank, Former President, NBC News

A NEWS DEFINITION

News is sometimes defined as whatever people are interested in hearing about. Some "news" is little more than gossip — the latest marriage of some Hollywood celebrity; some is public relations — the story of a singer who is acting in a new movie; other news tells us of crime in the community or of the local efforts of teenagers to improve bicycle safety. Regardless of the event, however, it will contain one or more of the following elements of news:

Timeliness

1. *News is what happens now, what happens in the immediate present or what will happen.* Newspapers often tell you what happened yesterday, so leave most of yesterday's news to them. Broadcast journalism is especially adept at fast reporting. In radio, you can be on the air within seconds or minutes to report significant developments. With television you can be almost as fast, but with either medium you may have to sacrifice in-depth reporting. Because broadcast news is so immediate, you often have little chance for historical perspective in your writing; often you will be unable to say *why* an event happened simply because no one has had time to find out by the time you go on the air with your report. You must then wait to report the important "why" of events in follow-up reports.

Proximity

2. *News is what happens close to us, either emotionally or geographically.* We tend to be interested in events that happen within our community because quite often they interest or affect us in some way. Who can hear of a car-train collision without wondering for a split second whether the victim is someone we might know? Who, in a community, is not affected by rising property values or increased taxes? Who is not interested in some way about the drought or the approaching storm?

We also have tremendous affinity for reports of interesting events that happen far away from us. Sometimes, if the event is big enough, it far overshadows the less important happenings in our own community. Examples include war and disaster stories, the moon landings or the discovery of Stone Age tribes living on a South Sea island.

Whether you are dealing with local, national or world news, learn to “read” it as your audience would; determine what is most momentous, most interesting or most significant about the story you are writing.

Significance

3. *News is what is significant to your audience.* Whatever the story, ask yourself who is affected by it, or is interested in it. In a metropolitan area, a story about a teacher’s strike, while important, may directly affect only about one of every 20 people in your audience, while a story about dramatic increases in food prices or a developing cold front may affect almost everyone listening. Always ask yourself, as you assess the potential significance of the story, how it affects your audience.

Conflict

4. *News is what results in dramatic conflict and hence human interest.* Radio and television borrow heavily from traditional theater. They prefer dramatic conflict. If you doubt this, try filming a building that is not on fire. Television prefers the visually dramatic, and radio works best when you report the sounds and emotions of events. In some respects the preference of broadcast journalism for the dramatic is a strength; in others, a weakness. Few people in your audience consciously define the essential differences between print and sound and pictures. Yet a huge difference separates the broadcast media from print, because broadcasting uses sound, color, movement and light to report while print uses words and still pictures. Sound, color, movement and light traditionally produce emotional responses while print and still photographs tend to produce more literal, rational responses.

Dramatic conflict is whatever happens between two opposing forces. The conflict can be between one person and another, or one nation and another, or it can be between man and an outside influence or force. In simplified form, dramatic conflict occurs in four basic definitions:

- man versus man
The struggle between individuals in a boxing match, a chess championship, or a senator’s fight against organized labor; other examples include the test pilot who fights to keep his job after mandatory retirement age, clashes between pro and anti-abortion forces, the women’s rights movement, or the story of an elderly woman on welfare struggling to avoid eviction from her home.
- man versus himself
The struggle of a person to kick drug addiction; the triumph of athletic achievement in a single-person sport; the triumph of an individual over a physical handicap.
- man versus fate
The struggle of an individual to survive after a wilderness plane crash until help arrives; a public figure’s fight against cancer; shipwrecks; families made homeless by fires and disasters.
- man versus nature
Significant weather events; consequences of air and water pollution; environmental health stories; stories of individuals who cross the sea alone, by balloon, or sailboat.

Prominence

5. *News is what happens to prominent people, places or things.* Nearly everyone is interested in the prominent names that make news. Everyone from the president and his family to pop singers and motorcycle daredevils attract our attention. Often such newsmakers provide us with vicarious experiences in the activities and achievements in which we would participate in real life if only we had the chance, the courage or the ability. Go to a bar or a dorm lounge and try watching people listen to radio or television news. You will discover that prominent names in the news capture and recapture their attention during the course of a newscast. Similarly, the famous places and things in our lives — from the Washington Monument to our favorite city landmark — perk our interest in the news.

Human Interest

6. *Human Interest.* Ultimately, news is anything people are interested in, whether significant or trivial. If you think a story would interest a majority of your audience, it is probably newsworthy.

APPLYING THE NEWS DEFINITIONS

An understanding of news helps you highlight the elements you should search for in each story you write; it helps you define treatment and style for any story because it offers a way of extracting the essence of any event for emphasis in your lead. Let's take an example. Firemen are going on strike for higher pay at 6 a.m. tomorrow morning if wage negotiations aren't ironed out by that time. They want an average wage increase of 70 cents an hour, or a total additional cost for fire protection services of about \$1.5 million. The property tax increase needed to cover the higher wages would amount to an average of \$6 per household in the community. City and fire union representatives are meeting late into the night.

This story contains all elements that fall within the Definition of News. The story is happening now; it is happening *close to us*; it has the potential to *affect us* financially, emotionally and perhaps even physically if the community is left without fire protection should the strike materialize. *Dramatic conflict* is present in the form of man versus man — firemen are taking drastic action to force a response from the city — and *prominent* community leaders are helping resolve the problem.

Almost all news events contain one or more of the following elements of news.

1. *Timeliness.* News is what happens now, what happens in the immediate present, or what may happen.
2. *Proximity.* News is what happens close to us—whether within our own community or that affects us emotionally because we can identify with some aspect of the event.
3. *Significance.* News is what affects us in some way, whether financially (an increase in gasoline prices), physically (cancer-causing food additives), or in some other way that has a direct bearing on us.
4. *Conflict.* News is whatever happens between two opposing forces, whether between individuals, nations or as the result of fateful occurrences.
5. *Prominence.* News is what happens to famous people, places or things.
6. *Human Interest.* Ultimately, news is anything people are interested in. If you think a story would interest a majority of your audience, it is probably newsworthy.

CONSTRUCTING THE SUMMARY LEAD

Based on your knowledge of your audience, choose the one or two essential facts for your lead that will telegraph the essence of the story to your listeners. Through the technique of the *summary lead* you can alert them to what the story is about and indicate in the first sentence why they should be interested.

Look again at the essential facts of the fireman's strike story. Perhaps you decide that the significance of the protest is the potential loss of fire protection within the community should a strike materialize. Your lead might then summarize how your audience would be affected by the strike:

DETROIT MAY BE WITHOUT FIRE PROTECTION BY SIX O'CLOCK TOMORROW MORNING.

In the story's lead you have told your audience why they should know about the strike: they may be without fire protection by tomorrow morning. You've helped them become interested in the story in terms of their own probable interests. Although the summary lead indicates what's to come, it doesn't give much specific information and for this reason, it's sometimes called the "throwaway lead."

Certainly you can report just the facts of the story without concern for helping your audience understand the importance of the event, but a concern for understanding is the mark of a professional writer.

OTHER TYPES OF LEADS

The nature of news changes from story to story, and your choice of leads can help reflect the special emphasis that given stories require.

Hard News Lead

This lead is used most often in breaking news or in updating an already-established major news story.

AT LEAST 40 COMMUNITIES IN WESTERN NEW MEXICO ARE THREATENED BY RADIOACTIVITY THAT ESCAPED LATE TODAY FROM A NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT NEAR ALBUQUERQUE.

In contrast, the summary or throwaway lead to the same story would be far less specific.

OFFICIALS ARE KEEPING CLOSE WATCH ON A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS SITUATION IN WESTERN NEW MEXICO THIS AFTERNOON.

Another example of the hard news lead:

IN NEW YORK CITY, 15 FIREMEN WERE INJURED TODAY AND MORE THAN 200 PERSONS LEFT HOMELESS IN WHAT THE CITY CALLS ITS BIGGEST FIRE IN EIGHT YEARS.

In this example, a later hard news lead to update the story might be written:

THREE TEENAGERS HAVE BEEN ARRESTED IN NEW YORK CITY AND CHARGED WITH SETTING A FIRE THAT LEFT 15 FIREMEN INJURED AND MORE THAN 200 PERSONS HOMELESS.

The hard news lead, used often by many broadcast writers, strikes to the heart of the story. It is an intrinsic part of the story, unlike the summary lead which can be eliminated without weakening the story's essential meaning.

Soft News Lead

Soft news leads are used most often for feature stories or interpretive "think" pieces. They are appropriate whenever you wish to emphasize the lasting value of a story, or to play upon the universal human interest inherent in a story. Such treatment lifts the event you are reporting out of the category of hard news and gives it a perspective that might otherwise be lost or overlooked in hard news stories.

MILLIONS OF TODAY'S AMERICANS GREW UP IN SMALL TOWNS, NOT KNOWING THE STENCH OF INDUSTRIAL SMELLS OR THE HUSTLE-BUSTLE OF BIG CITY LIFE. IT'S A MEMORY MOST OF AMERICA WOULD LIKE TO GO HOME TO . . . AND SO THEY ARE, IN PROSPECT, CONNECTICUT. THE PEOPLE IN PROSPECT HAVE VOTED IN THREE ELECTIONS THIS YEAR . . .

Within the category of soft news leads fall several types of leads that can be used to help "spice up" your newscast. Such leads, although useful, are used less frequently than summary and hard news leads because of their obvious emphasis on the unusual.

Suspended Interest Lead

This lead delays the climax, or the essence of the news, until the very end of the story.

A CHEYENNE RABBIT GROWER COULDN'T FIGURE IT OUT LAST WEEKEND WHEN SOMEBODY BROKE INTO HIS GARAGE AND STOLE EIGHT DISHES AND ALL HIS RABBIT FOOD. BUT IT ALL BECAME CLEAR LAST NIGHT WHEN THE THIEF RETURNED AND STOLE ALL HIS RABBITS.

Question Lead

The question lead is dangerous if the question lacks substance and would fail to elicit the interest of your audience. Again, use it sparingly and only on issues that would lead to probable debate.

WOULD YOU GO TO THE MOON FOR TWO-THOUSAND DOLLARS? A MAJOR AIRLINE COMPANY IS BETTING YOU WOULD AND MAY SOON BEGIN SELLING ROUND TRIP TICKETS TO THE MOON . . . AGAINST THE DAY WHEN PUBLIC SPACE FLIGHT BECOMES PRACTICAL. THE AIRLINE SAYS IF YOU BUY TICKETS NOW, AT TWO- THOUSAND DOLLARS EACH, YOU'LL BE GUARANTEED PASSAGE ON THE AIRLINE'S FIRST FLIGHT TO THE MOON . . . WHEN AND IF SUCH FLIGHTS BECOME PRACTICAL.

Freak Events

The freak event is natural material for a lead that emphasizes the unusual nature of a particular story. The lead is constructed to give the unexpected event top billing.

A CEMETERY FULL OF CANADA GEESE, FROM 50 TO 60 THOUSAND OF THEM, SEEMS TO BE HINKLEY, OHIO'S BIGGEST HEADACHE TONIGHT. CONSERVATION OFFICIALS SAY THE GEESE ARE FAR FROM THEIR NORMAL MIGRATORY ROUTES AND HAVE SETTLED ON THE ONE LAKE IN THE AREA — SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF HINKLEY'S CEMETERY.

Well-Known Expressions

This lead capitalizes on well-known expressions that most members of your audience have heard before.

A TEN-YEAR-OLD FRANKFORT BOY HAS PROVED AGAIN BEN FRANKLIN'S SAYING THAT "A PENNY EARNED IS A PENNY SAVED." YOUNG JODY MURRAY HAS DEVELOPED SAVING INTO A FINE ART, AND TODAY HE CASHED IN HIS LIFE'S SAVINGS . . . NEARLY 170-THOUSAND PENNIES IN ALL . . . FOR A TOTAL OF NEARLY 17-HUNDRED DOLLARS. AND WHAT WILL HE DO WITH ALL THAT MONEY? WHY, SAVE IT, OF COURSE.

Staccato Lead

This lead is useful to set the tone of a story. It develops something of a one-two-three punch to get the story off the ground and into the consciousness of your audience. The staccato lead is useful when summarizing a number of related events, such as actions at the city council meeting, or a collective impression of the day's weather.

RAIN . . . THEN SLEET, SNOW AND WIND . . . THAT'S HOW THE DAY BEGAN ALONG THE UPPER GREAT LAKES.

Metaphor Lead

This lead uses the figure of speech to the story's advantage. It invites comparisons with other aspects of life with which we may be familiar.

MAYOR STANFORD SAYS SAN DIEGO IS TRULY THE WINDY CITY TONIGHT . . . WITH MORE THAN 15-THOUSAND POLITICIANS GATHERED HERE FOR THE NATIONAL MAYOR'S CONFERENCE.

Literary Allusion

This lead features references to fictional or historical characters. Edward R. Murrow, for example, made such a reference during a broadcast report from World War II London when he reported, "For a moment I thought I was back in the London of Mr. Pickwick's time." Other leads can conjure up similar visions.

SHAKESPEARE WOULD FEEL AT HOME TONIGHT IN ASHLAND, OREGON . . . CITY OF THE FAMOUS SHAKESPEAREAN FESTIVALS.

Parody Lead

The parody lead features take-offs on events and sayings currently in vogue and of wide-spread public interest. Some television commercials, for instance, burn themselves into our consciousness and become part of our everyday national vocabulary. Such events and sayings, if not overdone, can help lend life to some broadcast leads.

THEY SAY YOU ONLY GO AROUND ONCE IN LIFE, BUT THE VOYAGER CREW SAYS THEY'RE GOING AROUND THE WORLD TWICE THIS YEAR . . . IF FAVORABLE WEATHER HOLDS.

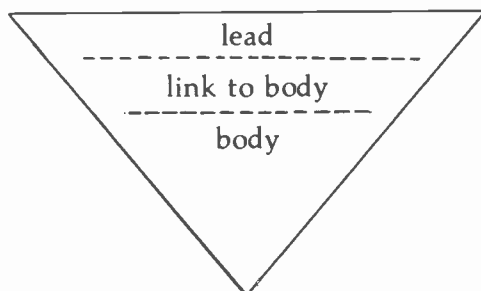
Many times you may not be conscious of the particular style or name of lead you happen to use in a given story. More often, your judgment as a writer will dictate your approach to the story and your treatment of it. Still, a knowledge of the various leads and their uses can help you form a starting point as you decide approaches to the various events that make up a normal day's news.

STORY ORGANIZATION

Newspaper reporters have used the inverted pyramid style in news story organization since the Civil War days when dispatches were transmitted from the battlefields via telegraph. Inverted pyramid style was commonly used because the telegraph wires were subject to sabotage and other frequent interruptions in service. By putting all the essential facts at the first of the story, reporters had a better chance of transmitting at least some of the story in usable form.

Inverted pyramid style summarizes as many of the five W's as possible in the lead (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) and sometimes the H (How). While some reporters are relaxing this structure now, it is still used at many newspapers.

Newspaper Structure
(Inverted Pyramid News Story)

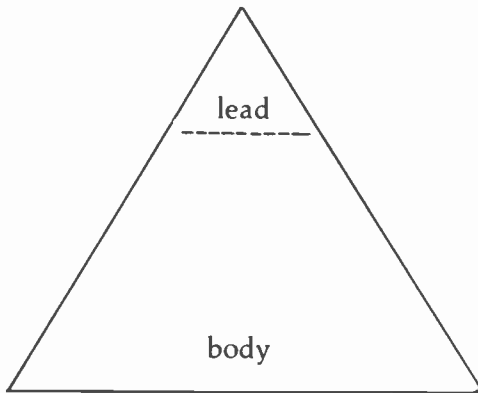


Newspaper Lead

Fifty demonstrators were arrested today after they temporarily shut down a coal-fired electrical generating plant near Huntington, West Virginia, to protest what they called "unacceptable air quality standards" in the area.

This lead, typical of newspaper style writing, contains the five W's — the who, what, when, where, and why. The lead is too long for broadcast news. It would be difficult to follow if read aloud, and more difficult to read aloud than the typical broadcast lead which follows in the example on the next page.

**Broadcast Structure
(Pyramid News Story)**



Broadcast Lead

Police in Huntington, West Virginia, today arrested fifty demonstrators for shutting down an electrical generating plant.

In contrast, the broadcast story structure more resembles an ordinary pyramid. The story begins with a concise lead that emphasizes only the most important aspect of the story, with emphasis on only one or two of the five W's. It then follows an informal style with the rest of the information usually presented in decreasing order of importance. The story must be built around the lead, however, with the most important information coming at the beginning of the story, just as would be true in a newspaper story. The difference is that sentences tend to be shorter, with fewer facts included. Often the broadcast story is told in chronological or narrative form.

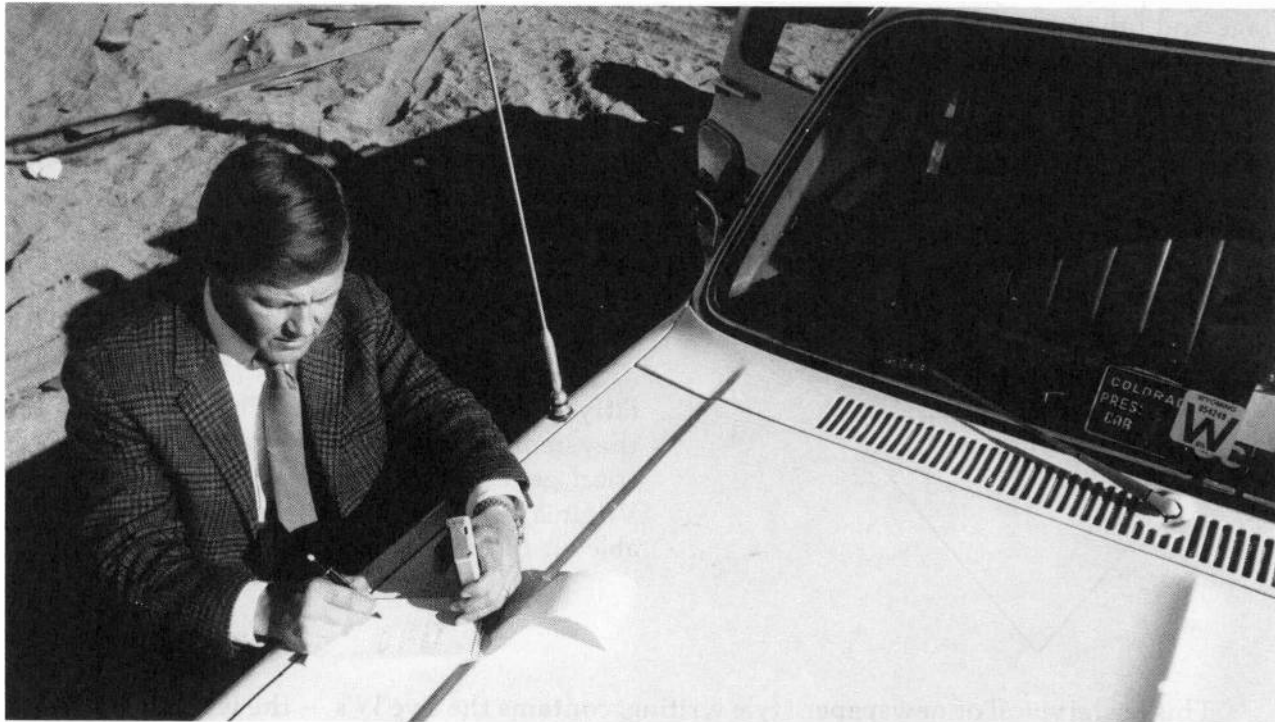


Figure 2-1. A television reporter makes last minute changes before breaking into normal programming with a special news report.

FRESHENING THE STORY

Since your broadcast audience expects to hear news that is happening "now," you can often freshen and update old stories by delaying reference to when the event happened. Let's assume the morning edition of your local paper reports on the previous night's school board meeting.

The Board of Education last night recommended a no-smoking policy in the entire school district, even for teachers on break in the faculty lounge.

Your early morning broadcast might report the same story but with a different emphasis on the time reference. Although the story occurred the previous night, your radio broadcast should move it into present tense:

The school board is taking a strong stand against smoking in public schools . . . and says regulations may be enforced even against teachers who smoke during coffee breaks. The board is recommending a district-wide no-smoking policy, approved last night at the board's regular meeting.

Notice the reference to "last night" is buried near the end of the broadcast story, while the lead and body of the story sound current and up to date. Consider how much brighter the story above sounds than if you started off by saying, as newspapers do, "The Board of Education last night recommended . . ."

UPDATE YOUR STORIES

Some news that you report will be in the nature of on-going, evolving stories and will have to be updated each time new developments occur. A generous application of common sense is your best guide in knowing when to update a story. In general, however, you should update a story every time new information occurs, and even if no new information is available you should rewrite all copy at least every three radio newscasts. In television news, you are considered derelict and unfit for duty if you don't entirely rewrite stories on the early evening news if they are to be used again on the late newscast.

The reasons for updating are obvious. No one in your audience wants to keep hearing the same story over and over as they listen throughout the day or evening. You are in the business of reporting news (new developments) and should pass along this new information to your audience at the earliest opportunity.

Imagine a downtown fire in which a business is destroyed and damage has reached an estimated \$350,000.

Your two a.m. story might be:

Firemen are battling a two-alarm fire in the downtown business district.

By five a.m., when the fire is out, your lead might be:

Investigators are trying to learn what caused the fire that destroyed a downtown business during the night.

By eight a.m., your lead might be:

Damage is estimated at 350-thousand dollars in the aftermath of a fire that destroyed a downtown business early this morning.

Your lead at 12 p.m. might be:

Arson is suspected in the two-alarm fire that destroyed a downtown business early today.

Always lead with your most up-to-date information in a continuing, developing story. Your listeners will appreciate the freshness of your newscast.

LOCALIZING

State Senator Richard Long is among those attending a national governor's conference today in Washington.

A broadcast lead similar to the one above gives listeners in your region reason to become interested in an otherwise national story. You should search for local tie-ins to national stories whenever possible.

A Pittsburgh businessman is among 72 persons who escaped injury today in the crash landing of a passenger jet just outside Paris.

Cold weather hangs over most of the western United States, but the weather service says Utah may escape the worst of it.

Albuquerque seems to be doing more than its share in the national fight against muscular dystrophy.

Localize your stories whenever it is natural and possible. Search for the local angles to regional and national events. Help your audience relate to news wherever it is happening.

Leads Exercise
Chapter 2

Name _____

Date _____

2-A

Directions: Use the following information to write broadcast news story leads. Use no more than three of the five W's found in many newspaper leads. Double space all copy.

Example: It's raining again tonight in Chicago . . . after two straight days of serious flooding.

WHAT (raining)

WHEN (tonight)

WHERE (Chicago)

1. Another governmental entity has entered the battle over the proposed Scenic Knolls development proposed just north of Central Valley. The Regional Council of Governments Wednesday, last night, joined the conflict by asking a state commission to rescind its approval of a request for the North Central Valley Sanitation District to serve the development.

2. A 19-year-old freshman basketball player died this morning during practice at Central Valley University. The freshman, Todd Smith, collapsed while running during a practice game. Smith had not had any known illness, according to trainer, Mike Way. Smith was pronounced dead at Central Valley Memorial Hospital after all efforts to revive him failed. An autopsy will be performed by Collins County Coroner Sam Stizel today.

Leads Exercises
Chapter 2

Name _____

Date _____

2-A Cont'd.

3. The president announced a new 800-million dollar energy plan while traveling through the Western United States on a busy three-day tour. He announced his plan at a Western Governor's Conference meeting in Salt Lake City. The plan calls for a five-year program to ease strains brought on by strip mining and other energy ventures.

4. The Administration recently proposed eliminating 20 weather stations around the country. However, Central Valley appears to be winning the battle to keep its station. Both House and Senate Subcommittees on Weather Service Appropriations have favored continued funding for the 20 stations, members of the state's Congressional delegation announced this morning.

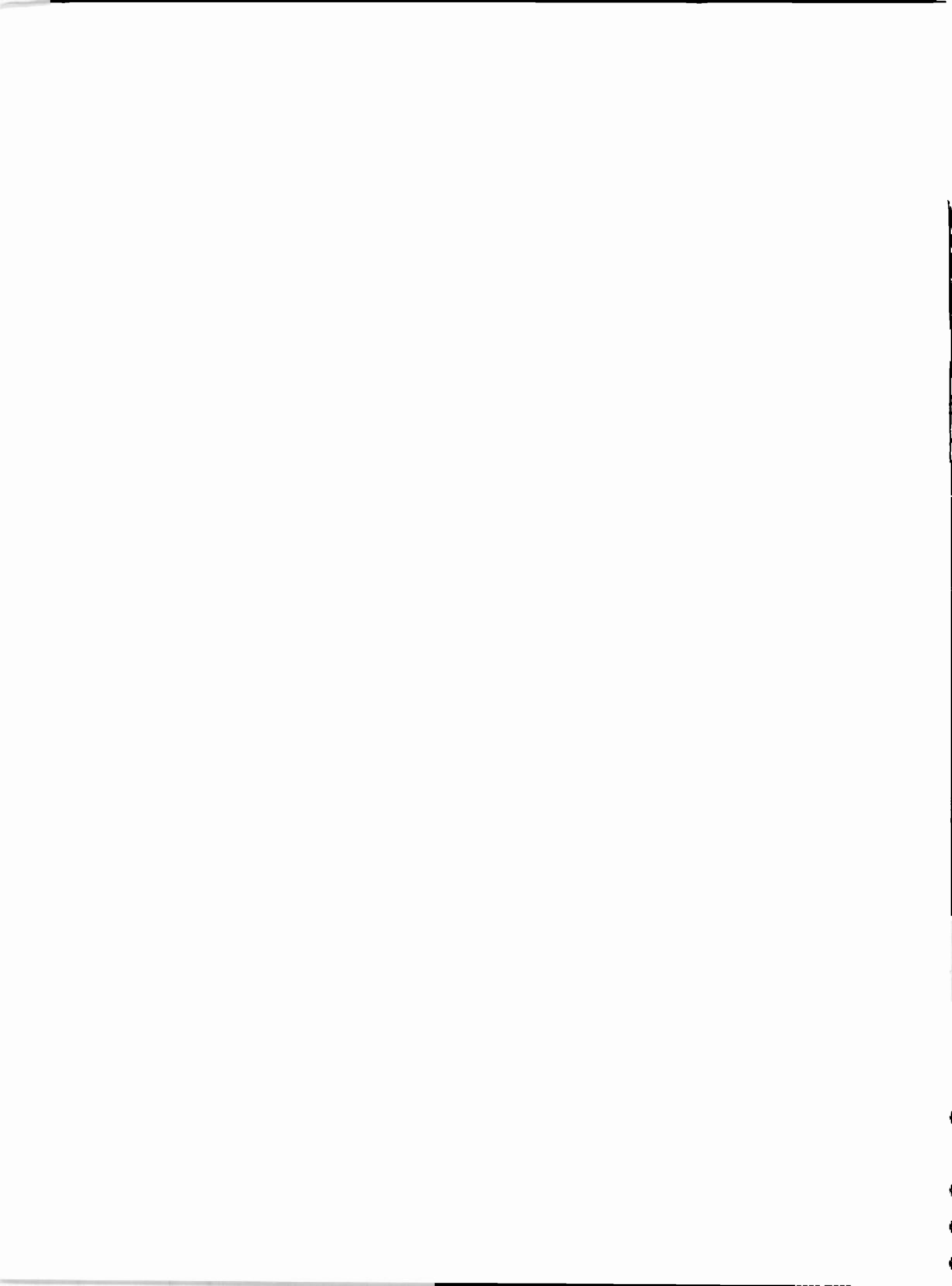
5. A fourth grade school teacher in Kansas City has been acquitted of child abuse for spanking a 10-year old girl with a wooden paddle after the girl lied about having gum in her mouth. The Kansas City District Court jury returned a verdict of not guilty after deliberating three hours. Lynda Kristle had been charged with child abuse after parents noted bruises on the child's buttocks.

2-A Cont'd.

6. A spokesman for the Pulitzer Prize Advisory Board announced an appeal for \$2 million in funds to provide for the "financial good health" of the prestigious awards. Dr. William J. McGill, president of Columbia University which oversees the awards, called the fund-raising effort a "low-key appeal to friends." The awards program is currently running about a \$25,000 deficit. The Pulitzer Prize was established by Joseph Pulitzer, long-time editor of the New York World.

7. The Federal Aviation Administration is investigating two large pieces of ice that fell through the roofs of two homes after apparently falling from the wings of an airplane overhead in Fargo, N.D. No one was injured in the ice-crushed homes yesterday morning. One chunk fell through the home roof of the R. D. Moore's in Fargo. Mrs. Moore was alone at the time of the accident, but was in the basement and was not injured. The other home, owned by E. Harry Masto, was only slightly damaged as the ice fell through the garage roof near the outside edge.

8. The wholesale price index climbed 1.3 percent in April, according to a commerce department report. That was the largest increase in four months. However, even with that large jump, wholesale prices have only risen 7 percent since last April, the report noted.



Writing Exercises
Chapter 2

Name _____

Date _____

2-B

1. Rewrite the following story for broadcast.
The State Patrol has reported the death of an elderly woman whose death lifted the state's traffic death toll for the year to 189. The victim, 78-year-old Othello Smith, was killed when a vehicle rammed through the wall of her house at 201 South Broadway. Police said the vehicle, driven by Johnathan Jones, 23, went out of control and smashed into a living room coming to rest on the couch where Mrs. Smith was asleep. Jones was treated for apparently minor injuries at the local hospital.

(WRITE YOUR STORY HERE)



Writing Exercises
Chapter 2

Name _____

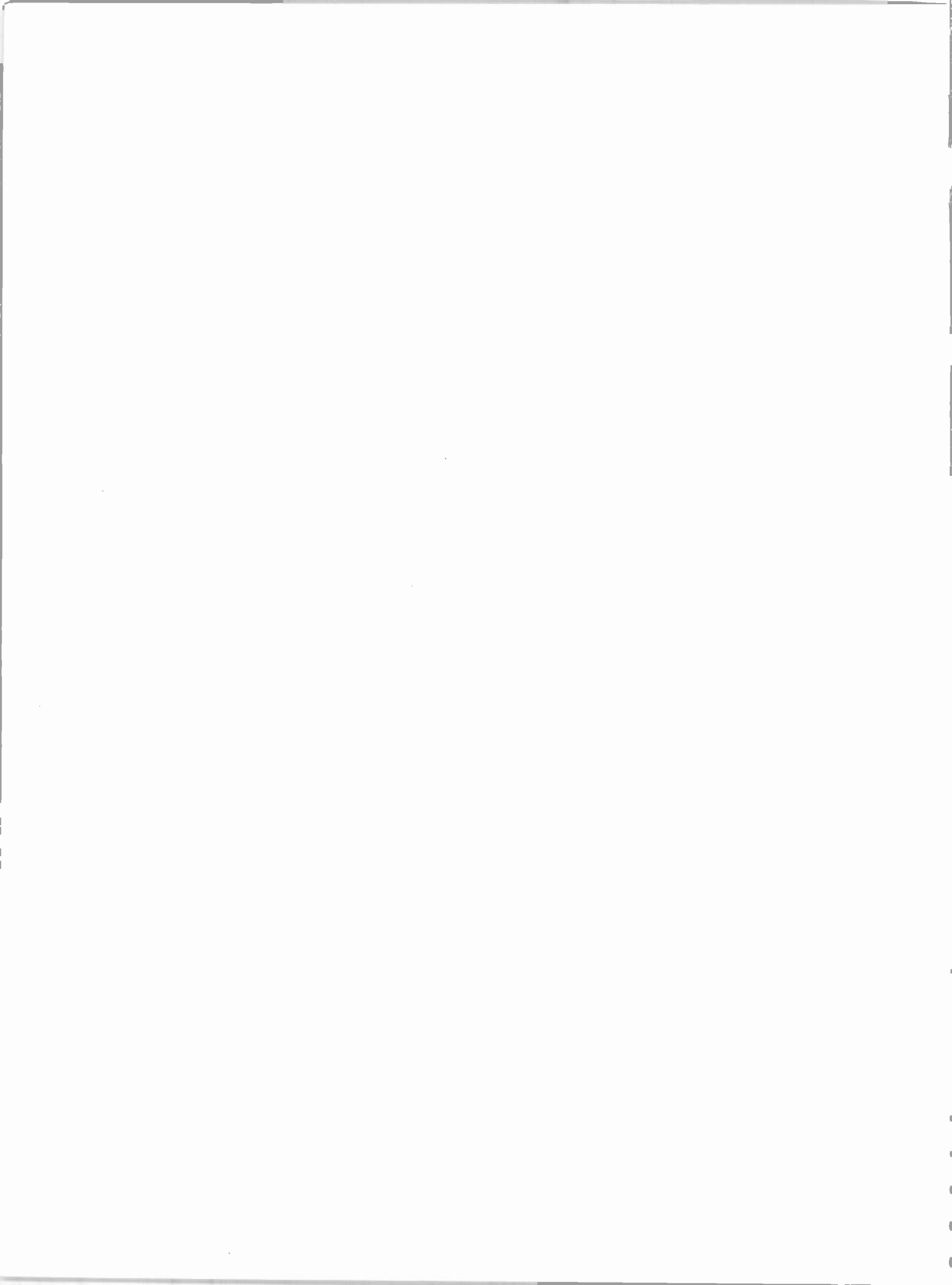
Date _____

2-B Cont'd.

2. Write a broadcast story from the following telephone conversation with a police detective in a metropolitan area. Not all the information need be included.

"The white male came in the Sunset Bank at 2000 Main Street about one p.m. today and stuck a nickel-plated revolver in the face of a teller, Ms. Susie Smith. He shoved a paper bag at her and she put about \$2,500 in it and he hurried out. Ralph Jones, another teller, followed the guy but lost him on the street. The robber was wearing a stocking cap, dark glasses and was about five feet, three inches tall and weighed around 110 pounds. He fits the description of the same guy who robbed the place last September and got about \$5,000. Nobody was hurt but the employees were scared as hell."

(WRITE YOUR STORY HERE)



2-C

Directions: Write a news story from each set of facts in proper broadcast style.

1. Consumers are being charged considerably more for AM-FM car radios than the cost would justify according to a study by the National Association of Broadcasters. In the study just released by the NAB, an AM car radio costs the manufacturers \$13.52 and an AM-FM set costs \$20.47. However, the consumer usually is charged about \$90 for the AM radio and anywhere from \$150 to \$300 for the AM-FM radio. The NAB study concluded, "We believe this cost is out of proportion to the actual cost of making the car radio and, as a result, the American consumer cannot afford to have full radio service in his car."

2. Keynote speaker for a local writing club will be Paul Friggens, area editor of the Reader's Digest. The workshop will be from 9:00 to 3:30 p.m. at the Ramada Inn. It will be for all aspiring freelance writers. Cost of the workshop is \$10 for members and \$25 for non-members of the Central Valley Pen Women's Club. Friggens has been a newspaper editor, magazine writer and editor, and journalism instructor at Columbia University. Other speakers at the conference will be Sally Stancil, family living editor of the local newspaper, and Dr. Ralph McQueen of Central Valley University Department of Journalism.

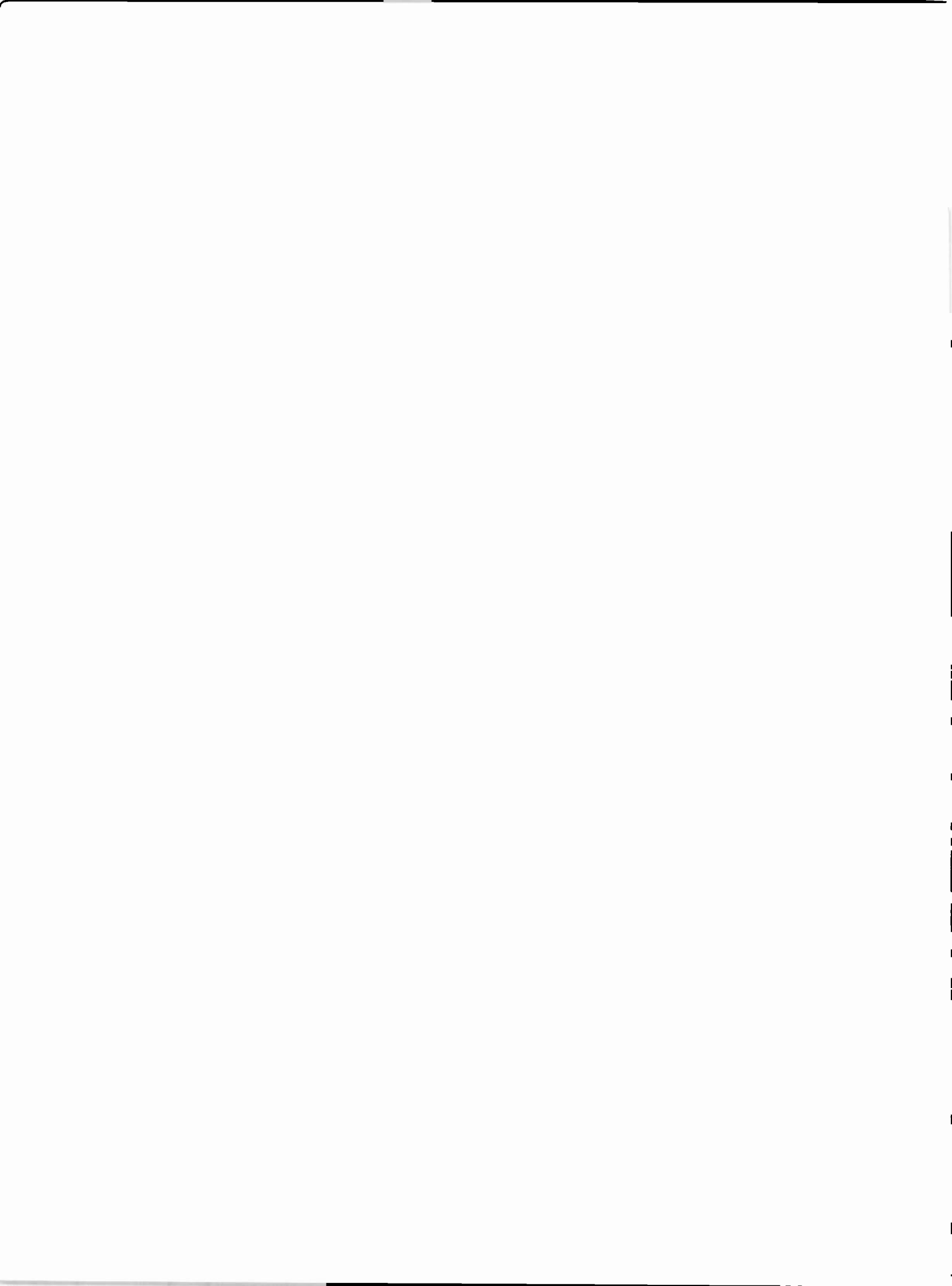
Name _____

Date _____

2-C cont'd.

- The electronic church, Christian radio and television stations, are rapidly becoming a major threat to local congregations, according to the Rev. D. E. Marty, church historian of the University of Chicago. He said that modern style, broadcast packaging of "old-time religion" competes for supporters with the disciplined, pastoral life of the church. "We should worry about members of the completely private, individual, do-it-yourself religion that competes against the Biblical faith wherein Christ exists for us today in communion, in the members of the body he heads."

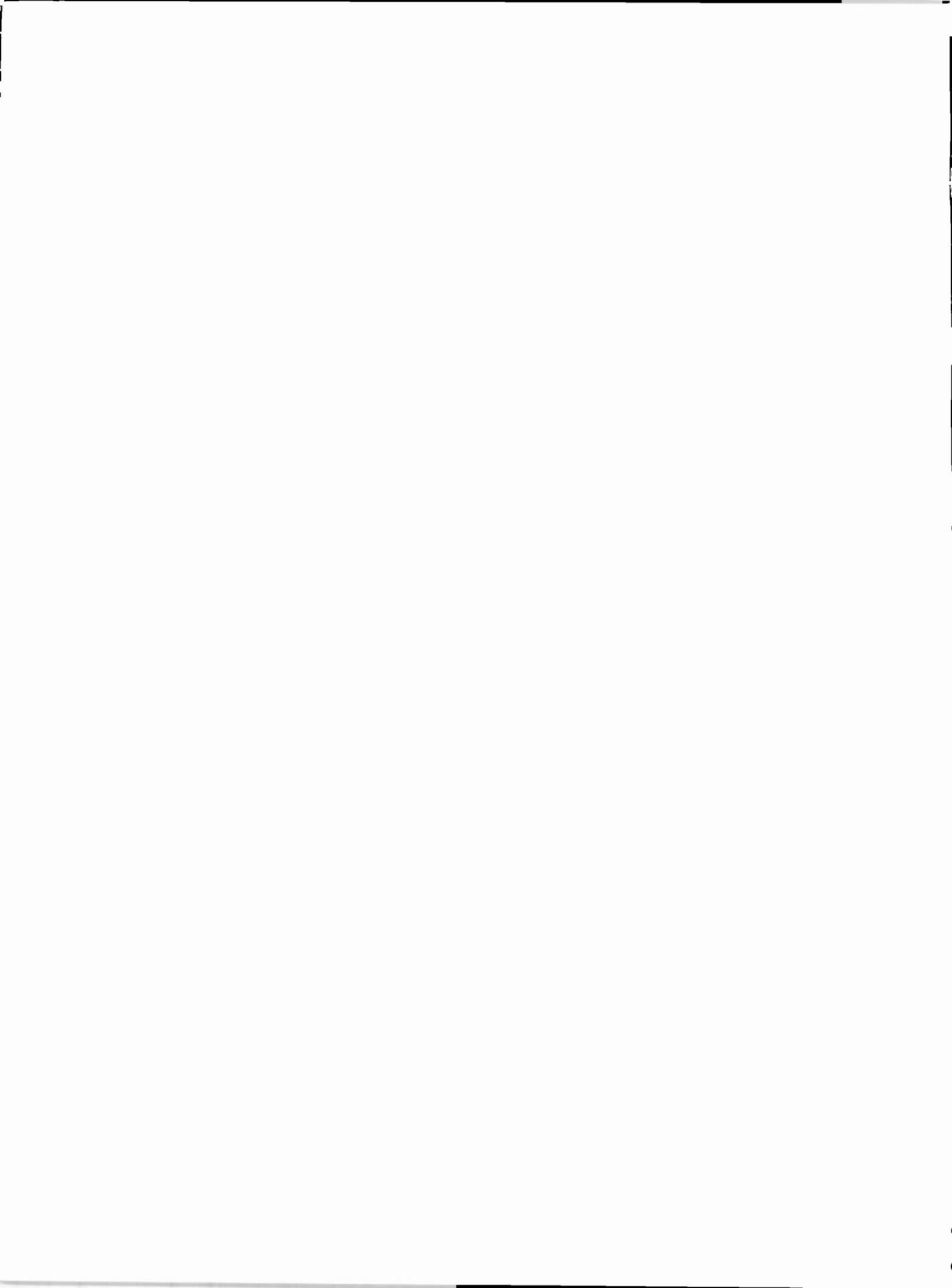
- The Agricultural Department has officially proposed new rules to overhaul the \$5.5 billion annual food stamp program. The announcement came today of the anticipated change in the program that will take place later this year. Assistant Secretary of Agriculture C. W. McMillan announced the proposals today and called for public comment through next month. The plan calls for tighter eligibility requirements for those on the higher end of the poverty scale and for easier access to the program for poorer people and the elderly.



2-C cont'd.

5. The unemployment rate dropped to 6 percent this month for the first time in 4 years as more Americans were able to find work, according to a government report released today. Percentage of working age population in the work force rose to 58.4 percent — largest in the country's history. The Labor Department said total employment rose by 535,000 to 104.8 million. The unemployment rate was the lowest since 1980.

6. A tornado in Jacksonville, Fla., yesterday wiped out an elementary school killing two kindergarten boys. About 100 other students from the 750-student Highview Elementary School were treated for injuries at the local hospital. The tornado ripped through the school without warning after a morning of thunderstorms. The wind destroyed the gym and about half the classrooms. Most of the students were in the cafeteria at the time it hit—lunchtime. "That probably saved a great many lives," Todd Smith, the principal said.



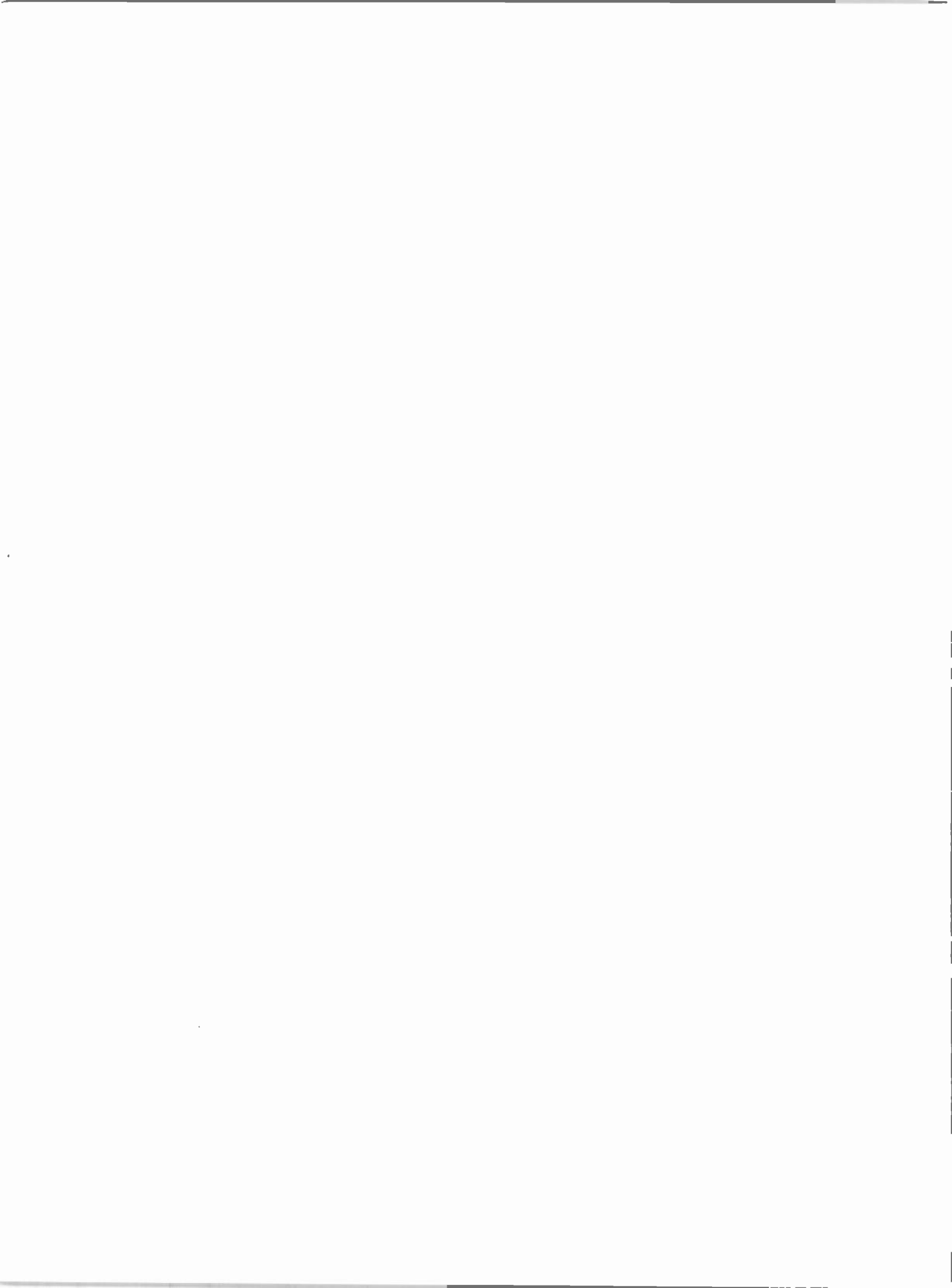
Writing Exercises
Chapter 2

Name _____

Date _____

2-C cont'd.

- 7 "Pilgrim's Progress," a film based on the book of the same title, will be shown Friday at the university student center west ballroom at 8:00 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m. Saturday night at Immanuel Baptist Church. There is no admission charge. "Pilgrim's Progress" was written three centuries ago by John Bunyan, who spent 12 years in prison for publicly disagreeing with religious practices of the day. The motion picture version was filmed near Belfast, Ireland, and produced by Ken Anderson Films to depict highlights of the story.
8. Two cars suffered extensive damage yesterday when a young girl taking her driving test failed to stop at the stop sign at Main and College Streets. No one was injured but her car and one driven by Max Lowdersilk were totalled. Both had to be hauled away. Mary L. Lincoln, 515 S. Taft, was taking her test when she said, "I just panicked; I forgot how to brake." Miss Lincoln is 16 and had just finished the high school driver's education class.



ASSIGNMENTS

Instructions: Unless otherwise instructed, use legitimate news stories from your daily newspaper to complete the following assignments.

1. Write five story leads for broadcast. Use no more than three of the five W's commonly found in newspaper leads in each of your broadcast leads.
2. Write five stories from yesterday's newspaper without giving away the fact that your broadcast stories are yesterday's news.
3. Condense the five stories you have written in Exercise #2 into no longer than 30 seconds each. Retain essential detail in each of the stories and strive to capture audience interest in the first sentence of each story.
4. Condense each of the five stories you have written in Exercise #3 into stories no longer than 15 seconds. Retain essential detail. Actual reading time should not vary more than two seconds from the assigned length.
5. Localize the lead to a national story to make the story more meaningful to your local audience. See the discussion of localizing copy on page 48 before you begin this assessment.
6. Quote a source in five stories for broadcast, each story 30 seconds or less in length, using acceptable broadcast style. (See pg. 14 for guidance on acceptable style for quoting sources.) Choose stories from your daily newspaper in which persons are quoted to complete this assignment.
7. Read and memorize the essential facts of a newspaper story. Without notes, ad-lib the story into a tape recorder. Transcribe your recording and compare it with the newspaper article, noting especially the differences in story length, emphasis and style.
8. Find a story that uses many figures and statistics and rewrite it for broadcast to improve meaning to an audience that will hear the story only once.
9. Write a one-sentence lead that puts abstract numbers, such as 200 million, two billion, etc., into perspective for a broadcast audience.
10. From any news source, find a story and identify its essence and significance to a local audience, based on the definition of news in this chapter.
11. Listen to a television newscast and identify at least five stories that feature as their essential nature elements of dramatic conflict.
12. Write 10 story leads for broadcast in which you delay unknown names until the second sentence of your story. Cushion the names so they are not used at the beginning of the second sentence. Stories from newspapers or magazines can be used as source material for this assignment.

13. Listen to news reports about a given event on two different radio or television stations. Compare coverage and story treatment on the two stations. Be alert for differences of emphasis in the leads to each story.
14. Write 10 sentences for broadcast, placing time references at first close to the main verb, then at the end of each sentence. Compare the sound as you read each of the sentences aloud.
15. Write five leads to a news story, updating each lead to reflect the changing nature of the developing story at each of the following newscast times: 9 a.m., noon, 5 p.m., 8 p.m. and 10 p.m.

Examples of stories you could use to fulfill this exercise include bank robberies, major fires, airplane crashes, train derailments, major weather stories, etc.

16. Find a newspaper story that would be in questionable taste on radio or television (one that highlights the gruesome details of a murder, etc.). Rewrite the story for broadcast, bearing in mind that no one in the broadcast audience can control what comes over the radio speaker or television screen from moment to moment.

3

News Selection

If you don't like riots or militant feminists, or opponents of ERA, or Republicans, or Democrats or whatever, you don't read the newspaper article — you just go on to something more agreeable. Nobody has yet invented a way to provide the consumer of broadcast journalism that luxury of selection.

Richard Salant, former President of CBS News

"The news," David Brinkley of ABC News once said, "is what I say it is." Brinkley and thousands of other broadcast journalists around the country decide each day for millions of listeners and viewers what is news and what is not.

The process of news selection involves countless judgments. As a layperson, you are involved in the process every time you read your daily newspaper, an endeavor that occupies the average reader from 20 to 30 minutes a day. Most people never read the paper from front to back; they *select* what to read based on their interests of the moment.

When you read the paper a headline may catch your eye and lure you into the story. A picture on the sports page might do the same thing. If the story doesn't capture and hold you, you can bail out and move to the next story. You can choose in what order you read the newspaper—comics first, back to front, sports, then editorials, or perhaps only the crossword puzzle.

In radio and television you may have to sit through the entire newscast for any given story. If the news is dull you can't simply turn the page. You must suffer through it, switch to another station, or turn off the set. Clearly, news content must be treated and presented differently by broadcast journalists than by their counterparts in print.

NEWS SOURCES

News reaches the station through all manner of sources. It is assembled locally by reporters, videotape crews, writers, stringers, editors and producers. Information from all over the world is relayed by teletype from the Associated Press and United Press International. Syndications, wire services and networks send pre-recorded stories or "feeds" down the line for recording and later broadcast. Two-way radios, telephones and police monitors blare in the newsroom throughout the day, alerting the assignment editor to breaking news within the community.

All this information would, if broadcast in its entirety, fill more than the day's broadcast schedule. Instead it must be processed and distilled into compact reports, usually from five minutes to 30 minutes in length, including commercials, that will illustrate the most important and interesting events of the day. With so much news and so little time to tell it, broadcast audiences would do well, as Walter Cronkite once said "to see the newspaper for further details."

When you put together a news broadcast, you are concerned with the total content of the show. You must organize the news, determine story order and length, the number of actualities or visuals and, as the day goes on, which stories must be added, shortened or dropped.

A broadcast journalism graduate summarized the process in a recent letter: "If you can take a day of life, shove it into a minute and still smile at the end of the day, then broadcast news is the place to be!"

NEWS JUDGMENT

The judgments involved in the news process are as individual as the people who make them. How do you decide what makes the biggest story of the hour? What stories should follow it? How long should they be? Even the networks don't always agree on the lead story of the day. Experience is the best teacher in answering such questions, but you can follow guidelines of common sense as you select the stories you will air.

CHOOSING STORIES FOR BROADCAST

A prerequisite in broadcast news is time. Protect it by eliminating all borderline material.

Ask questions of yourself about the news:

How much time does the story deserve?

Should the story be used later in the newscast?

What is the integrity of the source?

Is the story accurate and in good taste?

How many times has the story been aired today?

Is the story warranted because of new developments?

Determine which stories *affect* your audience. Is a minor robbery as important as the probability of a major increase in airline fares?

Determine which stories *interest* your audience. Should you emphasize the report on skiing conditions or the major tree damage caused by Dutch Elm disease?

News judgment requires the same discipline as any other skill, and you must develop it over time. Begin to study newscasts by stations you respect. Study their news judgment, talk with news personnel about what makes news, and practice making news judgments in your everyday life. Learn to distinguish what is serious and significant, what events are essential to know about, what stories affect your life directly, which stories are nice to know about but have little impact in your life, which stories exist by themselves and which are "manufactured," i.e., wouldn't exist if you didn't cover them.



Figure 3-1. Television newsrooms are “processors” of information where news judgments are made every minute.

HARD VS. SOFT NEWS

What we’re talking about is the distinction between types of news. The two most classical distinctions are between *hard* news, and *soft*, or feature news.

Hard news is what people expect to hear. It is the news they need to know to get along in life from day to day, news that helps them decide which course of action to take or that affects them financially, physically or in some other important way. Hard news tells about rate hikes in utilities, property tax increases, important Senate action, or of major crime in the community.

Soft news is optional to most audiences. It is news they might enjoy hearing but could live without, such as a report on how a local television newswoman learns to belly dance, how more firemen are growing beards these days, the Rhode Island man who pushes a peanut up the sidewalk to pay off an election bet, or how local school teachers are exercising three times a week until semester’s end. Such stories may contribute to our awareness of social or community trends, or to our understanding of how events affect us. If they serve any of these functions they are justified, but not if they replace stories *we need to know*.

The news director at a Miami radio station sent his staff a memo of guidelines on news judgment. Here are some excerpts:

1. Lately a lot of material has been creeping into our news shows that does not belong there. Effective immediately, kill all but the most major developments in international news. Stay away from D.C. stories on obscure economic indicators. All we should be interested in are the Consumer Price Index and unemployment figures.
2. Emphasis should be placed on the following items:
 - a. Consumer
 - b. Public education
 - c. Quality police matter
 - d. Employment
 - e. Transportation
 - f. Environment
 - g. Aviation
 - h. Minorities

Consumer-oriented stories include such items as the clear meat packaging ordinance, consumer frauds, dangerous items and substances, auto recalls and price gouging.

Just about everyone has contact in some way with public education. The big ones here are busing, drugs in school, school money problems and school taxes.

When I say quality police matter, I don't want to hear a robbery of under \$1,000. In other police matters, I'm not interested unless they're dead. I don't want to hear about fires unless the property loss is more than \$25,000 (or there is injury or death).

Employment covers such things as the airline merger, mass layoffs, companies moving large staffs here or opening plants with mass local hiring.

Transportation covers new highway construction, continuing highway bottlenecks and unsafe conditions, development of rapid transit and changes in fares. Also, coverage of the development of express bus lanes should be included.

The environment covers land use management, water resources, water pollution, air pollution, resource recovery, land pollution and endangered species.

Aviation related businesses are the largest single category of employment in Dade County. When you hear a story from an airline, A.L.P.A. or the machinists union, I want your eyes to bug out . . .

Minority group coverage includes Cubans, blacks, anti-war factions, abortion reform, etc., but don't let yourself be sucked in by opportunists.

LEAD STORIES

Your lead, or first story in the newscast, must be the biggest story of the hour—the event that merits special attention because it is the most important. The lead story may be obvious some days, obscure on other days when several big stories are breaking. Generally, you can solve the problem by asking which story affects or interests the most people in your audience.

Sometimes the choices can be tricky. Imagine that utility rates in your community are raised by the state utility commission, meaning you will pay more to heat and operate your home. The same day police announce the fifth rape-murder to occur in your neighborhood within the last three months. Which story is your lead? Only you can answer the question, based upon your knowledge of community interests and concerns. Ordinarily the rate hike might lead the newscast, but the unusual number of violent crimes may have created an issue of personal safety that would make the rape-murder story more important to your audience. In the absence of such finely cut decisions, hard news generally takes precedence as the lead story at most stations. Whatever you decide to go with as the lead story, always lead with the most current developments.

LINE-UP

Local news is usually placed first in the newscast unless it is obviously overshadowed by important regional, national or international developments. Build your show from the lead story, grouping similar items together. If you lead with a crime story, don't jump immediately to a story about plans for a new shopping center in your area even if it is the second most important story in the newscast. Go instead to a "buffer" that smooths out the flow of your news show, a story from district court for example, then to the shopping center story. Except in the shortest radio newscasts, you should avoid a line-up that groups stories from most to least important in 1-2-3 order. Your newscast will become progressively less interesting, and your audience progressively more bored.

NEWSCAST CONTENT

Use what time is available in your newscast for stories of substance. Avoid minor robberies, minor crime, fender-bender traffic accidents, suicides, minor court decisions and small fires. Each of these examples may have special properties on a given day, however, that make them special enough to include in the news. A minor traffic accident becomes news if the driver lost control because he saw a nude sunbather.

FUTURES FILE

An indispensable part of the newsroom is the *futures* file, a simple filing system such as an accordion-style folder with pockets for each day of the month. Into these pockets are placed newspaper clippings about upcoming events, notes from telephone calls, public relations releases about political and business activities, dates of court sentencings and the like. The file contains a ready reference for events that should be covered in the days and weeks ahead, and it should be consulted daily so advance preparations can be made to cover "predictable" news events.

A GUIDELINE FOR NEWS CONTENT

Since all guidelines are meant to illustrate an "average" news day, and few news days are average, the following "rules" are set down only to help you develop a news sense.

- use recordings from the field whenever possible but keep them brief and concise, generally not more than 30 seconds in length.
- write your news stories in present tense whenever possible.
- stress local news or substance and interest, and cover it live whenever possible.
- at least two stories in a five-minute radio newscast should be detailed and provide as much depth as a balanced newscast allows. All other stories should be more snappy and concise.
- end newscasts whenever possible with a bright, upbeat story (or *kicker*) that will leave your audience smiling or amused. Much news is sober and few people enjoy leaving newscasts feeling somber.
- minimum length for most news stories should be at least two sentences. One-sentence "headlines" are appropriate if used in association with a series of other one- and two-sentence stories, as in a news-in-brief wrapup.
- two or three short actualities generally make a five-minute radio newscast sound more comprehensive than one long actuality.
- update and localize wire stories whenever possible. Look for a local tie-in with state and national stories, and lead such stories with local emphasis in the first sentence.
- regardless of their source check all stories for accuracy, especially when they involve crime, legal action or political charges.
- rewrite all stories that are used in subsequent newscasts. No listener wants to hear the same story over and over again.

SPOT NEWS

A spot news story is an event that breaks out, day or night, without warning. As you begin your job in broadcasting, whether in radio or television, you may find yourself covering a variety of spot news—the fires, holdups, car wrecks, plane crashes, drownings and murders that occur from time to time in almost any community. Gradually you will learn that the news never changes. Only the names change. The same stories return day after day, year after year.

Such stories are often accounts of violence, and they will leave some people in your audience cold. Still others in your audience will be interested in such events. Listeners or viewers in your audience may have witnessed a car-train collision and will be eager to learn what happened. Others in your audience may be vitally interested in hearing about the third holdup in as many days at the mom and pop grocery just down the street from where they live.

Some spot news is momentous: a million dollar warehouse fire, a major drug raid, a train derailment, flash flooding, and grain elevator explosions are examples. Other spot news barely qualifies for the title and needs unusual angles to make it airworthy.

In general, as you make judgments about spot news, you should ask yourself what lifts the story out of the ordinary. Why waste precious air time reporting minor-injury accidents, inconsequential fires and \$25 holdups?

Many reporters are satisfied covering only the WHAT of events. Others will go beyond surface coverage whenever possible and ask WHY events occurred and what CONSEQUENCES are likely. Such questions help the reporter probe for the cause of stories. This is not to imply that you should become a crusading journalist, only that you should go beyond the symptom of a problem (the grain elevator explosion) and get to the cause (lax safety standards that surround the handling of grain dust). Only when people are aware of problems can the causes be addressed.

Many stations keep mobile news cruisers in the field to cover spot news. The cruisers are cars, station wagons, or vans equipped with two-way radios and, in the case of television, film cameras, video tape gear and sometimes live broadcast capability. In-car monitors and two-way contact with assignment editors back at the newsroom assure continual awareness of reports from fire, police, sheriff, highway patrol and other government agencies in the community. Mobile news reporters can often reach the scene of spot news within minutes if they are in good field position to begin with.

MINOR SPOT NEWS

Whether minor spot news is a legitimate component of your newscast is a value judgment. Many people in your audience will want and *expect* to hear it; others could care less and will wonder why you bothered with it in the first place. Our advice is this: somewhere in most of us lies a source of morbid fascination with the disaster and mayhem that befalls others. Often, when we disavow our interest in such events, we still secretly like to know about them and will listen in spite of ourselves. Why else do pedestrians turn to watch as an ambulance goes by with sirens blaring and red lights flashing?

We would caution, however, that spot news is only one component of broadcast journalism. It should never dominate the news line-up or upset the balance of an otherwise representative report of the day's events. Momentous events occur by the thousands each day all over the world. Always ask yourself if the car wreck at Fifth and Main is one of them.

REFERENCE SOURCES

Tools of the broadcast writer include reference materials, and no newsroom should be without at least the minimum references:

- *City Directories* help locate people, their addresses and telephone numbers. People not listed in normal telephone directories may be found in the city directory. This reference is especially useful when you are trying to contact someone near the scene of a fire or accident for eye-witness information. Most city directories also provide cross sections by name, address and telephone number. This makes it possible for you to locate someone even if you know only their address or telephone number and are unsure of their name.
- *Lists of radio and television stations* in the region are helpful when you need audio or videotape feeds from locations outside your immediate geographical area.
- *Pronunciation Guides* are essential references for state and local pronunciations, and for national places and names. If you have any doubt about a given word, you can look up the word in these references.
- *Out-of-town telephone directories* help you locate people and agencies outside your immediate area.

- *Unlisted telephone numbers* and other numbers that are frequently called can be listed to speed the reporting process. A file of such numbers contains many which aren't listed in the phone book—a police dispatcher's private line or the home number of a competitor station's news director, for instance—and which may be unavailable from other sources on a moment's notice. Caution: don't give out unlisted numbers to anyone except those who are authorized to use them.
- *Public officials and agencies* make up another reference source which should list position held, political affiliation, pertinent telephone numbers, political record of official involved, function of agency and the like. Most states have a "Blue Book" directory which lists Congressmen and women by name, party, terms held, office address and telephone number. Such directories are helpful when you must quickly learn as much as possible about a public official.
- *Dictionaries* are, of course, indispensable to any writer. Besides an up-to-date dictionary, you may want a dictionary of synonyms, a thesaurus, and even a book of famous quotations as a stimulus on days when you suffer from uninspired writing.
- *Newspapers and news magazines* help you keep abreast of local, regional, state, national and international news. Most newsrooms subscribe to local and state newspapers and at least one or two news magazines.
- *Newsroom radio monitors and television monitors* to help keep tabs on the competition and as a check against your station's news coverage. Monitoring the competition keeps you alert to any stories you may have missed in the day's news coverage.

Assignments
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-A

1. Log all stories on a radio news broadcast and those that appear on the first three pages of your favorite evening newspaper. Try to predict which stories from those on your log will be broadcast this evening by your favorite television stations, and in what order. Compare the television newscast with your story lineup.

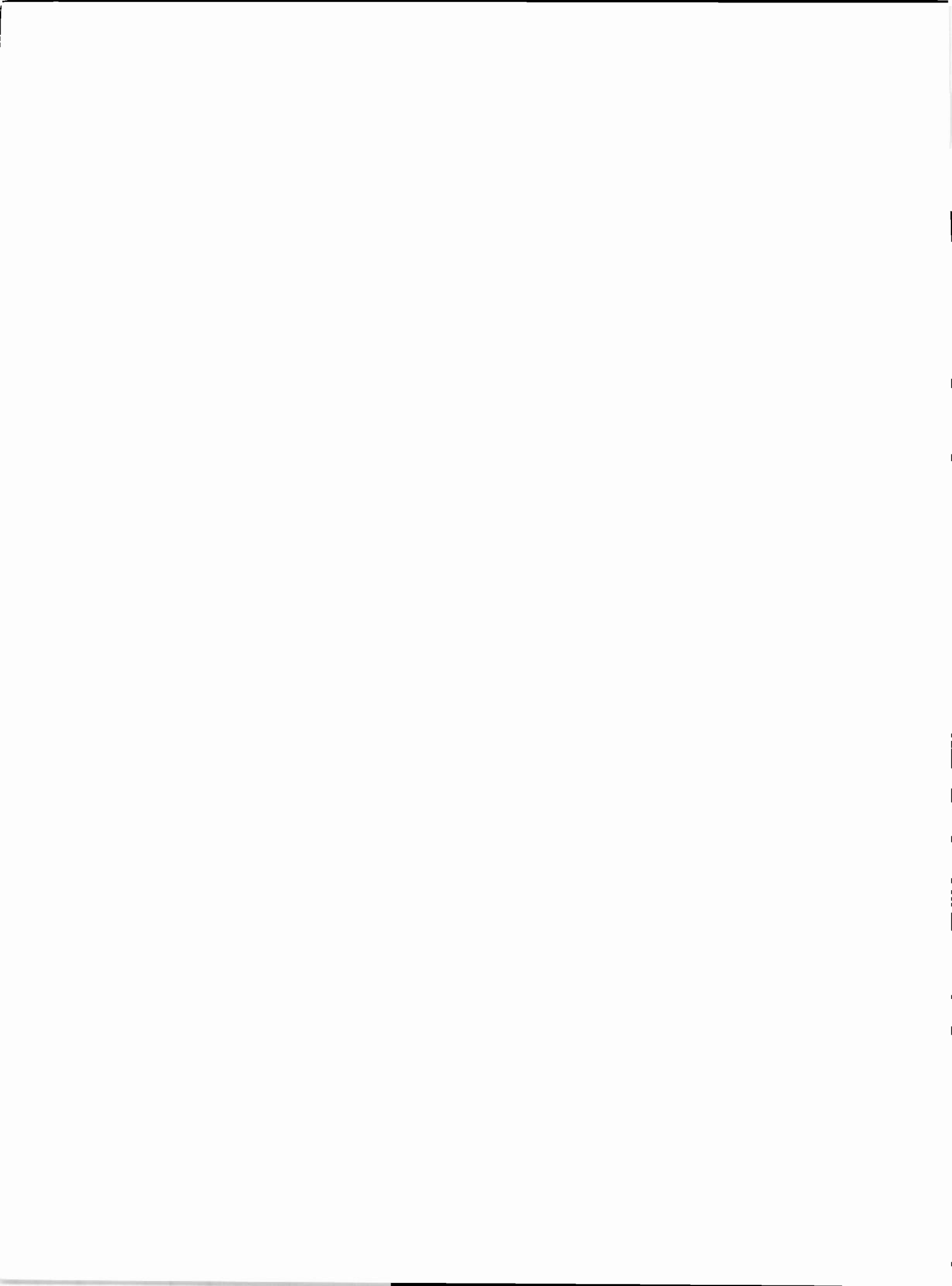
Use the worksheet that follows.

THE STORIES ON RADIO (in order)

- | | |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 6. |
| 2. | 7. |
| 3. | 8. |
| 4. | 9. |
| 5. | 10. |

THE STORIES IN THE NEWSPAPER (first three pages)

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 11. |
| 2. | 12. |
| 3. | 13. |
| 4. | 14. |
| 5. | 15. |
| 6. | 16. |
| 7. | 17. |
| 8. | 18. |
| 9. | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |
- (use back of page if necessary)



Assignments
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

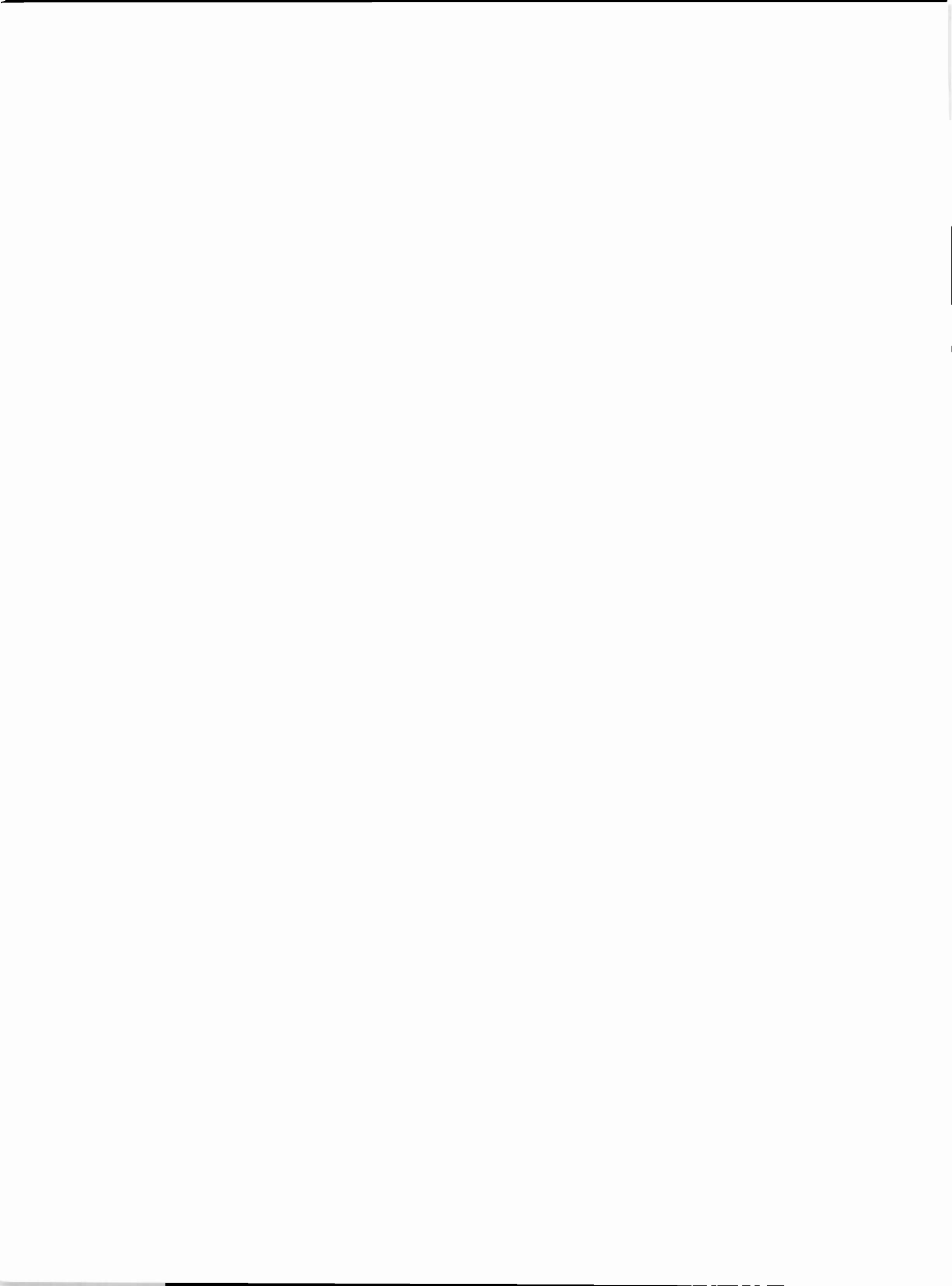
3-A cont'd.

YOUR PROJECTED STORY LINEUP FOR THE TV NEWS THIS EVENING

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 11. |
| 2. | 12. |
| 3. | 13. |
| 4. | 14. |
| 5. | 15. |
| 6. | 16. |
| 7. | 17. |
| 8. | 18. |
| 9. | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |

ACTUAL STORY LINEUP ON TV NEWSCAST FOR SAME DAY

- | | |
|-----|-----|
| 1. | 11. |
| 2. | 12. |
| 3. | 13. |
| 4. | 14. |
| 5. | 15. |
| 6. | 16. |
| 7. | 17. |
| 8. | 18. |
| 9. | 19. |
| 10. | 20. |



Assignments
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

1. After completing this assignment, discuss in class or prepare a paper on your response to the following questions:

Why did the television newscast contain stories you thought it might not carry?

Why did the TV newscast drop some stories you considered newsworthy?

Why is emphasis on stories for broadcast different than identical stories in the newspaper?

What major differences did you notice in news treatment between radio, newspapers and television?

Can an audience that listens only to radio or only to television be well informed?

2. Choose a TV station you respect and list all the stories broadcast in a normal half-hour broadcast. Determine the percentage and actual broadcast time of:
 - a. hard news and soft news and features
 - b. news which you consider essential to know about
 - c. stories which affect you in some way because of their significance (financially, emotionally or physically)
 - d. stories which interest you but would have little impact on your life.
3. Listen to one five-minute news broadcast on each of five different radio stations, preferably on the same day. Determine average story length, average number of stories per broadcast and story content for each broadcast. Discuss your findings in class.
4. Compare the following stories and number them first in order of most importance (significance), then in order of greatest interest to your audience. (Both radio and television) Discuss your decisions in class.

Story #1. HANGAR FIRE

An airplane hangar at the local municipal airport burned down late this afternoon, with damage estimated at \$50,000. Two light planes were damaged in the fire, but there were no injuries and no disruption of normal activities at the airport. You have videotape of the fire and an eyewitness interview for radio.

Store #2. MISS (your state)

A 19-year-old beauty queen from your state has been chosen Miss (your state). She lives in your community and will make public appearances around the state for the remainder of the year. You have an interview for radio and a videotape interview for television.

Story #3. DRUG BUST

Fifteen teenagers in your community, all under 17 years of age, were arrested just before newstime on charges of using cocaine and other illegal drugs. You don't have videotape of the event, or any radio interviews, but you have determined just before airtime that police confiscated drugs worth an estimated \$50,000 street value during the raid on a fashionable home where the arrests occurred.

Story #4. NO TRASH-BURNING ORDINANCE

The county commissioners have defeated a no trash-burning ordinance for the third time. The ordinance would have stopped area farmers and residents from burning trash in open-air containers. You have an interview with a pollution expert saying the move will almost certainly contribute to more air pollution in the years to come.

Story #5. DOG LEASH LAW

The city has imposed stiff new fines on persons who allow unleashed dogs to accompany them in public places. City officials say unleashed dogs have routinely caused trouble in past years. They say four small children were bitten in recent months and public parks have become unsafe because of the problem.

Story #6. TRAFFIC ACCIDENT

An early-afternoon head-on collision kills the drivers of both cars. Both victims have been identified by newstime and you have videotape of the collision's aftermath, and an interview with state patrol officials for radio.

Story #7. MURDER

A 21-year-old woman is found strangled in her apartment about 7 p.m. near the university campus. Police have no leads in the case except for neighbor's testimony about the woman's close friends. Just before newstime you obtain an interview with the chief of detectives.

5. Obtain permission from local police, fire or sheriff's officials to accompany them on their daily rounds. Write a news story based on a spot news event you witnessed while accompanying the officers.
6. On a day of your choice, list and compare news on the front page of your daily newspaper with the evening television news. Determine similarities and differences between news coverage and news emphasis and try to determine the reasons, based upon an assessment of the differing audiences, deadline times and essential differences between print and broadcast journalism.
7. Listen to five 5-minute radio news broadcasts. Determine the average story length, average number of stories, and types of story content for each broadcast. Compare your findings in a class discussion.

Assignments
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-B

1. Compare the following stories and number them, first in order of most importance or significance, then in order of greatest interest to your audience. Discuss your decisions in class.

<u>Interest</u>	<u>Significance</u>	
_____	_____	Nationwide coal strike is settled.
_____	_____	A Hollywood celebrity dies.
_____	_____	Cloud seeding brings snow to local drought-stricken areas.
_____	_____	A mass murderer is sentenced to life imprisonment.
_____	_____	Foreign intelligence agents are evicted from Washington, D.C.
_____	_____	Local man is jailed for keeping pet African lion in house.
_____	_____	Gay rights activists speak in town tonight; demonstrations against the gays are planned by two vocal citizens' groups.
_____	_____	Fifteen police officers in your community are fired after being charged with operating a burglary and car theft ring.
_____	_____	Air quality standards are deteriorating significantly in your community.
_____	_____	Auto accident kills 2 local teenage boys. Officers are investigating possible drug use as the cause of the one-car accident.



Assignments
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-C

1. Choose a TV station you respect and log all the stories broadcast in a normal half-hour news broadcast.

STATION YOU WATCHED: Channel _____
Call Letters _____

After completing the log of stories on the next page, determine the percentage and actual broadcast time of:

HARD NEWS (PER CENT) _____ %
(LENGTH) _____ minutes

SOFT NEWS (PER CENT) _____ %
(LENGTH) _____ minutes

News you consider essential to know about:
(PER CENT) _____ %
(LENGTH) _____ minutes

News that would affect the audience in some way, whether financially, physically or emotionally.:

(PER CENT) _____ %
(LENGTH) _____ minutes

Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-C cont'd.

NEWSCAST LOG

STORY #	LENGTH	HARD NEWS (check)	SOFT NEWS (check)	ESSENTIAL? (check)	AFFECTS AUDIENCE?
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
13.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
16.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
18.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
19.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
20.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
21.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
22.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
23.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
24.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
25.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

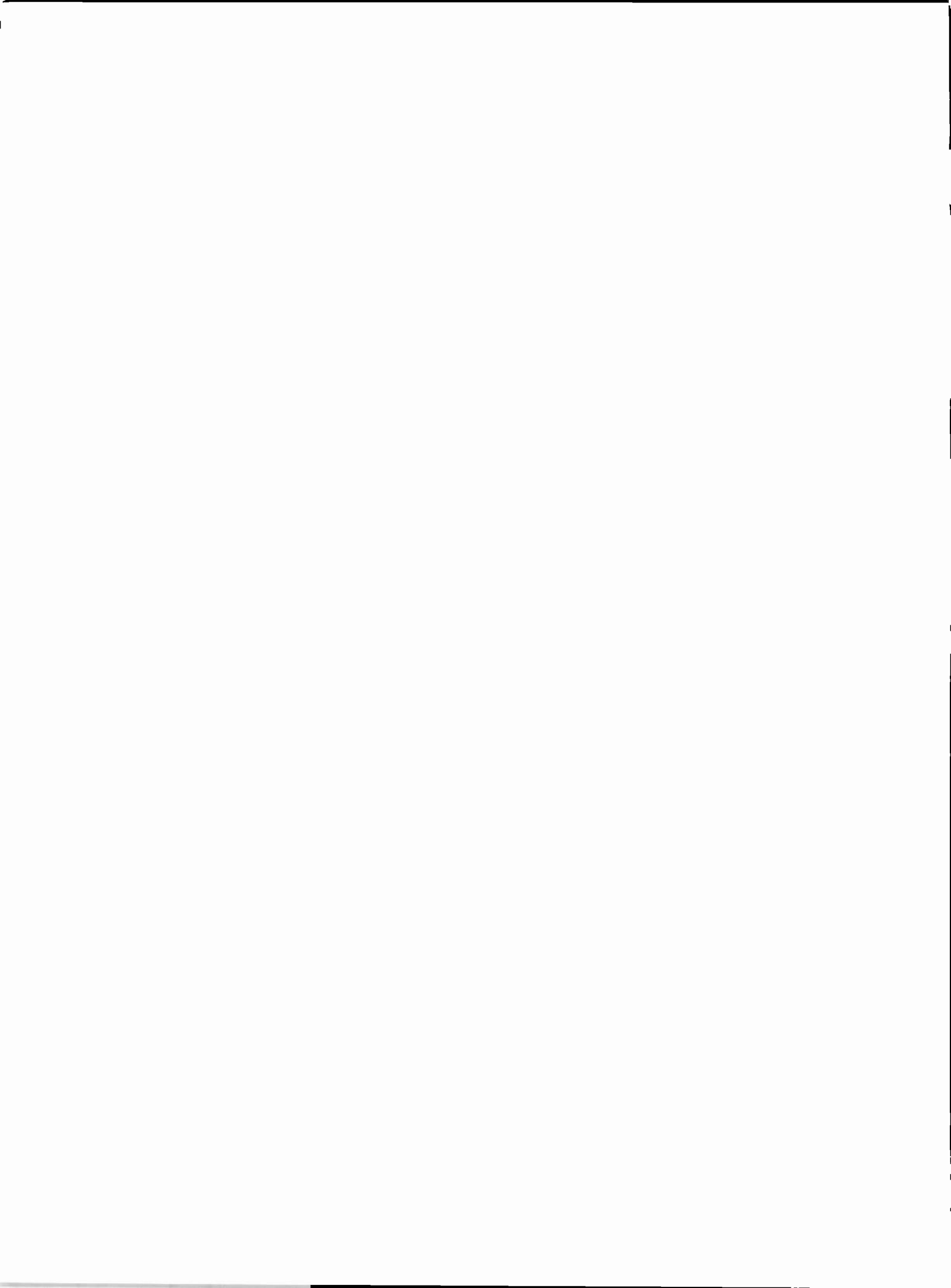
Date _____

3-D

Directions: Write a broadcast news story from each set of facts. Be sure to pick the most news-worthy elements. If the facts do not warrant a news story, say so, and explain why not.

1. The 50th annual National Social Science Convention will begin tomorrow at the city's convention center. Approximately 2,000 professors of social science disciplines from most of the nation's colleges and universities will be represented. Research papers and discussion on innovative teaching methods will be emphasized at the convention. Keynote speaker for the opening banquet will be Dr. Bill Cosby. Sessions will begin with the banquet Thursday evening and last until noon Sunday.

2. Tony Kinney and Anne Michaels will receive the Society for Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi award for outstanding contributions to journalism in the state at the annual press association meeting next week. Kinney and Michaels uncovered a \$25 million land fraud during an investigative reporting series last fall. The reporters have also been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, the first nomination by a Central Valley newspaper in 20 years.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-D cont'd.

3. Construction of a freeway around Central Valley's business district was one of the items discussed at last night's city council meeting. The issue never came to a vote, however. The council did approve a \$5.4 million capital outlay to build a new civic center. The plans must still be approved by the council, but construction is expected to begin within six weeks.

4. A local cement contractor has fired all of his employees who went out on a wildcat strike yesterday. Jones Cement Co. has notified all workers who refused to come to work today that they are not to report to work again. Elbert R. Jones, owner and president, told reporters at a news conference this morning that he will advertise in the local newspapers and broadcast media for a full crew of 35 persons to start work Monday.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-D cont'd.

5. The Cashway grocery store was robbed of \$3,500 yesterday. Police today arrested Tom T. Wilbur and Susan T. Sprague on suspicion of first degree armed robbery. Wilbur and Sprague have no previous record. They live at 3445 15th St. Late this afternoon they were charged with first degree armed robbery by police after Ralph T. Simpson, manager of the grocery store, picked them both out of a police lineup.

6. The First Baptist Church called a new pastor today. The Rev. T. Kyle Brooks will begin duties as minister of the church in two Sundays. He comes here from the pastorate of the Calvary Baptist Church in Duncan, Oklahoma. He is married to his wife, Kathy, and two children, Paula 13, and Yvonne, 1, will accompany him. Rev. Brooks replaces the Rev. R. R. Hastings who retired three months ago. The 38-year-old Rev. Brooks graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1965 with masters of divinity degree. He received his bachelor's degree from Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa.



Exercises
Chapter 3

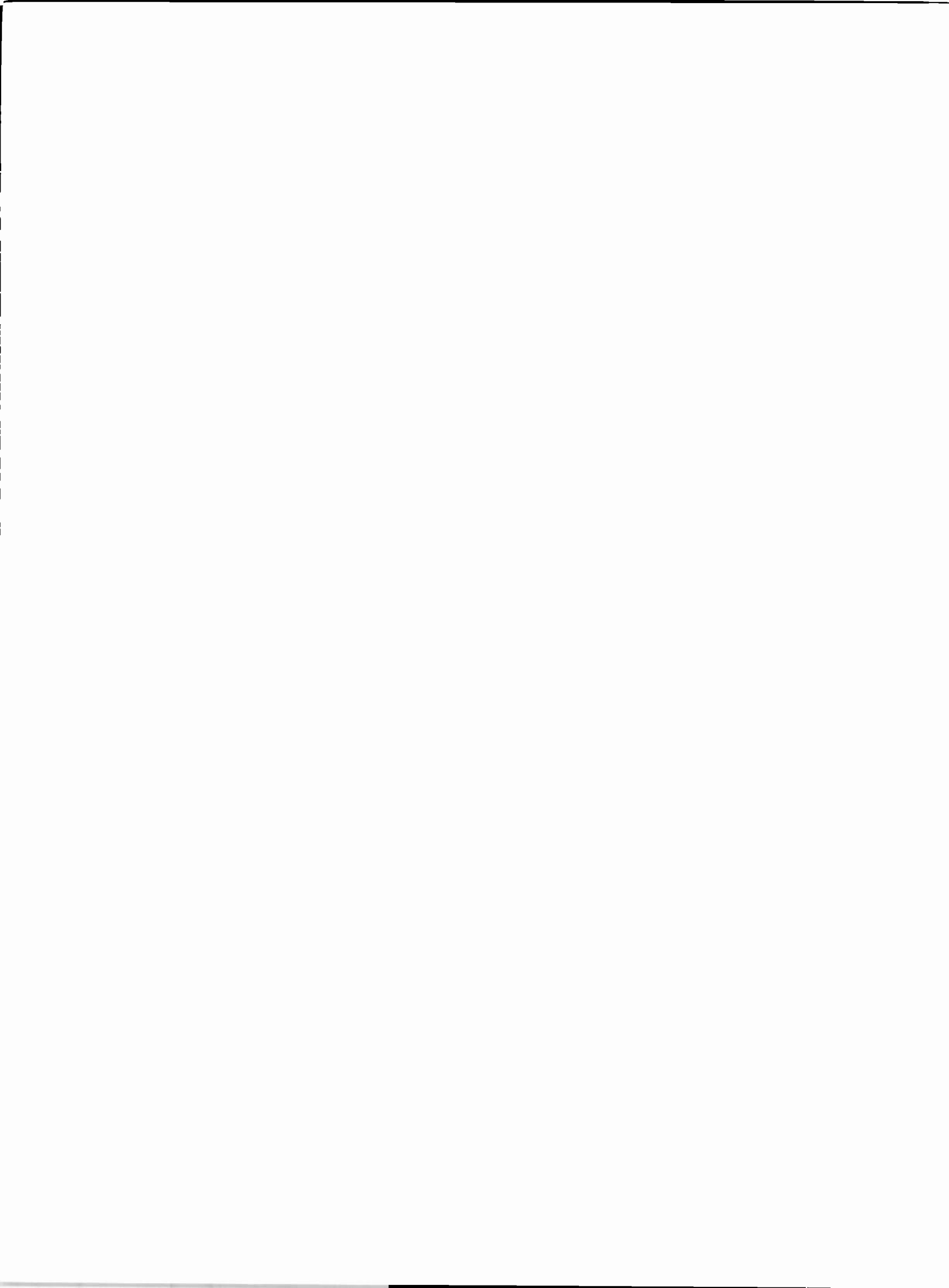
Name _____

Date _____

3-D cont'd.

7. Mrs. Jolene Smith was elected president of the Central Valley Chamber of Commerce last night. Mrs. Smith has been a member of the chamber for 12 years. She is the first woman president in the 48-year history of the chamber. Mrs. Smith is owner of the Campus Book Shop. She and her husband, Stan, moved to Central Valley 15 years ago from Minneapolis. The 42-year-old Mrs. Smith has two children in Central Valley University—Tom, a 19-year-old sophomore, and Ted, an 18-year-old freshman. She will be installed at the chamber's annual banquet next Thursday at the Ramada Inn.

8. United Fund Executive Director Paul Simmons said today that Henry Brown will head this year's fund drive that begins in October. Goals for the new year will be set by the executive committee at their next meeting. Brown is president of the Union National Bank and former state senator.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-D cont'd.

9. Search for 10-year-old Betsy Dill was called off this morning when the child's mother Mrs. Rowene Dill called police to say an aunt had called to say that Betsy had come to spend the weekend. Police had been searching the canyon near the Dill home at 4234 Western Drive.

10. Central Valley University will host a hearing and speech conference next week, according to CVU Conference Director Walter Bates. Mr. Bates expects about 25 clinical specialists for the three-day meeting which begins Monday.

3-D cont'd.

11. The state highway budget was approved by the legislature yesterday. The \$37 million budget contains funds for three new four-lane highways in the state. One of the highways will be a 10-mile stretch of U.S. 287 that runs through Central Valley. \$8.6 million was appropriated for construction to begin on that section. It will require additional funds from next year's budget to complete the project, according to highway director, Stan Cass. The governor is expected to sign the bill, an executive office spokesman said.

12. Dr. Floyd Waits, internationally known economist, will speak to the Rotary Club tomorrow about the inflationary spiral in the nation's economy. Dr. Waits, former chief of the presidential economic advisers, is now distinguished professor of economics at Texas University. Rotary Club president Alex Clark said the luncheon has been moved to the Palace Ballroom and opened to the public for \$150 a plate.

Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-E

Directions: Write news stories from the following facts. If, however, you feel the facts are not newsworthy enough to write a story, tell why not. If you could choose five of the stories for tonight's 5-minute radio newscast, which five would you include?

1. The Board of Realtors met in their monthly meeting last night. They meet at Upton's Steak House. The realtors discussed the finances for the group. Considerable discussion was also held concerning the current spiraling interest in real estate, according to Mike Adams, president of the group.

2. A majority of the House Ways and Means Committee is tentatively supporting a proposed \$10 billion income tax cut. This is well below the \$24 billion tax cut asked by the president. The committee's proposal, though, contains a \$4 billion rollback in social security taxes that the president's package does not include. Rep. Al Ulman, D-Oregon, has been pushing the compromise bill. He believes he has the necessary votes to get it out the committee. "There isn't total unanimity among the Democrats," he said, however. He hopes the committee will approve the bill sometime the early part of next week.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-E cont'd.

3. Preliminary results from the Democratic precinct caucuses in Collins County resulted in a total of 382 delegates selected to the county assembly next Saturday. The assembly will be held at the high school auditorium. About 2/3 of the delegates chosen were uncommitted. The present lieutenant governor received only three delegates in support of his candidacy.

4. Gov. Ted Locke vetoed the state legislature's major air pollution bill today, terming it "unworkable," but saying the necessity for rejecting the measure was "tragic." He said that he feared if the bill went into law it might conflict with federal requirements and could lead to federal take-over of the state program. The Democratic governor failed to mention that in this election year the measure was supported and passed by the Republican-controlled legislature.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-E cont'd.

5. Robert R. Rankin, 63, chairman of the board at Union National Bank, died at Central Valley Memorial Hospital early today of heart disease. Private funeral services will be held at Goodwin Funeral Home Wednesday. He stepped down as bank president three months ago, but retained his position as chairman of the board. He planned to retire from that at the end of this year.

6. Dedication activities for the new mall have been postponed due to the 12-inch snow storm that hit Central Valley yesterday. They have been rescheduled for next Saturday.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-E cont'd.

7. Two area women have been charged with three counts of vehicular homicide. The charges come from a car accident in which a man and two of his children were killed. Charged in the Collins County District Court were Melody S. Melanson and Tina Lou Lambert, both of 501 Maple St. They are also charged with leaving the scene of an accident. The accident occurred four miles south of Central Valley on U.S. 287 and Hatchell Road.

8. An autopsy report has determined that the two DiVece girls killed in last week's rape/murder case in Central Valley died as a result of severe head injuries. Both girls were sexually molested the report showed. Investigators continue to search for a male suspect, approximately six feet tall with medium complexion who was last seen with the girls a couple of hours before their deaths. Ann DiVece and her sister Melinda had gone to the Spartan Hotel Lounge. Witnesses saw them leave with the suspect in a light brown sedan about 2 a.m. Their bodies were found early the next morning on a deserted road near the lake.



Exercises
Chapter 3

Name _____

Date _____

3-E cont'd.

9. The FBI may bring charges in a 10-state white slavery ring uncovered first in Lexington, KY, according to the Kentucky state FBI director, Arthur Beel. About 70 prostitutes are thought to be involved with 18 of the 70 suspected of managing the operation. Indictments are expected sometime tomorrow.

10. The discovery of a 60-70 foot Sauropod dinosaur in New Mexico close to Las Vegas "will add to our knowledge about the geographic distribution" of dinosaurs. No dinosaur of this age had been discovered as far south as New Mexico, according to paleontologist Dr. Robert Kuner. It was discovered in an arroyo by a class of students from the University of New Mexico.



4

Features

If you have any interest in people to begin with, you can stick a pin in the map, go there, and find an interesting story.

Charles Kuralt, CBS News

People fascinate people. We imitate them, listen in on their conversations, secretly admire their accomplishments and watch in awe at their goings-on. What is it about people that “tickles our fancy” so much? For one thing, we all share a sympathetic interest in what life does to us and for us. At newstime, we don’t listen to the news and watch it only for the big stories of the day. We want to hear the “little happenings” too, the scandal, the gossip, the humor in the lives of others. The news is full of stories every day about heroism, tragedy, greed, winning and losing — events that lead broadcast journalism so naturally to the feature story.

Features are “soft news,” stories about people and things that interest people. They are stories your audience can feel something about and become involved in — stories that entertain and inform. They help keep life in perspective by showing us how other people cope with life, and sometimes they remind us that life isn’t all bad news, after all.

FEATURE SOURCES

An old man living in Space Age America still farms with horses just outside New York City. A lion tamer takes his cats to lunch at a drive-in hamburger stand. Whatever became of all the bomb shelters that were constructed in back yards in the frenzied 50s? How does the old-age pensioner get along without electricity in her home? Such subjects are the heart of a good feature.

If you are alert to life, interested in people and the things they do, you can identify dozens of potential features. Most important is your ability to supply a fresh perspective to events that seem common and ordinary to the average person. The mark of any creative writer is to see the unusual in the commonplace. It’s a capability that comes from learning all you can about everything in life, and from an intense interest in other people.

FEATURE VS. STRAIGHT NEWS STORY

The difference in writing straight news and features is basically one of approach. The straight news story usually follows the Four-W’s approach: the who, what, when and where. Feature reporting also covers the Four-W’s, but often it deals with the “why” of the story and

tries to speak to the consequences of events. Consider, for example, the following news story and then see how it might be treated as a feature story.

Straight News Story

Figures released today by the Federal government show that inflation rose another one and one-half percent last month, for an annual rate of 18 percent per year. Officials say the biggest inflationary gains occurred in housing costs, up nearly 14 percent since the beginning of the year. Officials say that at current rates of inflation, single-family dwellings may soon be priced beyond the incomes of most middle-class Americans.

Feature Story

For the last four months, the James Casey family has been camped in this tent just outside Philadelphia. With four children to feed and more than a thousand dollars in unpaid bills . . . James Casey is among more than eight million unemployed Americans.

Disaster overtook the Caseys in a series of measured steps. First, auto sales fell off at the assembly plant where Casey worked as a journeyman welder. That led to temporary layoffs. The Caseys fell behind in their house payments. Then serious illness struck their youngest child. The medical bills grew. And then one day, Casey opened an envelope at work. It contained his final check and a notice of termination. The Caseys lost their house and each day they hope against hope that a new job will come along. For now their tent is home. They can afford no other, and at nightfall when the kerosene lamps are lit, the Caseys know the true meaning of what it is to hear that once again last month . . . inflation rose another one and one-half percent or 18 percent a year.

The basic difference in the two stories is one of approach. The first story has a standard news approach that tells about inflation in abstract figures. The second approach, the feature story, tries to evoke some human emotion as it focuses on a single family to illustrate the consequences of inflation.

THE FEATURE STORY

The most memorable television feature reports reflect a skillful blend of both art and craft — that magical combination of words and pictures, sound and content. Generally, reports that contain most of the following elements will produce the strongest feature stories.

- Always remember: The Reporter is not the story.
- A lead that instantly telegraphs the story to come.
- A script free of information that viewers already would know.
- Strong, natural sound to lend the story added realism.
- Historical perspective that defines the story's larger context.
- A point of view.
- A strong, central character or characters engaged in compelling action that is visual or picturesque.
- An element of the unexpected.
- Short sound-bites (interviews or other shots of people talking on screen) that act to enhance and prove the story you are showing.
- No more than two or three main points in the story.
- A strong closing element that the story builds toward throughout its entirety.

A CONVERSATION WITH NBC NEWS CORRESPONDENT BOB DOTSON

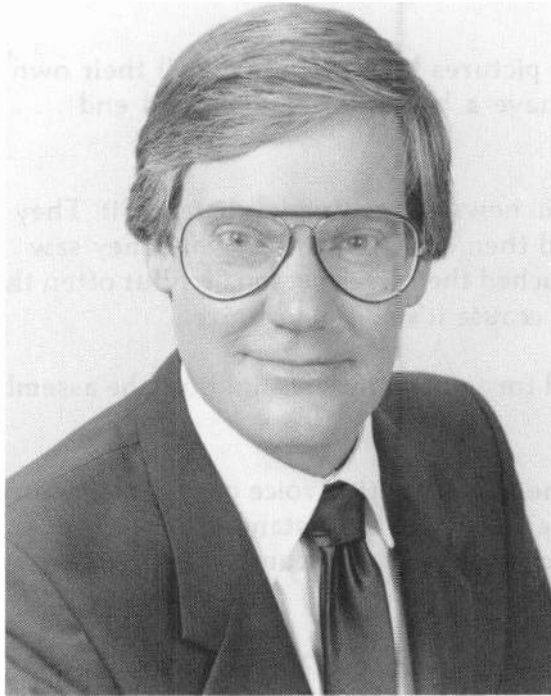


Figure 4-1. Bob Dotson.

NBC News Correspondent Bob Dotson likes people, and that trait is one of the secrets behind his success as a reporter for NBC News. "I like to get out and shake peoples' hands and talk to them, then go back and write about it," says Dotson. "Most of my stories are about regular folks you wouldn't mind having in your kitchen for a few minutes.

With a rare ability to blend writing and pictures into extraordinary reports of off-beat people and events, Dotson has won more than 35 awards — among them an Emmy Award and the Robert F. Kennedy Award for Outstanding Television Program. Each week, on average, Dotson prepares a 3- to 5-minute human interest story — an effort that may require up to four days of videotaping in the field and as much as 20 hours of editing time. He is supported by a full-time researcher, a producer, camera crew and videotape editor.

While his stories are seldom about earth-shattering events, they inevitably have the power to fascinate, and they offer further proof that most news stories contain the ingredients for feature treatment.

A cross section of Dotson's reporting is featured in his book, *In Pursuit of the American Dream*. In the following interview, Dotson shares his feelings about television news and his approach to the feature story.

Q: One of the hallmarks of your reports is your ability to pinpoint an event or a person and build a story. What accounts for your ability to get to the heart of the story?

Dotson: It seems to me that our craft is at its best when it shows people to other people, when it finds some common threads and breaks down some ignorance. Part of the job in writing a story is to be as fair and wide-ranging as possible. But people sell the story, so I try to find stories that have a strong, central character who can illuminate the larger issue.

Say the cost of living index went up last month. We could use statistics from a handout somebody gave us, show the sides of some building and say the cost of living is up. But this approach never says how the story really affects the viewer. I try to find that one person who can illustrate what inflation means — a strong, central character who can carry the story, someone who is doing something visual.

Q: You're saying that the learned expert who can explain inflation in technical terms doesn't always make good television.

Dotson: I think reporters have to remember that pictures have a language all their own in television, and that every piece should have a beginning, middle and end . . . in pictures as well as in script.

Lots of people do "slice-of-life" television in news and few people listen to it. They sit there and watch a half-hour of news, and then can't remember what they saw . . . maybe a point here or there because it touched their lives personally. But often they don't remember style in television news because it's all homogenized.

Q: They're what some journalists have called formula stories, straight off the assembly line.

Dotson: A lot of network stories, if you analyze them, start with a voice over some pictures, cut to an interview, then go to a little more voice over and a standup close. That's the formula. How can viewers remember such stories if they contain no surprises, no turns of the corner, nothing they didn't already know?

Q: How do you avoid that same problem in your own reports?

Dotson: First, I try never to put up with any nonsense from myself. After I write the script, I go back through it, and I look for what I call the "gimmees" — the truisms that people already know. If you're harsh with yourself, you get to the point of the story. And in television you must get to the point quickly . . . no cutsey-ness, no pyramid style — just get to the point. Almost every television story that fails, when you analyze it, fails because the lead is buried 35 or 40 seconds into the story.

Q: Sometimes you may spend all day on a story and come back with eight hours of information and a notebook full of facts. At what point do you begin to write the story?

Dotson: The thing is to realize you have eight hours of information. That's the research side of reporting, but that isn't the writing. The writing side is to look back at all that information and ask, "What are the two or three things I learned today that are important?" Once I know those main points, I can build the story around them. If you cram the story too full of facts, you'll miss the central issue. It will get lost in all those facts.

Q: You've given talks to professional journalists on "When *Not* to Write." What's a good example of that technique?

Dotson: I remember three stations that offered a classic example of the spectrum of approaches to television news. The story involved a Senate candidate who piloted his own plane and had to crash-land because of engine trouble. All three stations sent camera operators to film the landing. The first station talked the guy down: "Behind me, the plane you see is in terrible trouble . . ." The second station told us in the intro that the pilot landed safely, then said, "This is how it looked," as they rolled film. The third station said, "A Senate candidate encountered some scary moments today when

he tried to land at municipal airport.” At that point the film played and there was a little 10 seconds of film where the reporter didn’t say another word until the candidate popped his head out of the cockpit and said, “I’m okay.”

I’m not saying any approach is better than the other, but I prefer those little moments of drama in stories that will pull viewers to the TV set if I just stop talking and let the visuals run. It’s the same reason you build a beginning, middle and ending in any story — just those little dramatic moments — that’s when television is at its best.

Q: Most television stories need some kind of excitement, something unusual that people don’t expect. As a reporter, how do you persuade the viewer to turn his head and look at the television screen?

Dotson: I always go to a little extra effort to use natural sound, for one thing. I also use very short sound-bites, maybe just a line or two. Often they won’t run more than eight or nine seconds.

I look for the little moments when the person forgets he’s on television and is really saying something, where he’s adding the little exclamation point to bring your attention to the story.

The sound-bite should prove what you’ve shown about the story and perhaps said in the script. The biggest thing, then, is the natural sound or the unusual picture.

Q: When you arrive at a story, what is the first thing you do?

Dotson: The first thing I do, the very first thing, is look for a closing shot. If I don’t know where I’m going, I might have all kinds of nice scenes but they won’t build to anything. You can always recognize the close because that’s where you put the period and put the pencil down. You know there’s nothing that will top that little piece of footage. If you find the close, everything else will build to that.

Q: What else do you look for when you arrive at the story?

Dotson: I bring a notebook filled with boxes to check off. It’s almost like a pilot’s checklist: standup interview with this guy, shot of sun coming over the mountain, boy whistling like siren. The story is already blocked out. Now the story could change at any time, but at least it’s in a form on two or three pages of paper. Another reason I carry the checklist is because a crew’s time on the road is so expensive. It just takes too much time to shoot footage you may not need if you’re not sure where the story is headed.

Q: When you go into people’s homes to cover stories, how do you put people at ease?

Dotson: The process begins when our researcher calls the person. If the story still looks promising at that point, our producer calls. We have little telltale signs to figure out whether folks are going to work out in terms of personality and willingness. We check them out and by the time we arrive, we’re not really strangers. They still expect Hollywood to walk through the door when we arrive, but we leave the camera in the truck. We just wander in and have coffee with them. We sit down like we have all the

time in the world. We might even walk outside and see their rose garden, and gradually we just ease into their routine.

As soon as we can, we put a small wireless microphone on them so that they can become used to the microphone and forget about it. We do everything we can to put them at ease. If we're going to tape in the living room, we'll have the lights up an hour before they come into the room. At first they say, "Oh my, the lights are so bright," but soon they forget the lights. We also try never to use direct light. Our crews also have developed a set of unwritten rules and eye and hand signals, so that we can avoid that very disruptive Hollywood stuff, like "Roll 'em," "Speed," "You're on," "Stand by, please," and all that. The trick is to be perceptive about people and even when you're in a hurry, never to let them know. Pretty soon they're having fun.

Another thing, we never let anyone know they've done something wrong. One time a guy crushed a \$600 wireless microphone in his car door. "Fine, no problem," we said, because if he starts worrying about the production, we've lost him.

Q: Your approach, then, is simply to help people feel comfortable about being on television, and to help them forget they're on camera.

Dotson: That's right. I try not to come on as someone who already understands. If they figure you need some help, they'll warm up and present their point more clearly. Never talk through your questions without the camera. If the subject explains ahead of time, he'll leave out all the detail on camera — because you already know.

If his answer doesn't have the strength it should, say nothing. He'll realize by your silence that his point didn't register and he'll fill the void — usually with a stronger re-statement. You don't always have to jump in with a follow-up question. Silence can be just as effective.

Q: How do you feel about editing a sound-bite by reconstructing it to give it more impact?

Dotson: The trick is whether you are moving it around fairly. It's wrong to provide false impact. If you put applause after a speech that comes from some other point in the speech, that's wrong. But there's absolutely nothing wrong in editing someone's bite to make him clear, not to change the emphasis or meaning, but to give the bite a little push toward clarity. It's accepted practice to take the first six words of a statement and the last three and cut out the digressions in between. By leaving the digression in, you obscure what the person wants to say. You're not doing him any service and you're not doing your viewers any service.

Q: You said once that in order to survive as a reporter, you look for the small victories. What did you mean?

Dotson: You find a shot that worked; you write a sentence that worked. This time you covered the story a little differently and it worked. Television journalism is nothing but details, and each detail that you have under control is one more building block in the reporting process.

Q: Someday, when you hang up your typewriter and reflect back on your career, how would you like your work to be remembered?

Dotson: I really believe that these stories, not the great sweep of history but stories about ordinary folks who have an extraordinary effect on others, these small stories will be of prime importance to historians.

Too often in network news we content ourselves with showing politicians getting on and off airplanes. Fifty to a hundred years from now not much on network news will reflect how we lived in the 1980s . . . how regular folks coped day to day.

Back in the 30s when a lot of filmmakers and writers and photographers were out of work, they were hired by the government to go out and record the ordinary activities of life. Their body of work has proved to be of immeasurable importance long after the film clips of politicians stepping on and off railroad cars have crumbled in neglect.

TELLING THE FEATURE STORY

It's been said, "There are no dull subjects, only dull writers." Good feature writing presupposes you have an overwhelming interest in people. It is this interest in people — and sometimes in places and things — that allows you to write interesting stories about almost any subject.

Feature writing by definition is a more personal form of journalism than most reporting, more intimate in its expression, which in turn allows you more freedom to decide story treatment, emphasis and tone.

FEATURE WRITING HINTS

Few rules govern the style or form of the feature, but you will usually need some kind of angle if you are reporting about subjects not well-known to your audience. The angle can be as simple as an emphasis on the unusual in which you give your audience a little surprise:

Jonathan David lives in Fargo, North Dakota. He's just starting third grade and says by Christmas he'll know how to read. Nothing unusual there, except that Jonathan is 81, and he says it's hard to run a business these days without some "book learning."

Besides your angle, you will need a treatment that is appropriate for the subject — a way to establish the tone of your story. As a feature writer you are a storyteller, a "show and tell" expert who draws in the audience by revealing, tidbit by tidbit, the fascinating story you have to tell.

As a storyteller, you can drop straight news style and concentrate on what some writers call the "anecdotal" approach. In your story lead, you set up interest and make the audience hungry to learn more of what you have to tell. Like the master storyteller, you tease and delay (while still keeping your story simple and concise) until finally you drop the punchline.

When you avoid typical news style, your writing can become more conversational, more casual than normal. You have set out not merely to inform, but to entertain. As your story unfolds, you reveal its various elements of human interest and emphasize them for maximum audience interest and understanding of the larger issue about which you are reporting.

During his tenure as *On the Road* reporter for CBS News, Charles Kuralt has elevated the feature story to the status of art form. His secret is a blend of writing and pictures that form extraordinary reports of commonplace events. In the following excerpt from an interview at CBS News in New York, Kuralt was asked about his ability to make commonplace events so memorable.



Figure 4-2. Charles Kuralt, CBS News Correspondent, is a master of TV news features.

(Photo Courtesy of CBS News)

CHARLES KURALT DISCUSSES FEATURE REPORTING

It helps to be interested in the subject to begin with. I see the work of young reporters, occasionally, who I'm sure are more interested in how their questions will come out, than in the subject. I think it helps not to come on like a big-time television personality. I think it's probably good advice to have more interest in the subject than you have in yourself when you go out to a job.

I've found that if you hem and haw a little bit in asking your question, maybe even half intentionally, it puts the fellow at ease, especially if he's somebody who's never been on television before. What you're trying to do, of course, is make him forget the necessary lights and cameras and microphones and all that, and just be himself. And he'll reach that state of grace a lot faster, of course, if he's not overwhelmed by this big shot standing there with a microphone in his hand.

I try to keep myself in the background. Often I don't even appear on camera. I think you should appear on camera once in a while to remind people what you look like even if you're not very prepossessing, as I am not, but I hate to see young reporters end their brief reports on camera. There's always a better ending than that. Some little moment with which you can leave the viewer to make him feel something about this story. He's going to feel nothing about this fellow standing on camera, ending his report and giving his name.

To the extent that you can in television, I think it's a good idea to keep yourself in the background — fulfill the old and honorable duty of the reporter, which is to be the person in the back of the room taking notes.

Excerpted and edited from an interview conducted by Kuralt's former associate radio news producer Don Kinney. Used with their permission. (New York, 1978)

4-A

1. Research and write a feature story on one of the following topics, or a similar subject of your choice. If you choose your own topic, secure permission from your instructor before developing the story:
 - identify a strong central character for your feature story who illuminates a larger issue. Find individuals who BUILD, STRIVE, ACHIEVE, TRIUMPH, OVERCOME, or otherwise distinguish themselves through their accomplishments. Be certain the person is engaged in compelling, visual activities that help to illuminate the Central message.
 - how streets are named in your community
 - how many private solar homes and businesses have been constructed in the last five years, and how efficient they appear to be, compared with conventional heating and cooling systems
 - what has happened with all the bomb shelters built in the 1950s and early 1960s. Are they being kept up, what uses have they been put to, etc.

2. Identify and list 10 potential feature stories in your community. Write a 1½ minute feature story for broadcast on at least two of the topics you have identified. Imagine you have your choice of visuals to work with.

Note: If you or other members of the class can shoot videotape and have access to equipment, arrange to shoot and edit a visual piece to accompany your script.

Arrange a day in class for presentation, discussion and critique of your feature stories and/or videotape.

Based on class critiques, submit the best feature or features from the class to a local TV station for possible use on a news broadcast.

3. Watch feature stories on television. Determine which subjects, visual elements, word combinations and treatments in your view make the best feature stories. Discuss your findings in class.

To make this assignment more meaningful, you may wish to invite a local reporter/photographer team to speak in class on story coverage and discuss how the team covers feature stories.

4. Secure access to a county map of your area, select a location, go there, dig out and write a story suitable for broadcast.
5. Using the classified ads from your newspaper, identify at least three subjects that would be worthy of feature treatment. Using the classified ad as your starting point, write a feature story suitable for broadcast.

Note: It will be necessary for you to use in-field research, using the ad as your starting point, to fulfill this assignment.

6. Compare the coverage of feature news on local stations with those on your favorite network news. Identify common types of stories found on network news versus local news broadcasts. Discuss your findings in class, along with a general discussion of the value of feature material in local news broadcasts.

Exercise
Chapter 4

Name _____

Date _____

4-B

1. Write a kicker (last story of the newcast that leaves the audience smiling) from the following facts:

It's bad enough, maybe, for anyone to be named "Pigg," but it is especially difficult for a police officer such as Roland L. Pigg of Paducah, Kentucky. After much agonizing and a lot of trouble, Pigg has legally changed his last name to "Page." "People would either hang up or giggle when I would answer the phone at headquarters," he said, "because I would say, 'Hello, this is Officer Pigg.'" Someday, Page said, he would like to be chief of police and he asked how it would sound walking up to people and announcing, "Hello, there, I'm Chief Pigg of Paducah." He said it would sound silly.

(WRITE YOUR STORY HERE IN BROADCAST STYLE)

Feature Exercises
Chapter 4

Name _____

Date _____

4-C

Directions: First, write a straight news lead for each set of facts. Then, write a feature lead. Finally, write a feature story for each set of facts.

1. Tim Parsons, 5-year-old boy, saw a squirrel in his back yard, this morning about 8:30. He chased the squirrel up his large pecan tree. Tim followed the squirrel as far as he could up the tree, but the squirrel leaped into another tree in the neighbor's yard. Tim had gone so far that he was stuck. Firemen were called at 9:45 a.m. to come get Tim out of the tree. Tim's mother and father were at work, but a babysitter, Ellen Ditmer, called the firemen when she couldn't get him out of the tree.

Feature Exercises
Chapter 4

Name _____

Date _____

4-C cont'd.

2. Police received a call yesterday to retrieve a stray pig. Mrs. Rose Watkins told police that she was watering her front lawn when a pig appeared. When police arrived, however, the pig had gone. Two people, Walt and Theresa Ray, had seen it heading for Central Ave. about LaPorte St., though. Three squad cars were summoned to find the pig. About two hours later Patrolman Tom C. Riley spotted the pig going into a vacant lot. He chased it on foot, tried to tackle it, but ended up in the dirt. Two other patrolmen helped and Riley finally cornered it near the fence in the next yard. Riley suffered minor lacerations and a bruised thigh. The owner, E. R. Rucker, was ticketed for letting a non-domestic animal run free in the city. The pig had slipped out an open gate at the Rucker's house.

4-C cont'd.

3. An accident at 1726 E. Roseberry caused approximately \$21,000 damage to a service station and two parked cars. The Valley View Mobil Station was damaged when Terry McClendon of 4050 Kingsville Ave. drove away from the station's gas pumps and caught the loop of a hose on the front bumper of her car, pulling the gas pump over and rupturing the gas pipes. Electrical wires were also pulled loose causing a fire which spread to three other pumps and a nearby car of station manager, Dale Philpot. Heat from the fire also caused heat damage to the car of Ray Reguso. Damage to the station was estimated at \$18,000 and to the Philpot car of \$2,500, and and \$500 to Reguso's vehicle.

Feature Exercises
Chapter 4

Name _____

Date _____

4-C cont'd.

4. More than 59,000 diamonds have been taken from North America's only diamond mine in Murfreesboro, Ark., since the first stone was found in 1906. The first stone was found by John Huddleston who owned the 78-acre field. Finders are keepers at the state park that is now on the site. It was purchased by the state in 1972 after several unsuccessful attempts at commercial mining. Finds have included the 40.42 carat Uncle Sam, the 34.25 carat Star of Murfreesboro, and the 15.25 carat Star of Arkansas.

4-C cont'd.

5. House and Home magazine reports that sale of homes to singles is on the rise. Singles are making the decision as both an economic and an emotional reason. Emotionally, they seem to want to own their own soil. Economically, they want a tax break and a chance to build equity. The magazine indicates that the young singles are more mature than the ones of the early 1970's who flocked to swinging-single apartments. Figures indicate there is a 34 percent increase in buying among this segment of the population today over 10 years ago.

6. Forty-one families are being evicted from their trailer park just outside of town. Joyland Trailer Court was closed by the county because of improper sewage facilities. "There is no joy at Joyland today," Mrs. Mary Peelle said today as the 200 people were being evicted from their park. The septic system was overloaded and the city refused to extend sewer lines to the park. Clement Reynolds was dismantling a fence around his home. Pointing to a nearby pecan tree, Reynolds said, "We can take the fence, but not the tree I planted 15 years ago."

5

Scripting Visuals

One good word is worth a thousand pictures.
Eric Sevareid

Words-only carry the story in radio. In television, pictures carry the story, with words serving to interpret and explain. So heavy is the visual impact of television that stations commonly rebate 75 percent of airtime cost should the picture portion of a commercial be lost during broadcast. If only the sound is lost, the advertiser receives a 25 percent refund. Similarly, in television news, pictures carry great impact. In the best television news, words support visuals; it's no contest.

You may remember that most half-hour television newscasts contain fewer words than appear on the front page of many newspapers. This adage overlooks the tremendous amount of information that film and videotape deliver. Watch any TV newscast with the volume turned down and observe how much information you could translate into words from the visuals. If you wrote down every detail — height, weight, sex, age, facial features of every person in the news; descriptions of events and activities portrayed on television — how quickly your diary would swell.

Nevertheless, television without words has limited story-telling ability. Silent pictures seldom tell you the names of people in the news, what direction streets run, how long firemen have been on the scene, or the complexities of a legal story; nor can they give you weather forecasts, sports statistics, or abstract concepts of much substance. Because of such limitations, television demands two sets of information — a set of words and a set of pictures. Learning how to marry the two takes skill . . . and time.

WRITING TO THE PICTURE

When you write for television, pictures rule much of your script. The length and structure of the visual story determine how long the script can be, and sometimes in what order your information is presented. Your copy must have flow, as usual, since it will still be heard, and it must not “fight” pictures that are on the screen.

PREVIEW THE VIDEOTAPE (VTR)

The process of writing television copy begins with a preview of the videotape *before editing* if possible. The preview helps you in two ways — it alerts you to possible treatments of the news based on the visuals you have to work with, and it lets you know what information

you must put in words and which can be carried by the visuals alone. Almost always you can glean ideas for the lead and body of your script as you preview the visuals. Ideally, the story should be assigned a maximum length, then edited according to how the scenes work best together *before* the script is written. This practice is often unrealistic when you are rushed for time, however, and the script may have to be written first with visuals then cut to the script. The writer should also be aware that videotape scenes have a life of their own at the editing console and the individual scenes brought back from a story quite often suggest their own order — or the one way they work best together — during the editing process. Because of the creative nature of editing, most editors would prefer a free hand in cutting the story compared with the frustrations of artificially forcing visuals to fit a script. This becomes especially true if the writer has never seen the pictures and has no notion of how they might fit best together. Too often when this process is ignored, the newscast has the look of a poorly produced slide show.

THE BREAKDOWN SHEET OR SHOT CARD

The breakdown sheet or shot card (figure 5-1) contains a list of each scene in the edited piece, its length and a brief description of content. The breakdown sheet can be prepared either from the edited videotape or from the news script before visuals are cut. In either case, the breakdown helps match words to pictures.

BREAKDOWN SHEET

Photographer: _____

Reporter: _____

SUBJECT: _____

Date: _____

SCENE	SHOT LENGTH	ACCUM. TIME	COMMENTS
1	:04	:04	Long shot of fairgrounds with steam engine visible
2	:11	:15	Man taps throttle, series of rapid cuts shows machine speeding up, belt running, etc.
3	:03	:18	Man feeds bundles of oats into thresher
4	:02	:20	Cutaway showing old timers
5	:05	:25	Old-time tractors
6	:06	:31	Threshing machine and man operating it
7	:08	:39	Smoke pours from thresher; man in T shirt pitches oats into hopper
8	:05	:44	Straw shoots onto pile

Figure 5-1. The breakdown sheet shows the videotape editor scene order and length so the edited story will conform more closely to news copy.

WRITE LOOSE

The script must be written to exact time limits, because if it is too fat, the videotape will go to black before the newscaster has finished reading the story.

If anything, you should *underwrite* scripts that accompany visuals. Few elements of the newscast are as distracting as the constant chatter of a newscaster's voice over powerful, dramatic visuals. There is no law against discreet pauses in the copy, and pauses can be included as an element of the script. Avoid too much detail in your copy; your audience will never remember it anyway. Instead, concentrate on delivering impressions and let your visuals tell as much of the story as possible.

AVOID THE OBVIOUS

Anyone who writes for television can profit from the advice of creative writers. The best writers deliver just enough detail to stimulate your imagination. They allow you to think, instead of telling you what to think.

Such an approach allows the viewer to supply information from past experience, and hence to participate more directly in the vicarious experiences of television news. Edward R. Murrow became a legend because of his simple, precise reporting. One night during a World War II blackout in London, he remembered, "It was so dark I walked bang into a cow and she seemed glad to see me." Another time he reported, after accompanying a bombing raid to Berlin, "The clouds formed castles and battlements in the sky." Murrow used few adjectives, yet his writing was descriptive.

The same techniques can be used when writing to videotape. Supply only the information that the visuals cannot. Don't use words that may create an image in the mind that conflicts with images on the television screen. Avoid the obvious. (Is the governor's wife really "vivacious"?) If your tape shows tired people standing in long lines outside the unemployment office, there is no need to tell your viewers how weary the waiting people are; the tape will *show* their fatigue.

Similarly, you should never say in your script "shown here, seen here, as you can see, etc." Save such lines for the times when you haul out your vacation slides and home movies. How much more effective it is merely to "set up" your viewer, then let the visuals tell the story.

Perhaps you have videotape of Miss America's arrival in your area on a windy day. As she steps from the plane and descends the steps, a gust of wind blows off her hat and frazzles her hair, and a piece of wind-blown paper wraps around her neck. Surely, as footage of these scenes is rolling that night on your newscast, you could say something to the effect, "High winds tore off Miss America's hat as she emerged from the plane, then wind-blown trash again assaulted her as she came down the steps." But consider how much more elegant your writing will be if you say, just before we see Miss America emerge from the plane, "The wind played tricks on Miss America from the moment she arrived," followed by momentary SILENCE as the tape tells its own story and lets us see for ourselves what happened.

What we're saying then, is to write in your script what the visuals can't say, and NOTHING MORE. To subvert Mark Twain's advice as to the adjective, "When in doubt, leave it out," we would say as to excess words in the news script, "When in doubt, leave them out."

CUE WORDS TO PICTURES

When you must identify people or objects in the visual story, the words must be cued to pictures as closely as possible. Your script must be exactly on cue, for example, when a close-up

shot of a newsmaker appears on the screen. In this manner, the person's name will be voiced on air just as the person's picture appears. Or, you might have a shot of a murder weapon being held up for display by a police officer. The image will tell your audience the murder weapon is a gun, but not what caliber it is or the fact that it was stolen hours earlier from a pawn shop just down the street.

SCRIPT FORMATS

Script formats vary from station to station, so the following examples are shown only for your reference. Almost all television scripts follow the split page format, however, and most differences between the various formats will be strictly cosmetic.

To set up your typewriter for the television script, whether for copy to be read live or for voice-over visuals, set the left margin stop at 15 and the right margin stop at 75. Set tab stops at 40 and 45 spaces and double space all copy. If you indent the news copy five spaces, while keeping the left margin of your copy at 40 spaces, each full line of copy will average two seconds. Count anything more than half lines as two seconds, but don't count anything under a half line. Timing your copy is then as simple as adding up all lines that are more than one-half line in length, and multiplying by two seconds to arrive at total reading time.

The *director's instructions*, on the left side of the page, are written in ALL CAPS. News copy on the right side of the page is written in CAPS AND LOWER CASE. In this manner, the newscaster will know immediately whether Red China refers to the country or to a set of dishes and can distinguish at a glance between copy and director's instructions.

Scripts for most short stories (20 to 30 seconds) can be written on a single page. Most scripts contain a short, on-camera lead that introduces the story and sets up the viewer for the tape that follows. The show will look choppy and lack proper flow if you consistently begin visuals and story narrative together. The practice is acceptable from time to time, such as when you lead live with a related story, then cut directly to videotape and begin reading the new but related copy. Otherwise, you can safely assume that viewers will be comfortable with the regular pattern of a brief, five- to six-second lead-in before the newstape appears on screen.

SILENT VTR FORMAT

LIVE:

Just last week, two other planes crashed into the same mountain . . . earning it the new name, Nevada Triangle.

VTR SIL:

:22

Any similarity to the Bermuda Triangle ends with the name. Mount Diablo is in desert country, a day's walk from civilization.

Search crews wandered the area for two days this week before they picked up signals from the plane's crash locator.

Two F-A-A officials suffered heat stroke and were evacuated after daytime temperatures reached 120 degrees.

Old timers call the area unfit for man and warn . . . enter at your own peril.

END VTR:

Notice that the designation "LIVE" tells the director the newscaster is to appear on screen while reading the accompanying story. VTR SIL gives the director the source of the visual (silent videotape). The reference :22 gives the running time of the tape, and the direction "END VTR" warns the director when to punch out of the story. Notice that the script contains no reference to individual videotape shots, their length or content.

If you are scripting only sound-on-tape (SOT), your script format changes slightly.

SOUND VTR FORMAT

LIVE: Just last week, two other planes crashed

into the same mountain . . . earning it the new

name, Nevada Triangle. Old timers say the

mountain has claimed other lives in its time, but

not because the peak has any mystical powers.

VTR SOT:

:26

(OUTCUE: ". . . what happens when you get

careless.")

SUPER NAME: SAM TUCKER

LIVE:

The search resumes tomorrow for the three

missing planes.

In this example, the live lead-in introduces sound-on-tape which runs :26. The director is alerted that the videotape ends on the words ". . . what happens when you get careless" and that the newscaster comes back live after the VTR to wrap up the story with a standard "tag" as discussed in Chapter 7, Art and Craft of the Interview. Notice the speaker's name is supered on the screen during the interview to avoid the need for identification in the lead. Normally, name supers appear within three to five seconds after the tape starts and are held for a maximum of five or six seconds unless they are unusually long or complicated.

Many producers dress up the live lead-in with visuals just before the VTR begins. A common technique is the use of a chromakey "window" behind the newscaster while the live lead-in to VTR is read. A second alternative, also commonly used, is to begin the story with the newscaster on camera, cut to 10 or 15 seconds of silent VTR with newscaster's voice over narration, then to the SOT. In the example that follows, "Live with Graphic" tells the director to insert a graphic behind the newscaster.

SCRIPT FORMAT FOR SOUND VTR (SOT)

LIVE WITH GRAPHIC

(Mount Diablo)

Indian folklore credits Mount Diablo in

western Nevada with mystical powers . . . and this

week aviators are taking note. Since last weekend

three planes have crashed on the mountain's west

side . . . earning it the new name, Nevada

Triangle.

VTR SOT

:38

(OUTCUE: ". . . if it's not the Bermuda Triangle,

it's the next thing to it.")

LIVE:

F-A-A investigators call the myth of a so-

called Nevada Triangle the work of over-active

imaginations. They say all three crashes this week

were the result of pilot error.

<p>JOHNSON ON CAMERA ... F&P GRAPHIC . . . Bo CU</p>	<p>J</p> <p>In "Faces and Places" to-night . . . Linda Evans peeked around a door at a New York restaurant today. She's in town</p>	<p>20-20-20</p>	<p>RGP</p>
<p>GRAPHIC . . . Bo & friend</p>	<p>to take part in an international film festival honoring French actresses.</p>		
<p>GRAPHIC . . . map</p>	<p>-0-</p> <p>Here's the political face of the U.S., showing the pattern of victory for recent Republican Senate candidates. Republicans won throughout the West and MidWest, but Democrats took "The Land of Dixie" and enough populace of the Eastern states to win control of the Senate.</p>		
<p>GRAPHIC . . . man on hands & knees</p>	<p>-0-</p> <p>All of which is why Penter Pantan of Providence,</p>		

Figure 5-2. Typical TV news script showing how to designate graphics placement.

In the event of a live-lead/silent VTR intro to sound tape, the script should follow the format given below.

LIVE: Indian folklore credits Mount Diablo in western Nevada with mystical powers . . . and this week aviators are taking note.

VTR SIL:

:14

Since last weekend three planes have crashed on the mountain's west slope . . . earning it the new name, Nevada Triangle.

Other pilots have reported close calls with the peak, among them Las Vegas charter pilot Ted Ferrell. He says he's not superstitious, but neither is he a fool.

SOT:

:34

(OUTCUE: ". . . a high, dangerous mountain I'd rather fly around.")

SUPER: TED FERRELL
CHARTER PILOT

LIVE:

Ferrell says if anything, he expects the legend surrounding Mount Diablo to grow bigger and better with time . . . a publisher's delight, says Ferrell, with little real substance.

In the event you have two or more takes of sound that cannot be butted together for some reason, you may choose to bridge the two sound takes with silent VTR and voice-over narration. In that case, your script would follow the format shown below.

LIVE WITH GRAPHIC
(Protesters)

Mayor Davis walked straight into a

hornet's nest today. . . . It was a confrontation

between truck drivers and shoppers.

VTR SIL:

:14

At issue is the price of food at two local

supermarkets . . . both with contracts that

guarantee annual wage hikes for union truck drivers.

Today a shopper's group said enough is enough . . .

and asked Mayor Davis to enlist the governor's

support.

SOT:

:18

(OUTCUE: ". . . needs to be handled on state and

federal levels, not a local one.")

(Bridge)

VTR SIL:

:10

Local truckers argue they're underpaid

and if anything, they'll stop driving if

wages aren't boosted. The result, they warn--no

food at local supermarkets.

SOT:

:19

(OUTCUE: ". . . if that doesn't work, what's left?

Go on strike, I reckon.")

LIVE:

Truckers say a strike vote may be taken as
early as next week. The confrontation goes next
to the governor's office.



1. Use the following fact sheets to write standard format news scripts, complete with director's instructions. Consult the scene breakdown sheet so your script matches the visuals as edited. For your convenience, standard script blanks are provided at the end of this section.

THRESHING BEE
(Story #1)

Facts:

this weekend (today) Platte County Fairgrounds Platte City, Mo. Twentieth Annual Old-Fashioned Threshing Bee and Picnic. Dozen old time threshers McCormick Deering John Deere International Harvester Wilson's Thresher showing how it used to be in the good old days 600 people attending the day film shot and aired machines (including dozens of old tractors — some with spoke wheels dating back to 1900) all makes and descriptions . . . most still running machines circling the block square fairground serving watermelons home-made ice cream barbecue beef many people brought tents and sleeping bags to stay overnight many old-timers fairgrounds clogged with smoke old-timers said the air still has a "clean smell" Photographer burned shirt as hot soot and sparks drifted through air no admission charge car races at night little boys impressed with the old machines and tractors some women wore sunbonnets. (Script should fill :47 total time.)

Breakdown Sheet

<u>SCENES</u>	<u>Scene Length</u>	<u>AT**</u>
LS — establishing shot fairgrounds with steam engine visible	04	04
MCU — man taps throttle; series of rapid cuts shows machine speeding up, belt running, etc.	11	15
MS — man feeds bundles oats from truck into thresher with pitchfork	08	23
Cutaway — people (some "old-timers" in straw hats) standing around watching	02	25
MS — threshing machine and man operating it	06	31

**Accumulated Time

LS	— smoke pours from thresher; man pitches oats into hopper (he's in a "T" shirt)	08	39
LS	— straw shoots onto pile	05	44
LS	— fairground	03	47

(Est. LS = Establishing Long Shot; CU = Close-Up; MCU = Medium Close-Up; MS = Medium Shot; MLS = Medium Long Shot; LS = Long Shot.)

- Write scripts from the following facts. No breakdown sheet is provided because the scenes are general and routine in nature. Videotape of the X-C 80 shows a routine take-off, flight and landing on the California desert near Edwards Air Force Base. Tape of the packing plant shows general demolition scenes of the old tower (bulldozers, wrecking cranes, dump trucks, etc.). Use the script sheets provided at the end of this section.

X-C 80
(Story #2)

MAXIMUM SCRIPT LENGTH: 20 to 25 seconds.

The U.S. Air Force today released footage of one of the two X-C 80 prototype planes built to test long-range bombers and their capability in modern warfare. The prototypes fly at speeds up to 2,000 miles per hour. The plane is made of a special alloy, honey-comb skin to keep weight down — called by press releases a "revolutionary design concept" in airplane fabrication. The planes were developed as bombers, but hold only the pilot and a co-pilot/navigator. Each plane cost \$6 billion to design, test and produce. The plane's guidance system was designed in your town.

Packing Plant Demolished
(Story #3)

MAXIMUM SCRIPT LENGTH: 35 seconds.

The local packing plant is being razed today. It was shut down about two months ago when the company decided to relocate to the Midwest near Emporia, Kansas, to be closer to major rail lines. The plant was built in 1898 and ran continuously until two months ago. It is located in the north part of the city, an area that will be converted into a new shopping center and low-cost apartment housing complex. The packing plant contributed \$4 million monthly to the local economy and employed 1,900 workers. Many of these workers have been relocated and transferred at company expense to Emporia, but approximately 800 are out of work, most of them family men. The building is an historic landmark and was designed by German architects who began work on the concept in 1895.

Assignments
Chapter 5

Name _____

Date _____

5-A

SHOOTING
(Story #4)

Facts:

bodies gone when photographer arrived occurred 8505 E. 116th St. your city wife in process of getting divorce living with mother husband arrives about 5:30 barges into house has gun (.38 caliber revolver) shoots wife she dies at scene wife's sister in bedroom gets shotgun wounds man before he's wounded throws chair breaks out window flees with shotgun around back of house and into adjoining field police at scene investigating police helicopter called to join in search through woods suspect: John J. Jones, 31, 10001 S. Main St. killed: Jessica Jones, 29, no children, her sister, who wounded Jones, is Cheryl Smith, 22; she suffered head wounds when struck with gun in good condition at General Hospital suspect not located at newstime (10 p.m.) search continuing at that time, but helicopter had been called off search. (Script should fill 1:07 total time.)

Breakdown Sheet

<u>SCENES</u>	<u>Scene Length</u>	<u>AT**</u>
Est. LS of house shows broken front window	04	04
CU — house address	02	06
MCU — detective holding gun (murder weapon)	10	16
MS — broken glass on floor; detectives in room	05	21
MCU — blood stained venetian blinds and other debris on floor	03	24
MS — kitchen table still set for dinner — detective looking around room, in refrigerator	09	33
CU — broken window	03	36
LS — back of house; pan to show path suspect apparently followed; ends with people looking for second gun	06	42
MLS — helicopter flying overhead	05	47
MLS — police searching through woods	05	52

**Accumulated Time

MS — more police search	09	1:01
MLS — helicopter cutaway	03	1:04
MCU — police inspecting trail for signs of blood	03	1:07

STORY: _____

TIME: _____

WRITER: _____

VIDEO

AUDIO

--	--

STORY: _____

TIME: _____

WRITER: _____

VIDEO

AUDIO



STORY: _____

TIME: _____

WRITER: _____

VIDEO

AUDIO



STORY: _____

TIME: _____

WRITER: _____

VIDEO

AUDIO



Part II

Broadcast News Coverage



Introduction

Gathering news is the principal task of the news department. The actual news show is the culmination of journalists' efforts at the station and around the world.

This section of the workbook provides a basic organizational structure to help you understand where each job fits into the final newscast production. Who writes the news that the anchorperson delivers on the evening news? Who decides what stories to use and in what order they will appear? Who decides what network news feed stories will be used? These are simple organizational questions that you need to understand in order to know where you fit into broadcast journalism and to understand how the process works.

The major task of the reporter is newsgathering. Thus, we have provided two chapters of skill-oriented material to assist you in becoming a more proficient newsgatherer. One chapter gives tips on interviewing, while the other discusses how to use actualities.

6

Broadcast News Organization

"The best television news people in the country are journalists. We've gone through two . . . people who were fantastic voicers . . . but didn't know a damn thing about news . . . and the viewers knew it."

Albuquerque TV Newsmen

Local market radio and television stations in the United States vary in the extreme from one-person news departments to sophisticated operations with annual budgets of \$5 million or more. A sample of news operations yields these examples:¹

- In a resort town on the East Coast, the local radio station features a one-person staff. The program director helps with special events and feature stories and other station personnel help run down stories when possible from cars equipped with police radios and two-way radios.
- A Midwestern television station supports three camera crews, each with two persons each, and two editors who provide local videotape for one hour of daily TV newscasts and two half-hour weekend newscasts. Working under the news director are a news editor, assignment editor, a director of special events and a news bureau supported by three full-time personnel.
- In the Northwest a radio news operation each day puts together five 15-minute newscasts, two 10-minute and six five-minute newscasts. The station leans heavily on telephone interviews to get maximum use out of employee's time, employs mobile news cruisers in the field, and often breaks into network or local programming to cover major local news stories.
- In Florida a television station employs 22 persons, among them eight photographer-reporters, three electronics technicians, an editor and a librarian. Four mobile units provide spot news coverage.
- Another small radio station in the East employs a news director and four combination announcer-news personnel. The station emphasizes spot news and has two mobile units to cover breaking news. The station leaves most other coverage to its competition except for local features that are combined once in a while with wire copy.

The examples are typical of the wide range of news operations around the country. Almost all stations of any size subscribe to one wire service, and sometimes as many as two or three separate services. If only one wire service is used, the station may use a tip or stringer service. The station may have a tip hotline, for example, and invite listeners to call in story tips for special recognition or a small payment. Stringers, on the other hand, report stories and may act as photographers, even though they're not employed by the station. Stringers are paid for each

¹ National Association of Broadcasters, *An Operational Guide For Broadcasting the News*. (Washington, D.C.: The National Association of Broadcasters.)

story they're asked to generate, or in the case of stories produced on speculation, payment is made only if the story is aired.

While the range of jobs varies greatly from station to station, the most frequently encountered positions in broadcast journalism are somewhat similar in the medium- to large-market operations.

JOBS IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM

News Director (also called News Manager)

On the local levels, this position generally is the highest in the broadcast news field. The news director must be a person with extensive news experience, administrative ability and supervisory experience. The news director, usually responsible to the station manager or program director, is in charge of the entire news operation, and may also be an "on-air" personality. This position demands public relations ability since the news director frequently represents the station at large, whether at public functions, answering complaints about news coverage, or simply existing as a "personality" within the community.

News Producer

This person is responsible for the total look of the news show, from content to the number of items, story lineup, commercial breaks, timing and the most effective forms of story presentation. The job requires expert knowledge of broadcast news and production techniques, and requires working with the newscasters, reporters, writers, camera operators, editors and directors.



Figure 6-1. Many support personnel work behind the scenes although the audience never sees them.

Newscaster

This person is the on-air personality who presents news to the audience. Some newscasters are little more than announcers who read prepared news scripts, although at most stations the newscaster is a working journalist who helps write and prepare the news show. The newscaster, also called "talent" or "anchorperson," often edits news copy, writes and rewrites stories, and helps decide which reports will be aired. The job varies greatly from one station to the next, but is usually among the highest paid.

Assignment Editor

This person's job is simple — cover everything that happens. In touch with field crews by two-way radio, the assignment editor orchestrates coverage of the day's news. The assignment editor, who is known at some stations as the electronic news coordinator, assigns stories to reporters and photographers, lines up interviews, and handles news calls. Telephones ring, monitors blare with exchanges between local police, fire and sheriff's officials, and wire machines belch out copy. In the midst of chaos, the assignment editor makes snap decisions about which stories of the day will be covered and by whom. Throughout the day the assignment editor keeps tabs on which stories have been covered, which are yet to be assigned, and which are in the process of being covered. Obviously, the job demands expert knowledge of news and logistics, and assignment editors frequently move on to become news producers.

Reporter

This person writes news and reports it, so a thorough understanding of broadcast news is essential for this position. Much of the time, the reporter gathers and reports news from the field in the form of "voicers" (stories recorded for later broadcast or voiced reports over videotape) and "stand-ups" (on-camera reports delivered live from the field or recorded on videotape for later broadcast). Some stations employ *special assignment* reporters who specialize primarily in one area of the news — science, government, medicine, etc. — while others rely primarily on *general assignment reporters*, people who are assigned to cover the news, whatever it may be — where it happens and whenever it happens. Beginning reporters are often given beat assignments. The *beat reporter* follows a fixed routine each week covering, for example, police headquarters, district court, the sheriff's office, city council and the planning and zoning commission.

Photographer

The news photographer shoots videotape and may operate live ENG equipment. At small stations, this person writes and reports news as well, but generally is restricted from such activity in union markets. The position requires extensive knowledge of electronic and videotape equipment, sound recording, lighting techniques, news values, and creative editing.

Writer

Although reporters and newscasters do much of the writing for newscasts, few large operations can do without behind-the-scenes writers to help prepare the show. The news writer is involved with everything from headlines to scripts, from wire copy to original feature

material. At other stations producers commonly write much of the news show including story teasers, headlines, handoffs, lead-ins to pre-recorded video news packages, not to mention many of the news stories in a typical newscast. The writer also assembles finished reports from many sources — wire copy, telephone interviews, still pictures, and VTR. In radio, the biggest demand for writers comes from stations that offer news 24 hours a day; in television, writers are most in demand at stations that originate from one hour to an hour and a half or more of news each day. Good writers tend to make good reporters and, assuming they understand the complexities of broadcast news production, may struggle through the ranks to become reporters and newscasters.

Videotape Editor

Since television by its nature is visual, it eats up large quantities of videotape stories — all that must be edited. The VTR editor occupies a key position, since stories brought in from the field must be edited into polished, professional presentations. The job requires specialized knowledge of picture and sound editing.

Other positions related to production of the daily newscast include the following:

- newsroom secretary — handles incoming calls, general correspondence and clerical duties.
- graphic artist — prepares flip cards, graphs, charts, chromakey cards and other visuals to be used in the newscast.
- sound person — records and monitors sound during in-field videotaping and audio recording.
- lighting person — responsible for lighting news subjects and news events in the field.
- engineer for live, in-field production — assures integrity of broadcast transmission signals during live broadcasts of news events, or direct transmission of signals back to station for recording and later playback.
- field producer — accompanies tape crews and reporters to oversee production of in-field news coverage.
- researcher — responsible for researching files, old photographs, film morgues, etc., during generation of news stories, special reports and documentaries.

Other jobs related to newscast production, but which may not require knowledge of broadcast journalism, include:

- studio floor director
- technical director
- audio and video control
- stage manager (also known as floor director)
- set carpenters
- electricians
- studio camera operators

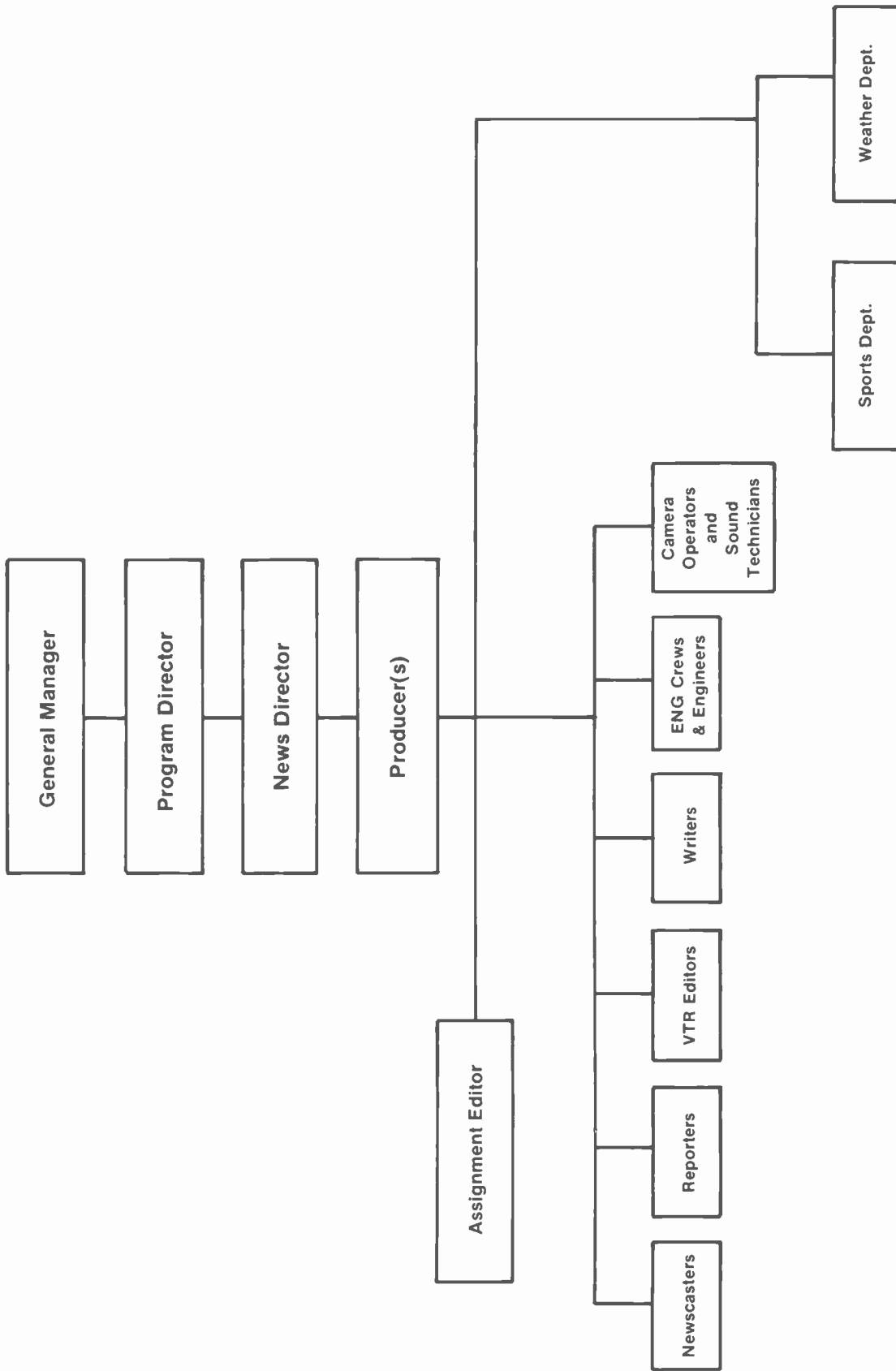


Figure 6-2. Broadcast stations typically operate according to standard departmentalization similar to that outlined on this organizational chart.



Assignments
Chapter 6

Name _____

Date _____

6-A

1. Prepare a personal resume, listing all pertinent information that is relevant to your application for a job in broadcast journalism. List all job experience, honors, awards, education and relevant job-related college courses. Follow the sample format included in Appendix B, or a resume format of your choice.
2. Cut a three-minute radio audition tape that demonstrates your command of writing, voice delivery, news judgment and production values. Submit the tape to your professor for critique. Play back the best auditions in the class for evaluation and discussion.
3. Write, prepare and record a five-minute television audition tape on videotape. Include live copy, one or two "voice-over" VTR stories and several graphics as part of the newscast. Discuss and critique your tape in class. Note: Based on available facilities, you may have to alter this assignment to your school's capabilities.
4. Interview a broadcast journalist who holds the type of job you're most interested in learning. Find out how that person became interested in broadcasting and rose to the position he or she now holds. Share pertinent comments with others in class discussion or record the interview for playback in class.
5. Develop a reporting beat which you will visit at least once a week for four weeks. Each week, as a standing class assignment, write at least one story suitable for broadcast from the beat source you visit and submit the copy you generate to your professor. You will need to visit the beat source in advance, introduce yourself, and secure permission to stop by on a weekly basis. You should need only a few minutes each week to question your beat source about recent happenings, with perhaps another one-half to full hour to go through records and other documents as you research facts for your stories. Possible beat sources are listed below, with additional spaces provided for other beat sources in your area.

University Police Office
City Police Department
State Patrol Offices
Municipal Court
County Court
District Court
Fire Department
Sheriff's Department
Local Park or Forest Service Offices
Wildlife Offices

School Board
City Building Department
City Council
Municipal Planning and Zoning
Department
County Commissioners Office
Other (please identify)

Assignments
Chapter 6

6. Arrange to visit a radio newsroom to observe newsroom organization, typical staff duties, and the delivery of an on-air broadcast. During your visit you may wish to question working journalists about their job responsibilities and seek advice about obtaining a job in broadcast news. Prepare a report to share with the rest of your class.
7. As a class project, arrange to tour newsroom facilities at a local television station. Many stations prefer to conduct tours in the late evening when most of the news program has been put together. Arrange to watch the actual news broadcast and talk with news personnel about job duties, the job market and other topics of interest to you.

7

Art and Craft of the Interview

"The trick is to conduct it in such a way the person forgets it's an interview and has a conversation."

Bill Moyers, CBS Television

Interviews are such an everyday part of broadcast journalism that we often take them for granted — yet they offer an important way to spice broadcast news with life and dimension. Interviews are a reliable way to improve viewer and listener interest in your newscasts, provided they are honest, spontaneous and conversational. As with most actualities, the best interviews are spontaneous; never stilted, rehearsed or contrived.

Interviews range from simple entertainment to serious discussions, although the most routine and frequently heard are the brief news or spot interviews. In your career as a broadcast journalist, you no doubt will conduct at one time or another most forms of the interview.

Some interviews, for example, provide a vehicle through which eyewitnesses can describe in their own words and emotions the drama of hard news events. Someone who has just witnessed a helicopter crash or escaped from a burning apartment house has a vitality of description few reporters could ever match without becoming personally involved in the story.

Interviews may expose the sincerity or falseness of political figures as they speak their opinions about important social issues. Interviews can entertain and inform us with intimate glimpses of celebrities being themselves, children's first frightened confrontations with department store Santa Clauses, and talks with experts on every subject from the future of solar energy to parapsychology.

Interviews are essential tools that contribute to broadcast news much of its immediacy, mood, essential detail, expert interpretation of important events, and the kinds of entertainment values that lend zest to radio and television communication.

THE INTERVIEWER

Good interviewing takes practice, sometimes years of it. The Mike Wallaces, Ted Koppels and Barbara Walters of the world work hard at developing and maintaining their interview skills. If you want to become a skilled interviewer — the person who asks the right question at the right time, who consistently asks insightful questions, a journalist who can probe for honest answers without offending — you will have to practice the art of interviewing.

All prerequisites for successful interviews presuppose that you come to the occasion thoroughly prepared, that you know everything you can about the interviewee and the subject at hand. Few things kill an interview more quickly than an interviewer who is obviously unknowledgeable or disinterested in the subject at hand.

BASICS OF THE GOOD INTERVIEW

When you conduct an interview, you are the mind and mouthpiece of your collective audience. It is your responsibility to ask questions your audience would ask if given the opportunity, to seek clarification if the interviewee wanders, to keep the interview an exchange of information instead of a conveyor belt of information from special interests (politicians seem to be especially adept at delivering public relations material to your audiences in hard news form), and to pace the interview so it builds to a satisfying conclusion.

Interviewing is an art which builds upon another art — the art of listening. Many people, even so-called professional interviewers, are so intent upon formulating their next question that they fail to hear what the interviewee is saying. Honest responses to honest questions are the heart of spontaneous interviews. You can quickly kill the life of any interview by concentrating so intently on your next question that you fail to hear.

Broadcast journalists seldom have time or sufficient reason to write down every question they intend to ask. A better method is to list on a note pad, by subject area, topics you'd like to cover in the interview. Some journalists write down a few key words or the four or five most important questions they intend to ask. They store other questions or subject areas in the back of their mind in case the interview falters or fails to develop as they anticipate.

Regardless of your method, questions can never be totally prepared because interviews often develop spontaneously, and when they do, the attentive interviewer can capitalize on the situation.

Consider, for instance, an interview with a major oil company executive about rising energy costs. The interview is to center on the price of gasoline, but as you will notice, the subject gradually becomes federal energy policy.

INTERVIEWER: What will happen to the price of gasoline over the next five to ten year period?

EXECUTIVE: Well, I think the price can be well over two dollars a gallon, by 1995. As prices move up above two dollars, you will see an enormous impact on the average American family, because gasoline then becomes the major factor in the family budget.

INTERVIEWER: How major?

EXECUTIVE: Well, already people are spending more on the family car, out of their total budget, than on food, and this really appalls me.

INTERVIEWER: Some people might think that oil interests would be delighted over the prospect of an ever greater share of America's disposable income.

EXECUTIVE: That's not the point. If energy is truly short, as I believe it is, then we have two alternatives to control its use. One is laws and regulations that control cars — force people to use more fuel-efficient cars. The other is to have the price of gasoline go up very substantially; don't try to effect fuel savings with laws and regulations; instead let prices increase radically so people have to control their own rates of consumption. This approach in effect creates voluntary rationing. Oil profits then would dip slightly or stay about the same, assuming gasoline use declines below current levels.

- INTERVIEWER: Still, you might enjoy current levels of profit from fewer sales. Doesn't that amount to higher profits just as it would if you increased sales and therefore profits?
- EXECUTIVE: No. We need those profits to invest in new explorations, to find new energy reserves, and we need profits, too, so we can research new energy alternatives.
- INTERVIEWER: You mention energy alternatives. What specifically?
- EXECUTIVE: In Nebraska, they have a program to make 10 percent alcohol, made from corn, in their gasoline mix. If this works, they could go to 100 percent. Now you can run cars on potatoes, on corn, or coal, and these things are going to be powering automobiles in the form of liquid fuel after oil has become so expensive it will be very difficult to continue using conventional oil.
- INTERVIEWER: To what extent can oil companies become involved in such research?
- EXECUTIVE: To the extent that we're allowed to, I should say encouraged to, by the federal government. And it's in this area where I think the federal energy program falls short. We need a great commitment to the development and maturation of alternate fuel processes.
- INTERVIEWER: In your view, how likely is such a commitment by the federal government?
- EXECUTIVE: I'm discouraged by the lack of foresight we see today in Washington. Currently, in my view, the emphasis is misplaced, with too much talk about increased oil imports, more drilling for oil around the world. With oil, we're always going to experience high prices, shortages, and politics. Especially politics, as the oil rich nations use oil to manipulate concessions from those countries who use it the most. About these things it seems sometimes that Congress lacks foresight, and previous administrations haven't done all they could to ease the problem. And, if something isn't done soon, this nation will wake up, say around 1990 or 1995, and realize it is starved for affordable energy. We will then face a depression like we haven't seen since the 1930s.

The interviewer helped this discussion develop spontaneously by listening carefully to the oil executive's responses and guiding the interview in directions in which it would develop naturally. The interviewer followed up on the oblique reference to new energy alternatives, a subject peripheral to the original intent of the interview, and gradually led the discussion into federal energy policy. Several portions of the interview could be used on the air — anything from the future cost of gasoline to likely energy alternatives in the years ahead.



Figure 7-1. A broadcast engineer monitors equipment performance during a live field broadcast.

TOUGH QUESTIONING

Only once did the interviewer approach the role of “devil’s advocate” with the question, “Some people might think that oil interests would be delighted over the prospect of an ever greater share of America’s disposable income.” Such questions, while sometimes warranted if the subject is especially reticent about responding to controversial subject matter, may offend the audience if asked without just cause. Save the tough questioning for those subjects who intentionally try to change the subject or who talk non-stop to avoid the subject. When warranted, the tough question works wonders: “Twice you’ve avoided answering the question, Mr. Mayor. Did you ever accept bribes from bail bondsmen?” If silence is the ensuing answer to such a question, it can be more eloquent than words.

INTERVIEW PROBLEMS

Avoid “yes and no” questions. Questions that require only a simple “yes” or “no” as the answer impart little real information to your audience. Avoid questions that begin with “Do you think . . .,” “Were you scared . . .,” “Are you against . . .,” etc., in favor of questions that begin

with "WHY?" or "WHAT DO YOU MEAN . . ." Questions that demand an articulated response from the interviewee almost always result in the strongest interviews.

Avoid "I see" and "Uh-uh"

Don't fall into the trap of saying "I see" or "uh-uh" after each response from the interviewee. Most often such comments are an honest attempt to show the interviewee that you understand what is being said, but too often they bear the implication to your audience that you agree with whatever is being said. Imagine your embarrassment if someone commented during an interview, "The space program was one of the biggest government farces of all time," and you answered, unthinkingly, "I see" or uh-uh." The same advice applies to head nodding on videotape or during live broadcasts: don't. Better that you bite your tongue than imply agreement through head nodding.

Don't Ask Two-Part Questions

Another troublemaker in interviews is the two-part question: "First, sir, is it true that Westinghouse plans to double its plant facilities within the next four years at the Rocky Mountain site, and second, is it true that profits have fallen over the past year from just over 12 percent on gross sales to a little more than 7 percent?" If your interviewee doesn't forget one or both parts of such a double-barrelled question, it's almost certain that your audience will.

Avoid Obvious Questions

Watch or listen to broadcast news long enough and you will hear all these troublemakers and more. Included are the "obvious questions" that never should have been asked in the first place: "Senator Percy, you're a member of the Republican Party, are you not?" or the interviewer who dominates by asking *and* answering each and every question: "Chief Walters, we know you've had a tough time maintaining discipline among your officers; we know all the steps you've taken to reinstitute good morale, but the feeling among most people in the community seems to be that your changes have come too late to do any good. Based on those facts, don't you feel you should resign?" Such faux pas tend to make the interviewee hostile which in turn makes your audience hostile toward you and your newscast.

Avoid Questions of Bad Taste

Some maniacal impulse among a few radio and television journalists has resulted over the years in the scandalous tactics of asking questions in obviously poor taste of accident and disaster victims still in shock.

Who has not seen the following questions put to accident and disaster victims who are still in shock: "How did you feel after you learned your son had drowned?" or "Did you fear for your life when the high voltage current passed through your body?" Several years ago, in a suburb just outside Lenexa, Kansas, a mother was returning home from the skating rink with a carload of children when the car was struck by a train. All but one passenger, a girl of about 13, were killed in the accident and a TV crew was dispatched to the scene. When the crew arrived the girl had been taken to a nearby hospital and the news director ordered an interview with the girl at

the hospital's emergency room. The girl, still in shock, related through her tears circumstances that surrounded the accident: "Mom approached the railroad track. The warning signals were flashing, but us kids were making so much noise she didn't notice the train. We screamed out, 'Mom, there's a train!' Then the train hit us and I don't know what happened after that." Should the girl have been interviewed? Did her response add substantially to the routine information contained in the report accompanying film of the aftermath? Only your conscience can provide that answer, but to ask the girl how she felt about the death of her mother or other members of the family is going the one step too far that some journalists routinely insist on going.

Courtesy Pays

Help put the other person at ease by appearing relaxed yourself. Maintain constant eye contact while the other person is talking and minimize the intimidating effects of microphones and other broadcast hardware whenever possible. Sticking a microphone into another person's face tends to make him ill at ease unless he is a veteran of the interview. Warm up your people, help them relax, and be honestly interested in what they say. Since the interview is a conversational discussion, it demands that you practice hospitality just as you would as a guest in someone's home. In interviewing, as in most other endeavors, courtesy pays.

THE LIVE INTERVIEW

The live interview in effect is a touch of spice that provides the interest and mood that would be available from no other source. Each day the hundreds of persons who are interviewed for television news are able to tell their stories with more enthusiasm, conviction and drama than journalists could ever accomplish through written, third-person accounts read on camera. It is one thing to hear the reporter's account of an air disaster and quite another to hear a survivor's still strong impressions of a mid-air collision. Always the best interviews do more than deliver facts — they provide the credibility, mood, vivid details and unexpected sidelights that help give news reports their vitality.

PROBLEMS OF THE LIVE INTERVIEW

Since the advent of live television news, the interview has taken on a new and sometimes unwarranted function: it is used not only to enhance live reports but sometimes as a substitute for the story itself. Reporters who have just arrived on the scene with instructions to "go live immediately" seldom have time to adequately research the event and prepare a reasoned report. They are forced instead to rely on a few seconds of on-camera introduction to the event, an interview which forms the main body of the report, then a few seconds of on-camera close in which the implication is, "There you have it folks."

In reality what the folks at home are given is not a report but a headline service that contains hurried interviews with one or two people who give their sometimes inexact versions of what happened. Sometimes the approach works, but often it fails because the interview, at its best, never stands alone as the entire story. In its finest form, the interview proves the rest of the story and helps the report achieve at least the illusion of immediacy.

THE REPORTER IS NOT THE STORY

Over time the television news personality, whether anchorperson or field reporter, inescapably assumes a certain "star quality." Seen frequently on television, in promotional advertisements, even on billboards around the city, the reporter soon becomes a public figure.

Instant public recognition becomes a feature of everyday life that further is established by station surveys of how well the reporter is recognized in the television market and how well viewers like the reporter's on-air personality.

As subjects of so much attention, on-air reporters may begin to think that their presence on camera is the story. Journalists who fall victim to this syndrome refuse to let the story tell itself. They dominate interviews with long-winded questions, appear on screen more frequently than necessary and fail, in the end, to take advantage of television's strongest assets — strong visuals, good natural sound and meaningful interviews.

While television reporters can't help but become personalities, their first obligation is to remain competent journalists. The best journalists know when to step aside and let the story tell itself.

THE TALKING HEAD VS. THE SOUNDBITE

In a generic sense all interviews or other shots of people talking on screen are called soundbites. Yet, there is a distinction to be made between the soundbite and the "talking head," a derisive reference to the often boring quality of on-air interviews. Journalists who scorn the talking head argue that since television is visual it should show the news, not merely tell it. Abstract or complex ideas, however, cannot always be visualized and the rush to keep television news visual often deprives viewers of the critical statement or the complex explanation from an expert knowledgeable in his field. When such interviews are used, they are kept to the minimum length so as not to befuddle or bore skittish viewers.

The argument, in such cases, is that television (and its viewers) prefers the dramatic and that print, not television, is the best way to deliver complex facts and ideas. To a great extent that point of view is valid, but often is espoused by journalists who consider all interviews to be mere "talking heads."

A telling distinction exists between the so-called talking head and a legitimate soundbite — a distinction attributed to former CBS news executive Fred Friendly.

Friendly tells the story of government hearings at which learned experts testified on the maximum weight that postmen would be allowed to carry on their daily rounds. The hearings droned on until a mail carrier stepped to the microphone to testify why the weight of his daily loads should be reduced. "I'll tell you why it matters," testified the mail carrier. "What matters is Tuesday. Tuesday is the day I gotta climb 13 floors with 122 pounds on my back, because Tuesday is the day 'Life' magazine comes." Point made, story enhanced all because this brief moment of sound put the entire hearing and the issues that surrounded it into perspective.

The soundbite, then, is the point of emphasis that proves the story and what's been said about it both visually and in the reporter's narrative. Frequently the soundbite is nothing more than that little moment of drama that elevates the story into a believable, interesting and sometimes more dramatic report. Talking heads in comparison are radio with the picture of a moving mouth that spouts meaningless information. They are the interviews that substitute for the story and that give viewers droopy eyelids.

CHALLENGES OF THE LIVE INTERVIEW

Among the most difficult interview forms, the two-minute interview is something of a juggling act. The reporter must first of all elicit a statement in the brief time available that really says something about the story and be able to bring the ultra-brief interview to a smooth close in the allotted time.

The longer the interview, the easier it is to zero in on subject matter and to elicit meaningful responses from the interviewee. "On the types of stories I cover," says NBC news

correspondent Bob Dotson, "I can burn 40 minutes of tape if I have to. The person I interview knows I will pick out the meaningful responses, so he can tell me now or he can tell me later."

In live television, by contrast, the people who are the most important newsmakers often have become television performers over the years. They know the clock is in their favor and they can talk for three minutes and still not give meaningful answers to the reporter's questions.

Reporters who conduct live interviews must have the background necessary to make live television news interesting and meaningful. They must be able to meet people easily and have the capacity to help interviewees forget the pressure of the moment. They must be instant students of people, and regardless of the situation they must be unflappable.

They also must have a certain amount of grit so that when interviewees try to seize control by running out the clock they can adopt their best Mike Wallace style, interrupt and say, "You're evading the question. What were you doing on the night of March 23?"

HOW TO CONTROL THE LIVE INTERVIEW

The reporter who conducts live interviews must elicit meaningful information in the brief time available (often a minute or less), yet maintain control of the interview's development, and bring the interview to a smooth close on air. To meet such challenges, on air journalists resort to a variety of techniques.

- Prior to on air broadcast, the person to be interviewed can be given a predetermined cue that signals the interview must end within 15 seconds. The cue may be something as simple as a touch on the knee (off camera), or a warning to the interviewee, "When I ask you this question, that will be the end of the interview."
- Some interviewees will talk nonstop unless some way is found to cut them off. When such people stop to breathe, be ready to jump in with a new question. In normal conversation, such an interruption might be considered rude. On television, the same interruption may be barely noticeable to home viewers.
- In extreme cases, interviewees may talk right over a question as the reporter tries to move the interview in new directions. To regain control, the reporter's only recourse is to become more assertive. Jump right back into the interview with a question that begins something to the effect, "Forgive me, but . . ."
- Have a smooth exit line thought out in advance that will bring the live interview to a smooth close. The exit line may be something as simple as, "Dr. Steele, thank you very much indeed," as the reporter takes a step away from the interviewee and faces camera to wrap up the story from the scene. The exit line also can serve as a prearranged signal for the sound person to cut the interviewee's microphone and for the camera operator to zoom to a tight shot of the reporter, thus eliminating the interviewee from screen.

THE INFLUENCE OF HARDWARE ON NEWS SOURCES

It will happen somewhere in America today: a band of strangers — producer, sound operator, camera operator, reporter — will invade the everyday routine of a person unfamiliar with the ways of television news. With great efficiency the crew will unpack imposing cameras, microphones, recorders, lights and cables. Once the gear is set up and operating, the unblinking eye of the camera lens will turn toward the person to be interviewed, the tape operator will yell "rolling," the first question will be asked and the interviewee will freeze in paralyzed fright. In such cases it is an understatement to say that the hardware of television news is intimidating.

TECHNIQUES TO PUT THE INTERVIEWEE AT EASE

As the on-camera interviewer, you can help put the other person at ease by appearing relaxed yourself. Constant eye contact with the person will help minimize the intimidating effects of microphones and other broadcast gear. By offering yourself as the reference point, the interviewee can concentrate on you as a person — not on the lights, camera and action that's happening all around him.

The art of good interviewing is to a great extent the art of conscientious listening. Reporters who only half listen to the interviewee while they think up more questions to ask can quickly kill the interview. Careful listening helps the reporter build the interview around what's just been said. Since the interview is a conversation, it demands that you be a courteous listener just as you would be in a normal conversation.

To help put interviewee subjects at ease, the crew's conduct is especially important. "When I have a reporter with me, I try to fade into the woodwork," says free-lance photographer Bob Brandon of Houston. "The last thing I want is for someone to be aware of me or the camera."

The person in charge of lighting may want to avoid shining bright lights directly into the interviewee's eyes, preferring instead to bounce lights indirectly off walls and ceilings or handheld reflectors.

Microphones, another intimidating fact of television life, always should be held by the reporter and made as inconspicuous as possible. Sometimes a microphone mounted on the camera or a miniature microphone pinned to the speaker's lapel solves the problem. Shotgun microphones which pick up faraway sounds also many diminish the intrusions inherent in sound recording.

TECHNIQUES TO ELICIT THE MEANINGFUL RESPONSE

Live interviews are at their best when they elicit interesting information and reporters can use several techniques to draw out concise, meaningful responses.

One technique is to avoid giving the impression that you are an insider who already understands the story. If you are a friendly person, yet obviously a competent journalist who avoids coming on as a big-time television reporter, most people will be glad to give you the information you want and will explain it succinctly. "I find that if you hum and haw a little bit in asking your question, maybe even half intentionally, it puts the fellow at ease, especially if he's somebody who's never been on television before," says CBS reporter Charles Kuralt.

Another tried and true technique is to look blankly at the interviewee if you would like the person to restate the response more concisely. Most interviewees will feel compelled to restate the point if you indicate with impassive face that you want them to continue.

The situation is different if you interview the governor or anyone else who appears frequently on television and is not overwhelmed by bright lights and the hoopla that surrounds live reporting. Public figures wise to the deadlines, restrictions and demands of television news can perform with a virtuosity that sometimes amazes even veteran journalists.

The following anecdote, shared by a journalist who swears the story is true, makes the point.

The story centers on a reporter who arrived late to cover the governor's press conference and asked the governor if he would linger a moment afterwards

to give a statement. The governor said yes. The reporter set up his camera, turned it on and said, "Okay, Governor, go ahead."

"Go ahead what?" replied the governor.

"Give me an answer."

"About what?"

"Look, Governor," said the reporter, "didn't you just have a press conference?"

"Yes," said the governor.

"And didn't you just answer some questions?"

"Yes."

"Well, pick one of them out and answer it again!"

And, so the story goes, the governor did just that!

Most of the people you interview will not be media types, however, unless you cover a beat in which you routinely talk with public officials or other personalities. Some of the best quotes and stories you bring home will come from the fellow down the street or the janitor around the corner. With such people, the trick is to put them at ease and make sure they give you back information in a way that television viewers can understand.

Assignments
Chapter 7

Name _____

Date _____

7-A

1. Conduct a minimum of three practice interviews with friends to develop your ability to phrase ad-lib questions. In each instance, have a friend decide spontaneously on a topic of interest to him or her — a topic about which your friend is knowledgeable — then begin the interview. Pursue the subject seriously and extract as much information from your friend as possible about the subject at hand. Examples of possible topics include: movie directors, how to grow indoor house plants, tips for beginning cooks, the job market for college students, rock climbing, hang-gliding, county politics, or the future of newspapers.
2. Interview a prominent or interesting person in your community. Call the person in advance to arrange an appointment, adequately research your subject area and prepare meaningful questions. Arrive on time with a tape recorder that works and with which you are familiar. Make a short test recording in advance of the interview to be certain sound levels are properly set and that your audio is of broadcast quality.
3. Edit the tape you recorded in assignment #2 into a story suitable for broadcast. Write a lead-in and tag to accompany the edited interview. Play the tape and critique your interview in class.
4. During the term, repeat assignments #1 and #2 a minimum of three times. Practice makes perfect!

8

Actualities

"One of the most important ingredients for any news department is live, local coverage."

Dan Rather, The Camera Never Blinks

Broadcast time sales people are fond of telling advertisers of a basic distinction between broadcast and print media. As they put it, readers must make a conscious effort to *absorb* newspaper content, while broadcast audiences must make a conscious effort to *avoid* the content of radio and television. When they are at their best, radio and television have tremendous power to involve, to sweep you up in psychological and physiological ways, because they use sound and motion to dramatic effect. In a newscast, the sight of a starving child, the sound of a crying person, the roar of a fire out of control, the angry voice of a taxpayer — all are capable of altering your blood pressure, your heart and your breathing rates. No newspaper can match that kind of impact. It is precisely such impact that has led naturally to the widespread use of the "actuality" in broadcast news.

ACTUALITIES DEFINED

An actuality is the sound of a news event, the voice of someone in the news, or the voice of someone who has witnessed a news event. Actualities help you take your audience to the scene of the event. They allow your audience vicarious participation in news events and hence a way to understand such events more fully. Beware that broadcast media *prefer* the dramatic, however, and can pull the news out of context if the actuality is unduly dramatic. The isolating glare of microphones and cameras can make the sounds and/or sights of 100 angry protesters in emotional frenzy seem like a mob of thousands to your audience unless you maintain perspective in your reports.

Typical actualities come from many sources:

- excerpts from a speech
- news conferences
- public statements
- experts
- interviews
- eyewitnesses

The list goes on, but you can count on obtaining actualities from day to day from almost anyone who makes news or watches it happen. The actuality can come from the mayor at a

news conference, a moon-bound astronaut, a bank teller who has just been robbed, an underwater rescue diver, a passenger safe at last after an airplane hijacking, an expert on solar energy, or a hostage who has just been released.

Three cardinal rules govern the use of actualities. First, don't use actualities to tell the entire story. The actuality illustrates a story the way a newspaper picture might. It is not a self-contained report; it is a sidebar item that enhances your report.

Second, use actualities only when they add a dimension that your written report could not. If the actuality doesn't say anything new, or if it doesn't add to what you have written in the main story, it usually should be dropped.

Third, since actualities are story enhancers or "sidebars," they should be kept fairly short—usually no longer than 30 seconds. Occasionally, an actuality will be so dramatic or full of information it can run longer, but in most cases consider 30 seconds a maximum length. To avoid chopiness in the flow of your broadcast, generally avoid actualities less than eight to 10 seconds in length.

Most actualities are recorded at the scene of the event and carried back to the station, although sometimes the reporter will relay them back to the newsroom via telephone for live broadcast or recording for later playback.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

A common source for actualities is the statement or interview from a news source that is recorded off a telephone line into a normal tape recorder at the radio station. The person with whom you are speaking must be told that his or her voice is being recorded onto audio tape. Telephone interviews are commonly used when you are pressed for time and can't interview a news source in person, or when a reporter in the field must phone in a late-breaking story in time for an upcoming broadcast. Most telephone recording systems feature a normal telephone receiver with a hand switch that shuts off the telephone mouthpiece to exclude extraneous noise from the newsroom while the recording is being made. A simple press of the switch reactivates the mouthpiece so you can converse normally with the news source when you wish.

TELEPHONE RUNDOWNS

At most radio and many television stations, news personnel routinely make *telephone rundowns*, a check just before major news broadcasts to determine whether important news is breaking. These checks are made with police, fire, sheriff and other local agencies according to a master list of the most frequently called and important agencies. Some stations have automatic dialing devices that make such calls at the push of a button. Often, as you make such rundowns, you may be greeted with a brusque "no news today" and a slam of the receiver on the other end even as you identify yourself. This happens because news sources have their own deadlines and are contacted daily not only by your station, but by competing stations.

TELEPHONE USE

Whether you are recording a telephone interview or using the telephone for routine checks of fire, police or sheriff's department happenings, it pays to mind your "telephone manners."

Practice courtesy and develop as much rapport with your contacts as your sense of professionalism allows. Courtesy pays off two ways: it helps you get the story, and it makes access to information easier next time you have to call the same source about a story. Remember to give your name and the station call letters or channel number when you call sources, and tell them whether you plan to record and air their comments. When the conversation has ended, thank your source for taking time out from a busy schedule to talk with you.

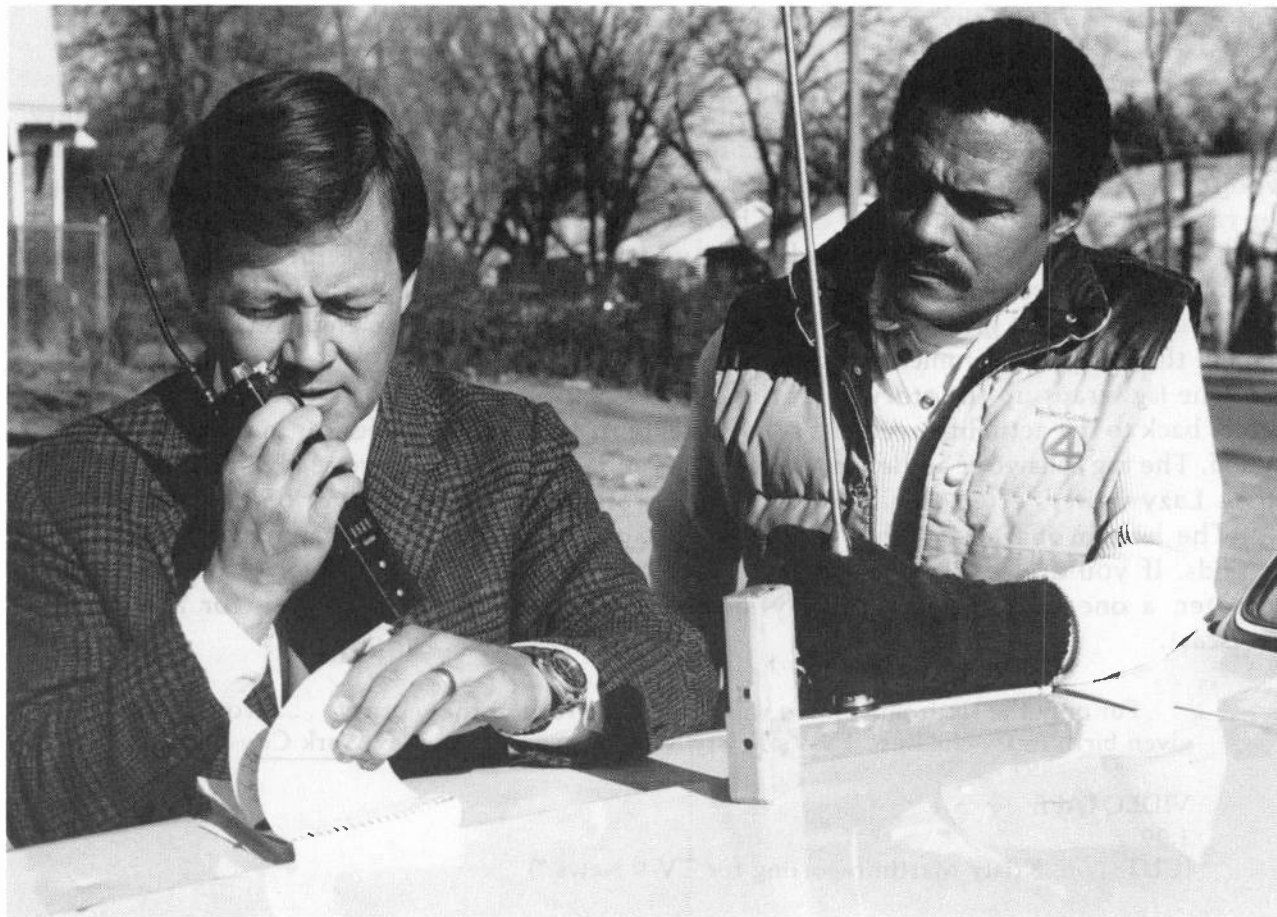


Figure 8-1. A television reporting crew converses with the assignment desk via 2-way radio prior to reporting a story live from the scene of a breaking news event.

LEAD-INS AND TAGS

Actualities, no matter what the subject and content, require LEAD-INS and TAGS — a way to introduce the actuality to your audience and a way to get out of it and on to the next story. The common formula for handling actualities in short newscasts at many radio stations is “two lines in (the lead-in), 20 seconds for the actuality and one line (the tag) out,” although such a formula is somewhat arbitrary and won’t apply in every situation.

The *lead-in* refers to the story and introduction to the actuality. Here is an example written and prepared for a radio newscast.

The blizzard is moving north to Canada tonight . . . after dumping more than a foot of snow on the Dakotas and Minnesota. The blizzard was so intense it made driving impossible . . . and many drivers were forced to spend the night in their cars . . . or truck stops along the road.

CT

:24

(Outcue “. . . all day trying to get out.”)

The storm left many rigs frozen solid . . . and the forecast for wind and cold makes even worse driving conditions likely tomorrow.

Notice the lead-in in the example above. In 15 seconds the story is introduced and the actuality “set-up.” In this case the actuality contained excerpts of interviews with stranded motorists who told of their experiences in the blizzard. The actuality was a CT or pre-recorded cartridge for radio, but the same interview could have been on videotape.

The last three words of the lead-in are underlined to cue the director or sound engineer that an insert or actuality follows. The time of the actuality, 24 seconds, is given, along with a standard outcue that gives the last five or six words in the cut so the engineer knows when to reopen the newscaster’s microphone.

The *tag* wraps up the story and brings it to a polished, professional ending. It most often refers back to the actuality even if it’s only a reidentification of the speaker in the actuality just ended. The tag tells your audience the story has ended and that you are ready to move to a new story. Lazy writers often eliminate story tags; professionals almost never omit them.

The length of lead-ins should be kept to about 15 seconds and tags no more than 10 seconds. If you are writing the intro to a comprehensive stand-up report from an in-field reporter, a one sentence lead-in may suffice. Here is an example written for a television newscast.

For only the sixth time in the world since the turn of the century . . . a woman has given birth to six children. TV-9’s Kristy Martin reports from New York City.

VIDEOTAPE

1:09

(CUT: “. . . Kristy Martin reporting for TV-9 News.”)

At news time, doctors report the remaining two children have little chance for survival. They say given another month, all 6 children might have survived.

Lead-ins generally sound best if they’re self-contained, meaning that they don’t telegraph the fact that an actuality follows. Such lead-ins are also called *blind lead-ins*. In the following examples consider each sentence to be the last line in the story just before the actuality is to be played on the air.

Original: Johnson was asked how the wheat agreement will affect bread prices.

Rewrite: Johnson says wheat subsidies will not cause higher bread prices in America.

JOHNSON (on tape): “WE ANTICIPATE ABSOLUTELY NO ECONOMIC EFFECT IN THE SUPERMARKET FROM THIS MEASURE . . .”

In this example, the lead-in helps summarize the tone and substance of the actuality with Johnson. The original example, although typically used at some stations, lacks impact and would leave your audience hanging in midair if the actuality failed to play, or if loose production caused a brief interruption or pause before the sound began. With *blind lead-ins* the story can stand alone without any apologies or wearisome explanations about how “we’ll” have that tape (or interview) for you in just a few minutes,” although, admittedly, the story is more complete and interesting with the cart or videotape.

Original: We asked councilmen if lower tax bills will result.

Rewrite: Councilmen say they’re not certain the measure will result in lower tax bills.

COUNCILMEN (on tape): “I DON’T SEE ONE DROP OF RELIEF FOR ANY PROPERTY OWNER IN TOWN . . .”

Original: We asked foresters what caused the fire.

Change to: State foresters say lightning probably caused the fire.

FORESTER (on VTR): “THERE WERE NO PEOPLE IN THE AREA, NO CAMP FIRES, BUT THE AREA IS EXTREMELY DRY, AND THE LIGHTNING BUILDUP LAST NIGHT WAS TREMENDOUS.”

Original: We talked with Clark today and he said:

Change to: Clark says he’s in favor of the bill.

Original: We asked Russell how he thinks the council will decide.

Change to: Russell says he thinks council will vote against annexation.

Original: Here’s what Martinez thinks.

Change to: Martinez says he thinks professional hockey in Boulder is years away.

Notice in the examples that you simply rewrite the lead-in to summarize what the tape says. Restructure your lead-ins to be more direct and they will sound cleaner and have more impact.

When writing lead-ins, beware of the *echo-chamber* or *parrot* effect. You accomplish this absurdity by writing a lead-in that says in almost the exact same words what is on the start of the tape:

(News person): . . . Brand retailers say independent stations are behind the gas war.

(AUDIOTAPE): “Independent stations are behind the gas war . . .”

OR

(News person): . . . but say it will be months before the stadium is completed.

(VIDEOTAPE): “. . . Despite earlier predictions, the Bears say it will be months before the stadium is completed.”

OR

(News person): . . . The President is in Japan, signing the final agreement that returns control of three American missile bases to the Japanese government.

(VIDEOTAPE): “The President is in Japan to sign the final agreement that returns control of three American air bases to the Japanese government.”

When you “parrot” in your lead the identical content of your actuality, your newscast sounds unprofessional. The problem most often occurs when someone else has edited the actuality and the writer has not taken time to check how it begins. Take time to find out; your credibility is at stake.

Often you can edit out the first sentence of the actuality you will use on air, and use the information contained in that sentence as the substance of your lead-in. The lead-in thus will flow even more naturally into the piece you air.

EDITING THE ACTUALITY

Few things drive audiences away from a newscast faster than tapes that run too long. Almost no actuality can be broadcast without some editing. News conferences, especially those called by special interest groups, can drag on and on. Eyewitnesses are often emotional, confused and wordy. Scientists sometimes are complex and obtuse. The point is, pull out the “gems” or “nuggets” of what you have recorded and use just those sections to illustrate the event’s essence as succinctly as possible. Signs are posted at many broadcast stations warning personnel to reserve anything more than two minutes for World War III or the Second Coming. A minute is often too long for most taped inserts in radio and in television stories few sound bites are worth more than 20 seconds.

Be judicious in your choice of what to run from a long-winded interview or press conference. Pre-screen what is important for your audience to hear; don’t leave that job up to your listeners and viewers.

Common practice calls for careful selection of the cut or cuts you will use, then demands that you tighten even what you have chosen. A few edits will eliminate unnecessary pauses (unless they are needed for dramatic effect or as telltale signs of the speaker’s hesitancy to answer a question), or a 15-second harangue of no importance in the middle of a piece you have chosen to air.

Additionally, you may wish to use more than one cut from the interview or news conference. If that happens, you will need to write *bridges*, or audio links, between the cuts you plan to use.

(LEAD-IN) Three police detectives were shotgunned to death outside a Miami Beach apartment house today while investigating a routine car theft. Eyewitnesses say the three officers had knocked on an apartment door and were waiting for it to open when the shots broke out.

CT

:32

(OUT: “. . . the most awful thing I’ve ever seen.”)

(BRIDGE) Miami Beach police have identified at least two suspects. Police Chief Martin Smith says eye witnesses are helping create police sketches of the third suspect.

CT

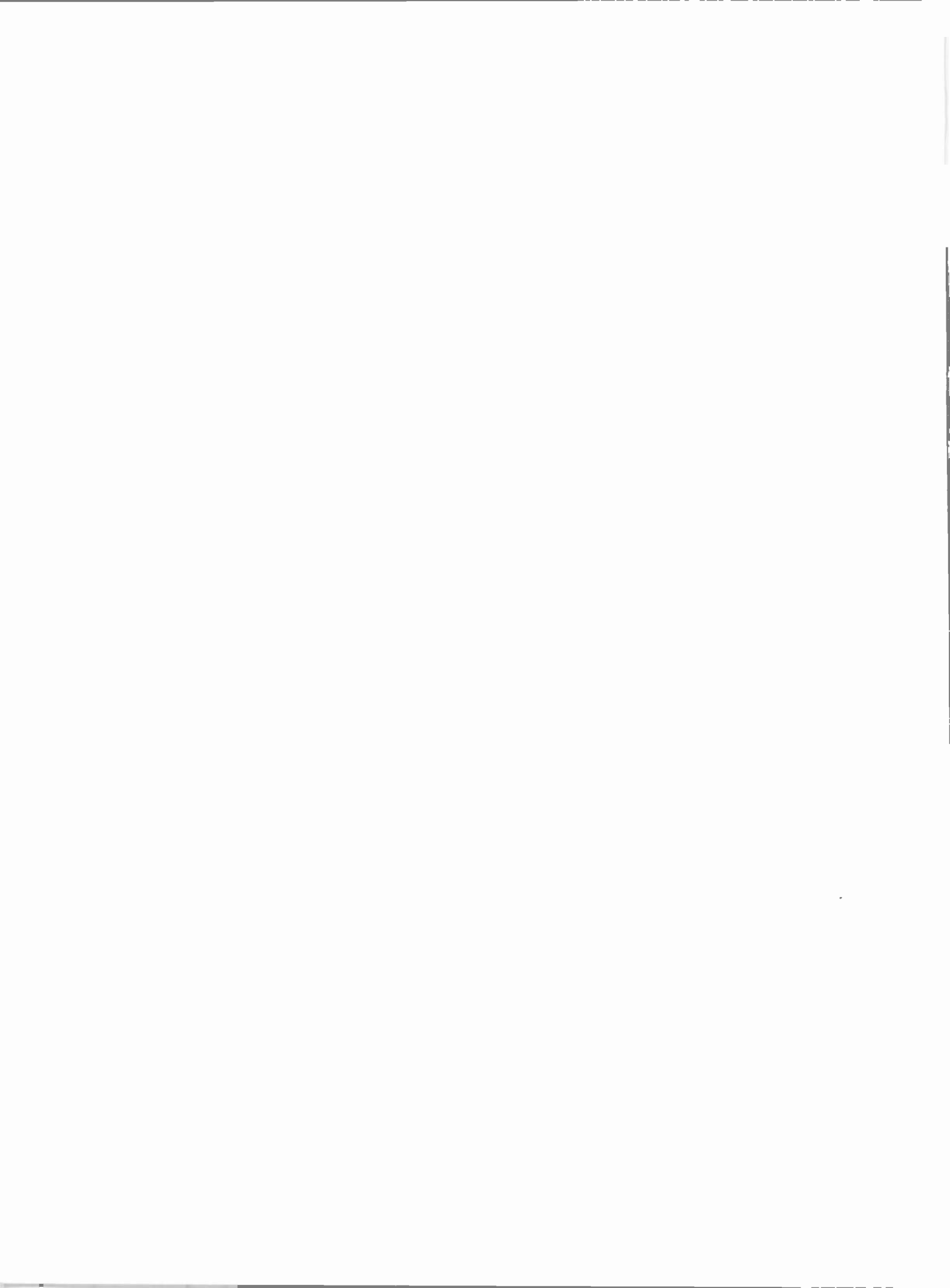
:15

(OUT: "... a stocky man, about 6-foot-two inches, with dark curly hair.")

(TAG) Chief Smith says all three slain officers had families. A benefit fund has been established through Miami Beach police headquarters.

Bridges, whether between tape cuts, or delivered "voice-over" silent pictures between two or more cuts of SOT (sound videotape), help transfer the story smoothly from one related subject to another without wasting time within the actuality. The bridge can be something as simple as a question delivered on air by the newscaster: "Does Davis support public education?" — a question Davis then can answer on tape. The question just cited is five words long, much cleaner and quicker than the 15-second fumble question voiced by the reporter who interviewed our Mr. Davis.

In the unlikely event that an interview is run on the air in unedited form, some stations would ask that you identify the reporter in the lead-in so the reporter's voice is recognizable as the interview progresses. In such a case you would say something to the effect: "Davis told KCUS newsman Mark Johnson he's against any public support of parochial schools." This treatment prepares listeners for two voices; they can now identify the second voice as the news person. In closing, never-never-never open an interview or actuality with the news person's question. The practice sounds clumsy in radio and takes over what should be the lead-in's function; and in television, nothing looks worse than a vacant-eyed interviewee's head on the screen while a 15-second voice-over opening question caresses the audience into mental oblivion.



8-A

1. Record and edit an actuality suitable for broadcast from a news conference, speech or similar event in your community. Write the story (lead-in and tag) that will accompany your actuality, using standard broadcast script format.
2. Using your newspaper or magazine as a source of facts, choose six news stories and assume that the quotations are tape-recorded actualities. Write blind lead-ins (see pp. 182-184) for each of the six stories. Include standard time and outcue designations as part of your script for each story and in each case identify the speaker who will be talking in the "actualities". Remember to identify the speaker by name and title, and to "cushion" the names as appropriate. (See page 17).
3. Listen to several radio and TV newscasts. Write down, verbatim, five blind lead-ins you hear and rewrite, if possible, to improve them.
4. Attend a city council meeting and tape record the proceedings while you take hand-written notes. Allow yourself one hour after the meeting to return home, write the script and edit the tape into a one-minute presentation suitable for broadcast. Allow only one hour for this assignment! If you go past the deadline, assume you have missed airtime.
5. Choose three cuts from the tape you recorded in assignment #4 and script narrative "bridges" that tie together the three cuts into a smooth-flowing, expanded news presentation that accurately reflects the most significant aspects of the city council meeting.

Exercise
Chapter 8

Name _____

Date _____

8-B

Following is an interview between a broadcast interviewer and Dr. Raymond Beardsley, supervising research engineer in a solar energy research laboratory at a major university. Write a self-contained or "blind" lead-in (see page 182) and tag and mark in bold brackets which portion(s) of the interview you would air. Follow proper script format (see Chapter 5) and include a standard time and outcue as part of your script.

(WRITE YOUR LEAD-IN HERE.)

- INTERVIEWER After more than 20 years research, what are your findings about the use of solar energy to heat and cool homes?
- ENGINEER Well, there are many possible uses for solar energy, but the heating of buildings and water is the most advanced and the most competitive with fossil fuels.
- INTERVIEWER How practical are such systems?
- ENGINEER Practical enough to supply about three-fourths the heat requirement in average homes . . . and about three-fourths the hot water an average family uses in a year's time.
- INTERVIEWER But aren't you talking about areas where the sun shines most of the time? What about areas where there's not much sunshine?
- ENGINEER Of course, abundant winter sunshine, high heat requirements and expensive fuel . . . all these things favor the use of solar energy, but most regions in the United States are suitable for solar heating.

To this point the interview has developed along predictable lines, but now comes a departure from the original subject and the interviewer follows up.

Exercise
Chapter 8

Name _____

Date _____

8-B cont'd.

ENGINEER

As a matter of fact, we're seeing increased sales of solar heating equipment in the northeast, areas that receive less sunshine than, say, people get in the far western states. Even then during cloudy stretches, a gas-fired furnace can take over but we find it's not used more than about one-fourth the time. Sunlight provides heat the rest of the time.

INTERVIEWER

Is solar heating competitive with natural gas at today's prices?

ENGINEER

No. But it is cheaper than electric resistance heating in most parts of the country and will be on a par soon with propane and fuel oil in sunny climates. We're going to see savings continue to increase as energy prices go up and solar equipment prices hold steady or even decline.

(WRITE YOUR TAG HERE)

9

Electronic News Gathering

"News . . . is news, and reporting . . . through any medium . . . is still reporting."

Mitchell Charnley

5:48 p.m. — 12 minutes before airtime for the six o'clock news in Minneapolis-St. Paul. A Northwest Orient airliner carrying 300 passengers is closing in for an emergency landing. Air traffic controllers confirm that a crash is possible, and reporting crews from three television stations speed to the airport in vans equipped with electronic news gathering (ENG) equipment.

All three crews set up small, field-sized television cameras, videotape recording and playback units, and microwave transmitters that can beam signals live through the air to be recorded at the home station for later broadcast, or rebroadcast instantly to viewers' homes.

News directors monitoring the developing story are now faced with a tough decision. If they opt for live coverage, viewers may witness an event in which up to 300 persons will die before their eyes.

From two stations come orders for live coverage. A third news director balks at the story's potentially overwhelming impact. He orders his crew to videotape the landing for later editing and playback, either in a special report or on the regular 10 o'clock newscast.

Finally, the plane appears on the horizon. It lands safely without event. The television crews leave and soon the airport is back to normal.

THE ENG REVOLUTION: A BRIEF HISTORY

In the strictest sense, there is no such thing as "electronic journalism." For all the marvelous gadgetry and electronic technology that surrounds broadcast news, there still is no machine in the world that will generate news stories when plugged into a wall outlet.

Journalism remains today, as it always has been, a *process* by which news events are reported and, sometimes, interpreted. The process involves the reporter's judgment, perception, creativity, language skills, integrity, intellect and hard work, and some means to deliver the finished story to an audience. That concept of journalism has not changed much in 200 years.

What has changed are the incredible strides in making the story more immediate — in the rapidity with which the story can be covered in the field and delivered to American homes. Behind this ability to report stories almost instantly are the technological breakthroughs that have resulted in Electronic News Gathering (ENG), or, as some broadcasters call it, Electronic Journalism (EJ), and through a relatively new development known as Satellite News Gathering (SNG).

THE HEART OF ENG

The heart of any ENG system is made up of small, portable television field cameras, lightweight videotape recorders and "go-anywhere" microwave transmission facilities. Barely five years after these systems had been introduced and tested under the fire of broadcast news reporting deadlines, they had almost made the newsfilm camera obsolete. Consider why:

In the 1960's and early 70's, the services of a logistics expert would have been required to secure same-day coverage of a story from New York for broadcast on a Midwestern station. First, the news director in the Midwest would have called a station in New York and requested film of the event. The footage would have been shot in New York, packaged, shipped to the Midwest via air freight, picked up at the airport, driven to the station, processed, edited, and finally projected into the television station's film chain (telecine) and broadcast to home audiences.

If the story broke as late as 10 a.m. in New York, it would have required a minor miracle to air film footage of the event by 10 p.m. that evening. Today, because of ENG, you could righteously complain, as the news director at the same station, if you didn't have the same story on the air within 10 minutes after it broke, or less. Even more amazingly, because of satellite broadcasts, you could expect important overseas stories to be available in an equally short time.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF ENG

Broadcast news, whether on radio or television, has always been touted as the most immediate. Broadcast journalists argue that newspapers are full of yesterday's news, while broadcast news is "now."

The argument that broadcast news is immediate held true for radio but until development of ENG it never quite held water in television news.

TV news broadcasts normally are scheduled no more than four times a day, with the major newscasts at 5 or 6 p.m. and again at 10 or 11 p.m. Regular programming fills the remainder of the television broadcast day, and most stations are reluctant to break into normal (and lucrative) programming except for bulletins and other news of earthshaking interest.

Five-minute newsbreaks on the hour have been common in radio for generations. They have just never been done on television, except in recent years for the one-minute newsbreaks on the hour during prime time. Even then, such breaks do more to promote the upcoming regular TV newscasts than to inform viewers. They are, in effect, a simple headline service.

THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY ON ENG'S DEVELOPMENT

Another reason for television's standard news day schedule, until now, has been technology (not to mention the extreme difficulty of preparing hourly television newscasts with a limited staff.) Consider for example, the difference in the hardware that reporters must carry if they are reporting, respectively, for newspapers, radio and television.

The newspaper reporter can cover a story with only a pencil and a notepad. The radio reporter adds to these resources a lightweight, portable audio tape recorder that weighs an additional five pounds or so. To go live from the scene, the radio reporter has only to walk to the nearest telephone or to speak into a portable transmitter, either carried by the reporter or located conveniently nearby in the reporter's news car. The television reporter, by contrast, goes to the event burdened with camera, videotape cassette recorder (VCR), lights, cables, microwave equipment and similar paraphernalia — a burden that even today may exceed 70 pounds.

THE LIVE TELEVISION BROADCASTS OF YESTERDAY

Imagine the problem that early television reporters faced. Until the introduction of ENG, a live television broadcast from the field (also called a "live remote") required a huge mobile van stuffed with heavy, bulky equipment — huge cameras, unmanageably large 2-inch videotape recorders, thousands of feet of thick cable, primitive microwave relay facilities, switchers, monitors and a full complement of engineers to manage all this gear.

No wonder that live television remotes were attempted only in the case of important, and usually predictable, news events — political conventions, space missile launchings, U.N. reports, state funerals and the like — or to broadcast routine sporting events where the huge cameras could be manhandled into place a day or so before broadcast and mounted heavily on huge, immobile tripods.

To cover the more routine events, television news relied on 16mm film cameras that became lighter and more manageable as the years passed, but which produced pictures that first had to be driven back to the station, processed and edited before they could be broadcast.

TECHNOLOGY SPEEDS THE REPORTING PROCESS

Although radio news reporting appears deceptively easy these days, it has been made simple by the tremendous advancements in reporting technology that now are being realized in television.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, sound for radio and film could be recorded in the field only with the aid of a van the size of a milk truck that overflowed with bulky, low-quality wire and wax cylinder recording equipment. Magnetic audio recording tape did not exist until the late 1940s.*

Over the years, as transistors and silicon chip technology helped to make miniaturization possible, portable audio recorders were introduced that could, by themselves, supplant the entire function of a truckload of old audio equipment. These units, familiar to almost everyone, weigh only a few pounds and in some cases produce sound comparable in quality to the larger studio sound recorders.

*"Development of the First VTR," Ampex Corporation.

BOMBS HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

The problem that ENG solved was how to make television news as immediate as radio. Even during World War II, Americans in the most remote parts of the country could sit at home in living rooms illuminated by kerosene lamps, tune in their battery-powered radios, and hear Edward R. Murrow's live broadcasts from London on CBS News.

As German V-Bombs fell on London, American radio audiences nearly half a world away could hear the bombs' ugly explosions split the night while Murrow described the devastation from a rooftop somewhere overlooking Trafalgar Square.

Murrow used radio to help listeners "see" with their ears in those days — including a memorable broadcast in which he artfully portrayed the dignity with which Londoners walked to bomb shelters during the nightly air raids. He accomplished this "audio portrait" simply by laying his microphone on the sidewalk outside a bomb shelter, a perfect spot to catch the unhurried sounds of footsteps as bombs exploded nearby.

The traditions of radio news reporting which Murrow helped to establish continue to this day. If a tornado develops somewhere in our vicinity, we look to radio for live reports of its

progress. Live interviews with visiting dignitaries, live reports from the scene of an airline crash — all are easily possible with radio. And today, because of ENG, such reports are equally as possible on television.

THE ATTRACTION OF TELEVISION

Above all else, the attraction of television news has been that it is visual. No one has ever asked radio to provide pictures or newspapers to run movies on the front page. At its best, television is unexcelled in its ability to take us to the scene of an event and make us "eyewitnesses"* to news in the making.

Without pictures live from the scene, fast-breaking events reported on television would be nothing more than radio accompanied by the talking head of the television news reporter or by a static slide thrown up on the screen to cover the absence of more suitable pictures.

THE SEARCH BEGINS

As late as 1956, television news was mostly a copy cat — a carbon copy of newspaper-style journalism and radio news rolled into one. The average television viewer was treated to occasional live coverage of boxing matches, and even more infrequently to live broadcasts from political convention floors. Television cameras were unbelievably heavy and hard to move. All broadcasts were in black and white.

For sports coverage, stations were stuck with huge cameras that sat passively on tripods at strategic locations throughout the stadium. For convention coverage, something better was needed than simple bird's-eye views of the action. Producers wanted roving cameras that could be moved up close to a national political figure for an interview, next to the convention delegation from Florida, then to the speaker's podium as delegates were polled.

What was needed was a light, mobile television camera that was not tied to an umbilical cord of coaxial cables that fed the signal back to a central location for broadcast. Also needed was a camera that would broadcast in color, go virtually anywhere, and operate in almost every temperature extreme while it unfailingly produced high-quality pictures.

NETWORKS TACKLE THE PROBLEM

The networks began to explore these problems, and as early as 1956 had fashioned a field unit with a standard camera and self-contained generator linked clumsily to a huge mobile van. It was an arrangement of infinitely more utility for convention coverage than it would ever be in the Nicaraguan jungles.

But by the 1960s, the networks had developed what at the time were major breakthroughs in technology. Even as early as 1958, electronic systems were available to cover political happenings "on the move" from down on the convention floor.

* Television news is promoted as an eyewitness medium when all it truly offers is a collage of *symbols* (sounds and pictures) to represent events that are far removed in space from the viewer's living room. Exact representation of the news is further muddled by such factors as selection of camera angles, word choice, and the recombination of words and pictures during editing. The words and pictures that finally are broadcast remain symbols which viewers must reinterpret according to the meanings they assign such symbols.

The first camera units weighed an unwieldy 90 pounds or so, but they were portable after a fashion, in about the same way a 90-pound chunk of lead becomes portable when a handle is attached to it. The operator held a shoulder-mounted, battery-powered television camera which fed signals to a portable transmitter mounted in the operator's backpack. The contraption was reminiscent of a Buck Rogers outfit — antennas sprouting from the operator's headgear and from the backpack transmitter, large batteries and a camera that drew unfailing attention to itself. There were no candid shots with such equipment. Still, the thing worked and further refinements managed to reduce the size and weight even further.

HENRY KISSINGER SPEAKS AND THE NETWORKS TURN TO ENG

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, CBS, Inc., had become the recognized leader in ENG research. Electronic news gathering as we know it today had long been in the planning stages at CBS Labs, and even then CBS was experimenting with prototype cameras the size of a cigarette pack. (A major hangup in producing these ultra-miniature cameras lies in the problem of lens optics. No technology exists to produce a comparably-sized miniature lens, although further research in liquid optics may help to solve the problem.)

The impetus for miniaturization was simple. CBS wanted to be first with the news and needed lightweight electronic cameras that did not depend on film processing to accomplish the trick.

On October 26, 1972, CBS used its new ENG technology to pull off an important news "scoop." After years of social upheaval over the Vietnam War, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger appeared for the first time on national television to utter a phrase that made headlines around the world: "A war that has been raging for ten years is drawing to a conclusion," Dr. Kissinger announced. "We believe peace is at hand."

Peace was not immediately at hand, of course, but the statement did mark the beginning of the end of the Vietnam War. And it was a statement of immense political impact at a time when President Nixon wanted favorable publicity to help him win re-election.

CBS covered the news conference with electronic cameras and broadcast Kissinger's statements live to the nation. A spokesman at one of the other networks says, "(Our network) had its tail whipped that day. We had talked about ENG, and when CBS went on the air live with the Kissinger story and we didn't, because we had to process our film, the barriers disappeared very quickly. We began our conversion to ENG the next day."

SERENDIPITY AT WORK

At the local level, the adoption of ENG was hastened by two remarkable events in May 1974, one in St. Louis, Missouri; the other in Los Angeles.

KMOX-TV, the CBS owned-and-operated station in St. Louis, already owned one of the first generation of pure, electronic journalism (EJ) cameras, a color Akai unit which was small, portable and lightweight. The Japanese-built camera was originally purchased to shoot digital displays of election returns in the KMOX-TV studios. The camera was mounted on a small stand in the studio and had no other purpose at the time than to be trained unblinkingly on the election board.

Technicians already had adapted the camera to produce broadcast-quality pictures. In their spare time they proceeded to adapt an old van that had been used to haul equipment back and forth to the station transmitter, and on this van they mounted an antiquated microwave dish for experimental purposes.

This jury-rigged system, made up of a less than adequate camera, an old van and a rusty microwave dish, was operational by late May 1974 when CBS President Arthur Taylor happened to be visiting KMOX-TV.

The afternoon of Taylor's visit, southern portions of St. Louis were hit with a terrible wind and hail storm, and news management made the decision. "We have the capability to go live," management said. "Let's do it." And so KMOX, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, took its Rube Goldberg "ENG Van" to the scene of a school where all the windows had been blown out, cut into the middle of afternoon programming, and broadcast the storm and its aftermath live from the scene.

The reporter at the scene that day was Sandy Gilmore, who later became a correspondent for NBC News. Breaking into regular programming with live material throughout the afternoon, Gilmore was able to report, while Taylor watched with fascination back at the newsroom, that anxious parents should not worry — no children at the school had been seriously injured.

Later that afternoon, Taylor invited Tom Batista, General Manager of KMOX-TV and himself a proponent of ENG, to accompany him on the CBS plane back to New York. On the way he told Batista, "It's a go. CBS will put the money into ENG and KMOX will be the pilot station."

The same month in California, the Los Angeles Police Department finally discovered the hide-out of the Symbionese Liberation Army. Crews from KNXT-TV, tipped off by police radio monitors, were among the first reporters on the scene. The crew pulled into an alley to within a few feet from the guns of Patty Hearst's captors and began sending live pictures to afternoon viewers. By early evening the networks had joined pool coverage that included 50 other local stations and were relaying to the nation live coverage of the siege as reporters ducked bullets and police dove for cover beneath their cars.

KMOX BECOMES FIRST LOCAL STATION TO GO ALL ENG

By mid-summer 1974, carpenters were tearing walls down in the KMOX newsroom and installing racks to hold ENG equipment. One-inch reel-to-reel videotape recorders were installed. Newsroom desks were outfitted with TV monitors, microphones and adequate lighting so that reporters could do live shots not only from the studio, but from the newsroom itself. Three vans were purchased and equipped with the necessary gear to originate live news broadcasts from the field.

From the first day of conversion at KMOX, the idea was to go live on every story possible. For two weekends in October 1974, KMOX conducted trial broadcasts with ENG. Then, on Monday, October 14 the station went all ENG. Although KMOX-TV was not the first station to do live ENG broadcasts, it is credited as the first local station in the United States to convert its news operation from film entirely to ENG.

THE CBS DECISION

CBS chose St. Louis as the test market for several practical realities. Although KMOX was the smallest of the five local television stations owned by CBS, Inc., KMOX employees were all

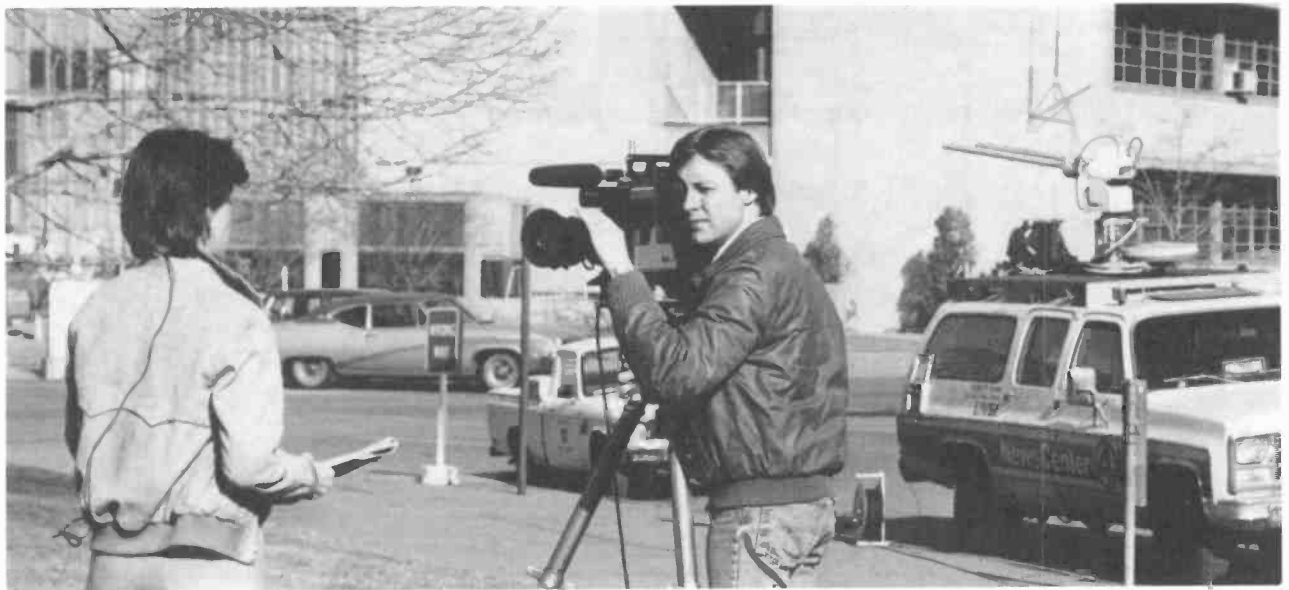


Figure 9-1. ENG speeds coverage of breaking news events.

covered under the same national labor agreement as were CBS television network employees. This consideration was significant since no one had yet worked out which film and engineering unions would cover ENG technicians and camera operators. CBS thus employed an efficient way to avoid initial jurisdictional problems with ENG at the network level.

Another consideration for CBS management in 1974 was whether ENG would, in fact, work as it was designed. St. Louis obviously was a safer market to test the limitations and pitfalls of ENG than, say, WCBS in New York or the CBS Evening News.



Figure 9-2. KMOX-TV, St. Louis, made broadcast history on October 14, 1974, when it became the first local station in the nation to convert its news operation entirely from newsfilm to videotape.

THE EARLY DAYS OF ENG

Fred Burroughs, News Director at KMOX-TV, recalls with a slight shudder the early ENG days in St. Louis.

"I remember going downtown to a big fire at 2 o'clock in the morning. Reporters from all three stations were there, and a good friend of mine, a film cameraman with the ABC affiliate, was shooting with a little hand-held Bell and Howell film camera.

"He saw our camera crew out covering the fire with an Ikegami minicamera — the old one with the backpack and the cables and tape machine — and it was unbelievably bulky.

"My friend didn't understand at all. He stood there with his little camera and watched our guys in water and fire hoses, with cable and tape machines and camera all twisted together, and he turned to me and asked, 'And this is the wave of the future?'

"Our guys were very unhappy to begin with, lugging all that gear and it was those kinds of events that put doubts in our minds. We would ask ourselves, 'Why are we attempting this?' But it didn't take long until the competition said, 'Hold it, ENG works' and then the competition was soon into ENG up to their necks, and ENG did become the wave of the industry."

TV AUDIENCES BECOME EYEWITNESSES TO THE NEWS

Above all else, from the network level to the smallest TV market, ENG brings television news to home audiences faster than ever before. Today, without ENG capability, no station could remain competitive with other television stations in the market.



Figure 9-3. Since the advent of ENG, helicopters have become an indispensable tool of the television journalist. *(Photo courtesy of Bell Helicopter Textron)*

Since ENG has the capacity to make audiences "eyewitnesses" to the news, the station that takes them first to the scene of breaking news has a distinct competitive advantage. The story aired live at 6 o'clock on one station shows up as old news when broadcast for the first time on film or tape at 10 o'clock on another station.

As a member of the television audience, however, no one normally compares ENG coverage among stations at any given moment as one can sit down and compare newspaper coverage.

The real competitive value of ENG lies in enabling the station to fulfill viewer *expectations*. Once a strong loyalty develops, the viewer expects his or her favorite station to have the important news and to have it first. The station's on-air and promotional efforts help to project that image. If the station is aggressive in covering the news, hiring good people, and using the latest technology to help improve what it puts on the air, then it has a good chance to be number one in the market, or at least to make a strong showing in the market.

ENG ABROAD

What makes ENG so immensely valuable at the network level is the ability to go anywhere in the world with a self-contained production outfit. American audiences still, would not be seeing some of the stories covered overseas today if networks relied on film.

By 1977, American networks had routinely demonstrated that news could be returned from abroad more quickly with electronic gear than with film. Pictures returned to this country were remarkable in their clarity, and soon, late-breaking stories from foreign countries were being aired the same day, even from the scene.

During the overthrow of the Shah of Iran, for example, it was not possible for news agencies working in Iran to feed color pictures out of that country because of censorship and a general breakdown in the social order.

NBC News, however, had a well-established bureau in Cairo which could feed stories back to the states from Iran, via satellite, almost on demand. The other networks had similar facilities. Had news stories been shot on film in Iran, they could not have been fed from Egypt. There was no color motion picture film processing in Cairo; had there been, the story still would have been at the mercy of local quality control standards that may or may not have met network processing standards. As a further difficulty, the networks would have been forced to rely on local telecine machines to convert film images to electronic signals for broadcast via satellite, and in that part of the world telecine machines can prove unreliable with amazing frequency.

Today with ENG, crews can go virtually anywhere in the world with their cameras and editing equipment and operate without the need to rely on local film processing facilities. Once the piece is recorded on videotape, it is ready for broadcast.

One of the paradoxes of modern life is that practically anywhere in the world, even though local stations in some of the developing nations may be unbelievably primitive, almost all countries have access to the Intelsat satellite system, which they've installed largely for voice and Telex communications. Given the right political situation, American crews can wheel up the equipment they travel with, plug it into the system, and feed the story back to New York via the Intelsat system.

Because of this system, American audiences were able to watch their president travel through Africa, Monrovia and Nigeria, and to follow American negotiators on shuttle trips between Cairo and Tel Aviv during Middle East peace initiatives. When the president returned



Figure 9-4. Electronic News Gathering allows live news coverage from virtually any location.

home, the networks concluded coverage of the event with a four-way live hookup using ENG equipment in Tel Aviv, Cairo, Andrews Air Force Base, and at the network studios in New York. Equally absorbing "history in the making" was beamed around the world when the American hostages were returned from Iran; during the successful launch and return to earth of the Space Shuttle Columbia; and during the attempted assassinations of President Ronald Reagan and Pope John Paul II.

SATELLITE NEWS GATHERING

Today another technological revolution is occurring in broadcast journalism, the advent of Satellite News Gathering, or SNG. Through microwave and satellite technology, local TV news operations can cover stories live and in color from anywhere in the world. No longer must local news audiences depend upon network news anchors and reporters for national and international news. Today they can receive those same stories via satellite, as reported by reporters from their favorite local station.

This national and even global news gathering capacity often is made possible through cooperative networks of local stations, who make their satellite uplink dishes, helicopters, and mobile studio vans available to member stations. For a station in Seattle, this means that local coverage of hurricane damage at a Houston shipping port is as simple as flying a reporting crew into Houston. The crew can then uplink reports to Seattle using a cooperating station's satellite facilities in Houston. While this reporting flexibility does not guarantee better television news,

it does offer that potential. Viewers throughout the country need to know how distant stories affect them. Businessmen in Seattle may need locally tailored reports which tell them about effects of the hurricane on shipping throughout the Pacific Basin. Tomorrow, those same businessmen may need to know how Pentagon deficits will likely affect an economy heavily dependent upon aircraft manufacturing. For all its potential, Satellite News Gathering carries with it some pitfalls. Some observers fear that once huge investments are made in satellite technology, stations will have no choice but to use it. This might guide stations toward certain kinds of news at the expense of other, possibly more important stories. "The temptation is to do stories that lend themselves to your technology," says Mike Crew, news director at WJKS-TV, Jacksonville, Florida.

With huge investments in electronic news gathering ability, television journalists are under pressure to put live reports on the air whenever possible. Live stories help justify ENG expenditures that may run as high as several million dollars at the largest local television stations. Instead, stations that aggressively promote their ability to cover news "live" may gather wider audiences among viewers who believe live capability helps stations do a better job of reporting "all the news."

Viewer expectations often remain unrealized, however, because the ability to "go live" is simply that — an ability. Not all stories warrant live coverage and those that do seldom break at times when they can be broadcast live. The exceptions are the highly visual and dramatic stories that deserve live coverage because of their significance. At the average station only a few stories a year may fall into this category — important resignations, strikes, major crime, disasters and other so-called "crisis stories." Run-of-the-mill stories might better be videotaped and brought to the audience at a more sensible time, after reporters have had a chance to research the story and edit it into a more thoughtful and comprehensive package.

WHY STATIONS COVER THE "PREDICTABLE" LIVE STORIES

Since most newscasts are aired at scheduled times, news events that are covered live must be happening during the same narrow "window" of time as the newscast. Hard news rarely breaks to coincide with scheduled newscasts, and when it does crews first must reach the scene and set up their equipment before the live broadcast can begin. The tendency, therefore, is to cover the predictable daily events — the routine speeches, news conferences, interviews and sporting events of the day. Newsmakers have grown more sophisticated over the years and now, wise to the ways of television news, routinely schedule announcements and news conferences too late in the day for anything but live coverage.

REPORTERS MAY LOSE CONTROL OF THE LIVE REPORT

Among the worst offenders are the big names in politics, sports and business who, hoping to use the station for a little free publicity, conveniently arrange their airport arrivals just in time for live coverage during the 6 p.m. newscast. Journalists who are forced to cover an important story live because of someone else's schedule have lost control of the story. There is no chance to check accuracy; no time to assure that the story is balanced. Further, live interviews, when present, must run "as is" with no time for editing, no time to probe beneath surface answers. A skillful interviewee can talk nonstop during the minute or so available and project an image of righteous indignation when cut off because time allotted for the story has run out.

ONLY THE BEST STORIES SHOULD INTERRUPT NORMAL PROGRAMS

Except for extremely newsworthy events that are highly dramatic and visual, most stations rarely interrupt normal entertainment programming for live reports. For one reason, live inserts throw off the programming schedule and may preempt lucrative commercials. Live inserts also may drive viewers away from the station when favorite programming is interrupted. And always the question must be asked: will viewers be exposed to possible violence, bad taste or obscenity?

THE BEST LIVE REPORTS ARE DRAMATIC AND VISUAL

Anyone who has watched much television news can recall instances in which the reporter on a live story should have stayed home. Examples of stories that should not be covered live include everything from the aftermath of a mattress fire (in which no one is injured or available to be interviewed), to the reporter standing on a pier as he describes a hurricane gathering force miles away and out of sight over the horizon line. Equally arcane are the live weather reports from the local botanical garden or the live standups in which the reporter describes barely visible scenes over his or her left shoulder.

Good live television, by contrast, contains strong elements of visual interest and dramatic significance. Such reports — the successful rescue of trapped miners, for example, or on-scene reports of a threatening flood — offer a compelling reason to go live. They allow the audience to witness history in the making or to participate in an unusually dramatic story that touches many lives as it develops. Stories that lack such visual impact and substance serve only as additional contributions to bad television.

QUALITIES THAT MAKE A GOOD LIVE REPORTER

As a journalist who does live reports you will cover stories into which you suddenly have been injected, sometimes without the benefit of adequate preparation, research or insight. To

WAYS TO IMPROVE LIVE REPORTING SKILLS

Live reporting demands individual traits that include such personal resources as a quick and analytical mind, the ability to speak extemporaneously, a well-developed vocabulary, good judgment and a sixth sense for what makes news. But even these traits can further be improved through training and practice.

Some news directors cite the desirability of news experience in radio, a relatively instant medium that requires the ability to present frequent live, ad-lib reports. Other stations cite the benefits of general assignment reporting, a job in which the reporter learns not only to identify and develop the sources that make news, but becomes an expert in covering a vast array of news topics. Individuals in this position learn, as well, how to meet people, how to conduct meaningful interviews, and how to present themselves on camera.

Beyond such experiences, the live reporter has access to that old maxim that "practice makes perfect."

do the job effectively you will need to know a little about almost every subject under the sun, to think quickly and have such a solid foundation in reporting skills that you simply react when there is not time to think.

You will need extraordinary abilities to ad-lib, to draw solid answers from complete strangers encountered only minutes before, and you will need special gifts of perspective to help your audience understand the causes of the event you are reporting.

"To be successful at live reporting, individuals must have some very basic traits that have nothing to do with education," says Roger Ogden, General Manager of KCNC-Denver. "They must be able to think on their feet. They must have a sufficient vocabulary and they must have an analytical mind so they can quickly weed fiction from fact."

THE LIVE REPORTING PROCESS

With the advent of live capability, news stations have had to reassess traditional ways of covering the news. Newsrooms have been reorganized; field crews have been altered; traditional job responsibilities, by necessity, have been redefined.

Nowhere are the changes more obvious than at the assignment desk. In times past the assignment editor's job was simple: "Cover everything that happens." In touch with field crews by two-way radio, the assignment editor today not only dispatches reporters from one location to the next, but also coordinates live news inserts in scheduled newscasts or when regular programming is interrupted.

Often called the *electronic news coordinator*, today's assignment editor also may decide which stories will be taped on the scene and which will be fed live to the station. Stories not important enough for live coverage can be videotaped on the scene and microwaved to the station at a later time, or can be beamed live to the station for recording and later editing on videotape.



Figure 9-5. A television crew receives briefing material prior to shooting at a political convention.
(Photo courtesy of RTNDA)

Whenever live stories are to be used in scheduled newscasts, two-way radio communication with the field crew enables staff members at the station to evaluate the story, suggest interview questions or even relay information about the story in progress that may be unknown to crews in the field.



Figure 9-6. Two-way communications gear allows field reporter Neal Browne to converse with news personnel at the station or to broadcast live on-air reports from the helicopter.

(Photo courtesy of KBTv-Denver)

LIVE FEEDS WITH VTR “B ROLL”

Live reports may contain at least some tape-delayed material. Crews that arrive at a news event as shortly as 15 minutes before airtime may videotape and field-edit significant action or microwave the raw footage back to the station for immediate editing. By newstime, the preshot and edited videotape (known in the trade as a “B Roll”) can be rolled over a live standup report — either from the scene or from the studio.

The term “B Roll” is a hold-over from film editing days when sound from a filmed interview (the “A Roll”) would be carried on one projector while scenes of the event under discussion (the “B Roll”) would be carried on a separate projector. The basic process remains the same, except that the filmed “A Roll” has been replaced by the live standup report, while the “B Roll” is now on videotape.

THE ETHICS OF ENG REPORTING

Only a few years ago, before the rapid evolution of ENG, broadcast journalists faced fewer of the challenges, problems and opportunities that electronic news gathering now makes commonplace.

Broadcast journalists did not face the ethical problems involved in deciding to broadcast airline crashes live and in color. They did not have to make instant news judgments as developing stories were sent live to mass audiences.



Figure 9-7. Electronic News Gathering relies heavily upon videotape which can be assembled from various sources into compact news reports.

Live coverage of dramatic events, such as an airliner crash or an apartment house fire, has the tendency to be more emotionally involving than reports shown after the fact. Live coverage offers the viewer more intense anticipation about the story's outcome, and hence more suspense. An additional element not present even in live radio news coverage is the possible visual identification of victims before next of kin can be notified. Ethics in journalism imply a responsibility to be believable and to earn the public trust. No journalist can afford to compromise truth or good taste. To do so is to lose faith with the public and to bias the information upon which viewers form their opinions and decide courses of private and public action.

Ethics (and professionalism) in journalism presuppose a belief in service to the public, a belief in self-regulation, and autonomy in one's work, and in some ENG broadcasts those considerations are outweighed by the capability which ENG provides to go live almost at will.

In the infancy of ENG, the tendency at some stations was to go live on every conceivable kind of story. We have the capability, went the reasoning, so why not use it? Suddenly reporters, unprepared for the consequences of this technology, were given the freedom to bury themselves in it.

Viewers across the nation were assaulted with startling shots of plane crash victims receiving last rites on bloody landing strips, vulgar obscenities uttered unthinkingly and

sometimes with calculation by news interviewees, the actual commission of suicide by a man holding hostages in a sleazy bar, naked "streakers" and "mooners" flashing for the minicams at protest rallies, and acts of violence that included the assault of a social organizer who was struck in the head with a glass water pitcher as he delivered a speech.

"Many stations learned the hard way," in the view of the late Steve Huddleston, who served in the 1970s as executive news coordinator at KMOX-TV in St. Louis. "Obviously, there were some stories that no responsible station would broadcast: a riot or its location, the most gruesome details at the scene of a crime, for example, but they would do almost everything else, and sometimes they got into trouble."

TOWARD A NEWS ETHIC

The ability to broadcast live calls for a news ethic because a journalist seldom can adequately "background" a live broadcast. There is no lead time to bone up on the event, no leisure to reconsider a decision once it is made. By the time people see a story on their home screens, it is too late for the reporter to back down from a bad decision, or from a lapse in news judgment or good taste.

Consider the consequences of one station's wrong decision in a Midwestern television market. The story began when police surrounded a local bar where an armed man had taken several customers hostage and threatened to kill himself. ENG crews from several stations arrived almost simultaneously and worked their way to within feet of the doorway where the gunman was barricaded. A police negotiator tried to talk the man into peaceful surrender. At that point, one station broke into regular programming with a live report from the scene. The gunman yelled to the camera crew, "If you don't get away from the door I'm gonna' shoot myself!", and suddenly he did put a gun to his head and pulled the trigger. The man died in full view of the camera and the thousands of viewers who were watching, many of them children who had tuned in to late afternoon programming. The other stations at the scene videotaped the story but did not broadcast it live. Viewer reaction to the event as broadcast live was, of course, immediate and irate.

THE BENEFIT OF PERSPECTIVE

In the case of this or any other event, the newspaper reporter has relative leisure to develop a perspective about the story that is being reported. The same is true, to a lesser extent, of the broadcast journalist who prepares a delayed report on audio tape or videotape. This "leisure of perspective" occurs as notes are gathered, the reporter drives back to the newsroom, the story is typed, the copy is passed through editors and rewrite persons, and finally emerges as a finished story. The process of the print story (or delayed broadcast account) is more "self-correcting" than the instant report because it is the product of more reflective thought.

The leisure of retrospective analysis applies not only to an on-the-scene inspection of the event, the taking of notes and gathering of facts, but also to the assimilation of the story by its intended audiences. Newspaper and delayed broadcast audiences *know* the story has evolved through time and that its author has had time to analyze the event more thoroughly than the reporter of a live event.

Audiences who witness live reports must assume more of the burden of making sense of news events. Walter Cronkite has said that the reporter's job is to present the facts and "let the chips fall where they may." In other words, reporters present the facts; what people do with those facts is up to them. But now, with live ENG, television reporters are saying to their

audiences: "Here are the facts, as best we can report them, *as they are happening.*" This is a far cry from saying, "Here are the facts of what happened," because in the live report so little is known at that point about the happening. The emphasis is almost entirely on the "what," with little consideration, by necessity, of the essential "why" of the event, or of its potential consequences.

INSTANT NEWS POLICY

Television news operations traditionally employ far fewer employees than their newspaper counterparts. For that reason television reporters typically conduct far less research than newspaper reporters. TV stations may do only one or two stories per week, or at best a series on that one story.

Often, fast breaking news events preclude proper backgrounding, even for seasoned reporters. When events as calamitous as earthquakes in Mexico City or the Soviet Union's nuclear meltdown at Chernobyl occur, reporters must react almost instinctively, their primary concern how to report the story as thoroughly as possible with little information available.

The demands that live broadcast create do not lend themselves to treatment in a handbook of ethical guidelines. Such policies must deal in broad generalities because in news, few events can be dealt with in specifics. There is no way to know what to predict.

At some stations, the problem is handled by designating certain key people who are responsible for dictating "instant policy." Often, these individuals are the news director and the executive news producer. "When we have a major breaking story — a hostage situation or a plane crash — we call those people in" says Roger Ogden, General Manager at KCNC-TV. "They make the kinds of decisions that can't be printed in a manual."

Even when such guidelines exist, there is the real question of whether they routinely can be implemented. Nora Beloff, former reporter for the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Reuters news agency, says "The life of a journalist has to be a series of compromises in which ethics is unlikely to be the overriding consideration." The reason for this, simply put, is that there is no time to form ethical decisions while under the pressure of deadlines and instant reporting. Such decisions, Edward R. Murrow once said, must be "hammered out by the individual on the anvil of experience."

"Our people, both in the newsroom and in the field, have to have a solid news or editorial philosophy to begin with, because broadcast news happens so quickly," adds NBC Producer Thomas Wolzien. "When you're sitting in the newsroom or the control room at 5:30 or 6:00 o'clock, and you're going live somewhere, you have a real problem because you don't have time to think. You can purely and basically react."

THE NEED TO DETERMINE STORY POTENTIAL

Just as ethics and good taste are a matter of individual judgment, so too are the considerations that dictate whether a given event should be covered live in the first place. Don Hewitt, executive producer of CBS *60 Minutes*, maintains that for the most part, live television is not good television. Hewitt believes the best television has drama that cannot be built into a live broadcast unless the event in and of itself is dramatic. And, says Hewitt, few events are inherently dramatic.

In this context, live coverage of people escaping from a flood-ravaged canyon is dramatic, but a meeting of city council might better be taped and edited into a solid story for later presentation. There is nothing inherently dramatic in scenes of council members sitting around a table while a reporter tries to explain what they're doing.

On the other hand, a 15-second "talking head" piece with the winning quarterback at the Super Bowl might be as dramatic as a live shot of an oil refinery explosion. The joy in a mother's face as she is reunited with her lost child in the mountains may be as valid for live coverage as the rescue of stranded motorists trapped on a snowy interstate highway. The point is that decisions about each story must be made on the basis of the individual conditions that surround each event.

LIVE COVERAGE OF THE NEXT WAR?

Even in the face of such dilemmas, the problem widens. Facilities are close at hand that would enable journalists to cover the next war, wherever it may be, via live broadcasts. Tiny microwave facilities and portable satellite ground stations would make such broadcasts a realistic possibility.

The same capability during the Vietnam War, for instance, would have enabled audiences to see an assault on what was called "Hamburger Hill" in Vietnam as it was happening. Minicams on the hill would have shown troops on both sides being shot and falling. The justification for such broadcasts, and they could be extended to include even live coverage of executions, is that journalists have a responsibility to show viewers what is happening in this world, pleasant or not. If war or capital punishment are fostered by a society, the reasoning goes, then its members should be involved in the consequences of such decisions as witnesses.

Each of us as individuals must decide the merit of such proposals, not only as members of society but as journalists. Edward R. Murrow, a reporter for much of his adult life, used the instruments of radio and television. But, observed Murrow, the instruments he used were mass media where he as the reporter was remote from his audience. "It is rather like putting letters in a rusty mail box and never being sure that anyone comes to collect them," Murrow wrote. "Yet the job of a reporter who can never see the eyes of his listeners is to provide information upon which opinion and belief can be based."

One problem with live reporting is that its effects cannot always be measured, let alone predicted. The ethics that guide ENG use must remain the same that have guided news reporting through the years in all media — fairness, accuracy, restraint, and concern for the audience's right to know about the events that are best understood in the perspective of time, and with the benefit of full information.

Assignments
Chapter 9

Name _____

Date _____

9-A

1. Tour news facilities at a nearby TV station and observe, first hand, the operation of ENG camera, editing and transmission equipment.
2. Invite a local news person to your class to discuss live broadcast coverage.
3. Discuss in class the ethical considerations of live broadcast coverage of an event in which profanity and/or obscene gestures are a probable element of the story. Should your audience be subjected to these spontaneous occurrences; do such occurrences lend anything of value or substance to your news report? Should they be allowed on the air?
4. Discuss how you would react in the following live news gathering situations:
 - A boat capsizes near shore, spilling scores of refugees into the water. Your reporter enters the water to help rescue small children and the elderly. You can elect to shoot videotape of the rescue, or to put down your camera and assist in the rescue. What will you do?
 - You are a news producer who has assigned a live report on the school superintendent's expected resignation. Your field reporter calls to say the school board can't hope to reach a decision until midnight or later. Crews from competing stations are preparing live reports. Your reporter asks to cancel her live report and spend the time gathering additional background information from parents and administrators. Your news anchor could easily prepare a voice over report to accompany news footage shot earlier in the evening. Do you make your reporter stay to do the live report, or allow her to leave the scene to gather more information?
 - You and your photographer are covering a hostage situation. The hostage taker calls police and demands a live television interview with a reporter from your station. Police ask permission to impersonate you, and to lend them a TV camera and news identification. They further promise you exclusive use of any footage they are able to shoot. Innocent lives are at stake. What do you tell the police?

9-B

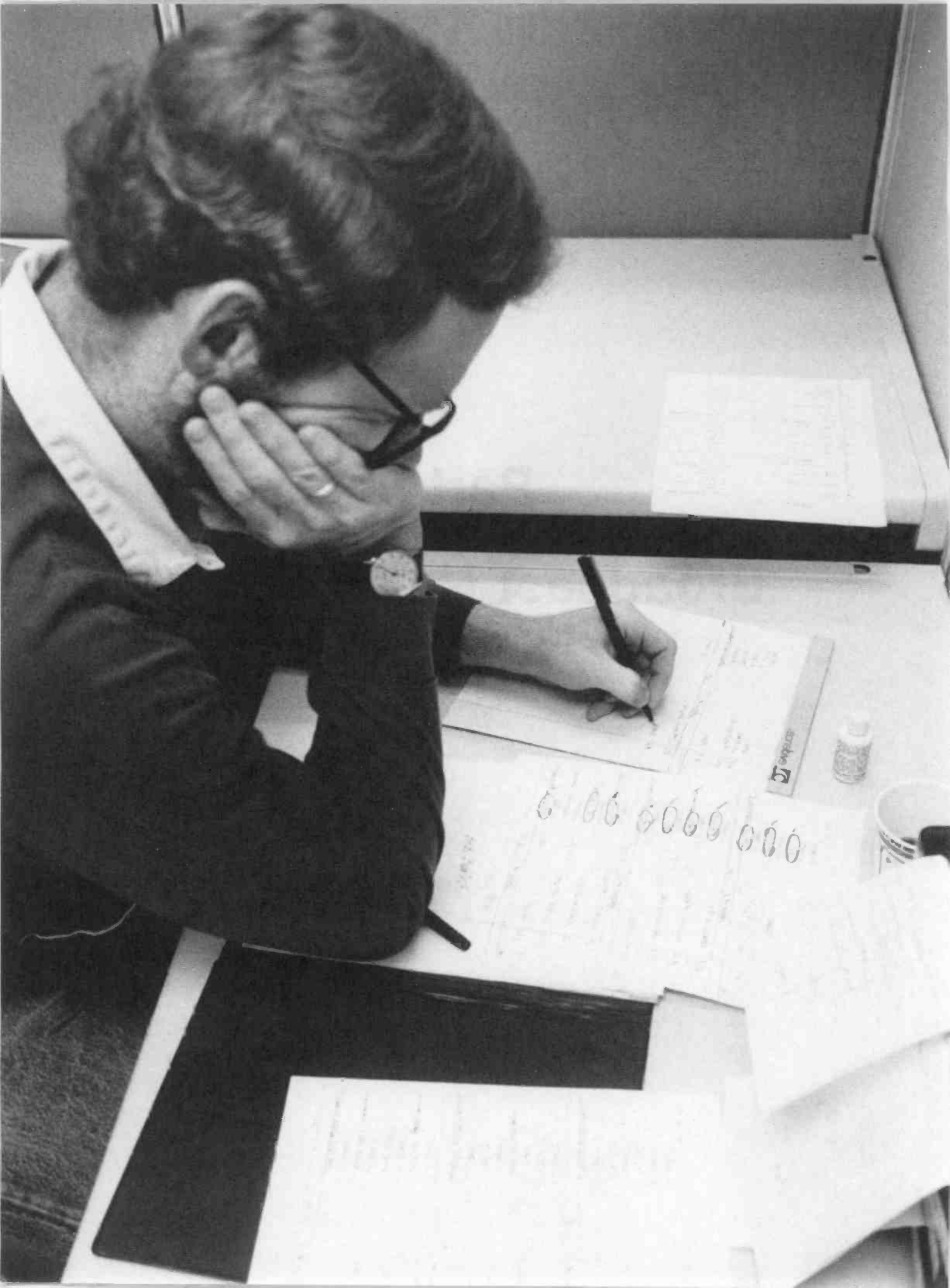
Consider that you have the following stories that you could broadcast live via ENG equipment on the 10 o'clock newscast. Since you have only one ENG van in this instance, determine which story you would cover and defend your answer in the space provided below.

Potential Stories for Live Coverage:

1. Twelve injury victims are arriving at the local hospital from a gondola accident at a nearby ski slope.
2. The mayor of your city has called a late evening news conference following city council meeting to announce his resignation.
3. A Hollywood celebrity is in town to kick off the annual muscular dystrophy campaign in your town.
4. A gasoline tanker has overturned on the interstate freeway just outside of your city. Flames and smoke are billowing hundreds of feet into the air. The driver has been killed and passengers in two other cars have been seriously injured.
5. Your city's university basketball team plays an equally ranked team in a game of statewide interest tonight. You will be able to broadcast the closing minutes of the game and interview players and coaches live during the 10 p.m. newscast.

Part III

Broadcast News Editing



Introduction

This section of the broadcast news process entails editing copy others have written and compiling all the material for your broadcast.

News comes from various sources. You may gather some as a reporter yourself. However, most of the news you broadcast will come from other journalists. That news may be from other local reporters, stringers, network news feeds, wire associations, feature services or public relations agencies or departments.

No matter what the source of the news, editing is a must, just as important for the electronic news media as it is for print. While similar mistakes must be avoided in all media, several editing differences exist.

Primarily, the news must be edited for the ear in electronic media; therefore, the writing style must be sound-oriented. Rhythm is important. For instance, leads must be quite short, and repetition of specific items may be needed in certain stories. Secondly, the newscaster must be particularly careful to produce clean copy either through retyping or clearly making the copy changes. In most cases edited material should be retyped.

Avoid most newspaper copyediting marks in broadcast editing. Copyediting symbols are used as shorthand between the copyeditor and the production department in the print media. A broadcast journalist, on the other hand, does not have time to translate the symbols when he is reading copy on the air. For similar reasons, broadcast style is different from newspaper style. For example, most abbreviations should be eliminated, capitalization should be used freely, and words requiring emphasis should be underlined.

The following editing changes may be made in broadcast copy; other editing will require retyping the story:

- 1) Material may be eliminated by completely blacking it out.

Example: Officials said ~~school~~ school would open today.

- 2) Entire words may be changed by blacking out the word(s) and inserting the new word. Individual letters *cannot* be inserted.

Example: Officials ~~said~~^{said} school would open today.

- 3) Limited new material may be added.

Example: Officials ~~said~~^{said school} would open today.

10

Videotape Editing Basics

Both art and craft, videotape editing is an essential part of television news. Without editing, raw tape from the field could not be molded into compact, concise visual presentations of maximum effectiveness. Editing, regardless of the medium, is the choice of images and sound, their timing and sequence. Such a simple definition contains an unstated significance: editing —often ignored or misunderstood by the public — is the heartbeat of any visual presentation. Without editing the news story could not exist.



Figure 10-1. A videotape editor previews scenes at an editing console before making a final edit. Three of the four television monitors allow the operator to preview material from three separate videotape recorders during special effects editing, necessary for example when three scenes are to be connected through dissolves, or when editing A-B-C roll packages. The fourth monitor shows scenes from the master tape.

(Photo courtesy of Convergence Corporation)

The process of editing videotape is different than any editing process used in the 80-year history of filmmaking. Videotape splices, unlike film, are accomplished electronically. No cement, no physical splices, no film reels or projectors are involved.

THE BASIC EDITING APPROACH

The videotape editing unit at almost all television stations consists of four components — a videotape player, a videotape player/recorder, an editing control unit, and television monitors that show scenes from both player and recorder.

The control unit operates the electronic *and* mechanical functions of the video player and recorder. Editing decisions are entered in the control unit,* which in turn operates the player and recorder during actual editing.

All components — player, recorder, editing control unit and the two television monitors — are fitted on a movable rack known most commonly as the editing *console*.



Figure 10-2. The videotape cassette editing system allows electronic transfer of material from the playback unit onto a master cassette in the videotape recorder. Both VTR playback and recorder are slaved to the editing control unit.

(Photo courtesy of Panasonic Company)

A SUMMARY OF THE EDITING PROCESS

A videocassette from the field is edited in the following manner:

- The cassette is loaded into the video player.
- Scenes (and sound) on the cassette are electronically transferred to the video recorder. Signals fed from the player are re-recorded, in order, on a master cassette.
- All instructions for the transfer of scenes and sound are performed by entering appropriate instructions in the editing control unit.

* On some units the editing control is incorporated as a physical part of the videotape machine.

THE EDITING CONTROL UNIT

The exact layout of the editing control unit varies from one manufacturer to the next, but the following schematic diagram based on the JVC RM-88U control unit represents the features found on comparable units.

The editing control unit is divided into four distinct areas:

- (1) The controls that *operate the player* whenever actual edits are not being performed,
- (2) The controls that instruct player and recorder to *perform actual edits* of varying nature,
- (3) The controls that *operate the recorder* whenever actual edits are not being performed, and
- (4) *Digital counters* that display elapsed scene time in hours, minutes, seconds and frames.

Figure 10-3. The editing control unit allows the editor to locate and preview scenes, perform electronic edits and review program material that has been assembled on a master videotape. As with most professional models, this unit allows sound to be edited independently of picture, sound with picture or picture only.

(Photo courtesy of US JVC Corporation)

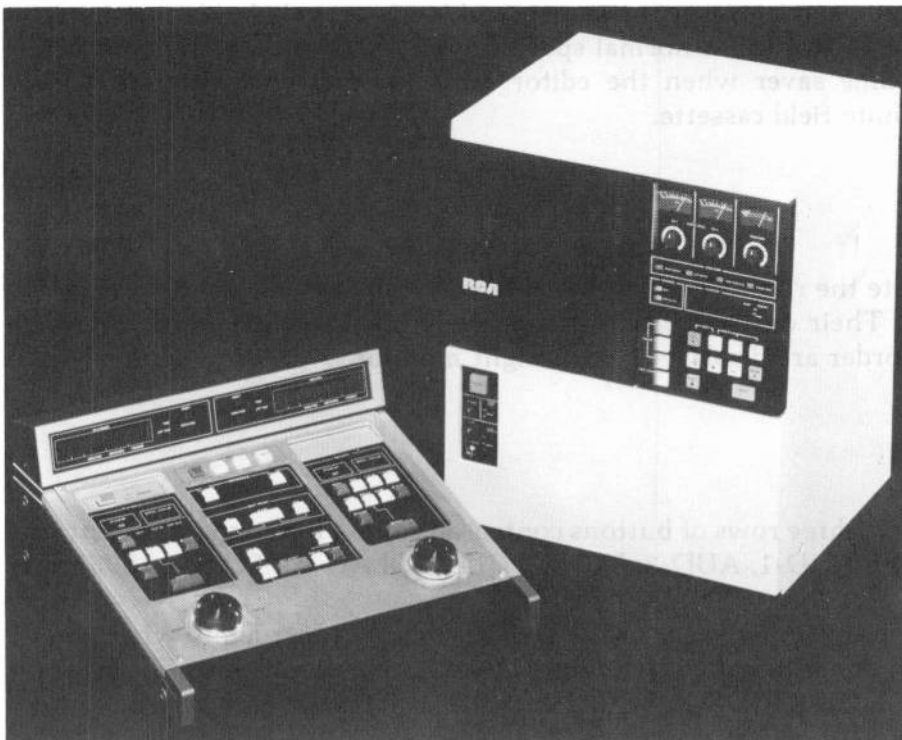
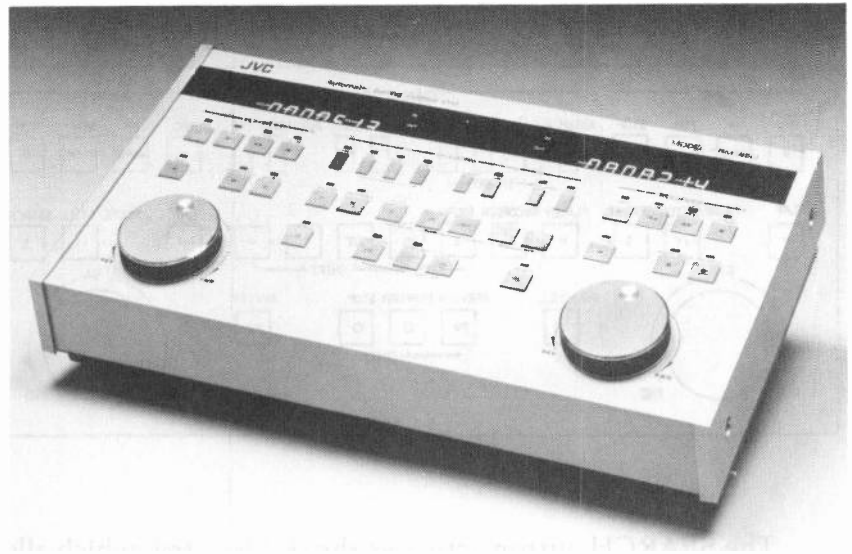


Figure 10-4. This editing system includes a 1/2-inch video tape recorder, and the edit controller which provides full-feature production and post-production capabilities.

(Photo courtesy of RCA)

PLAYER CONTROLS

The top left row of player controls, REC, FW, REW and STOP, are used much like the controls on audio cassette recorders. With these buttons, the operator can manually record, fastforward, rewind and stop the cassette in the video player.

The second row of player controls, marked PLAY, PAUSE/STILL and SEARCH, are used to play scenes from the raw field tape on the left monitor. When the PLAY button is pushed, scenes from the field tape play at normal speed. The PAUSE/STILL button stops the tape and displays a single still frame from the scene at that point.

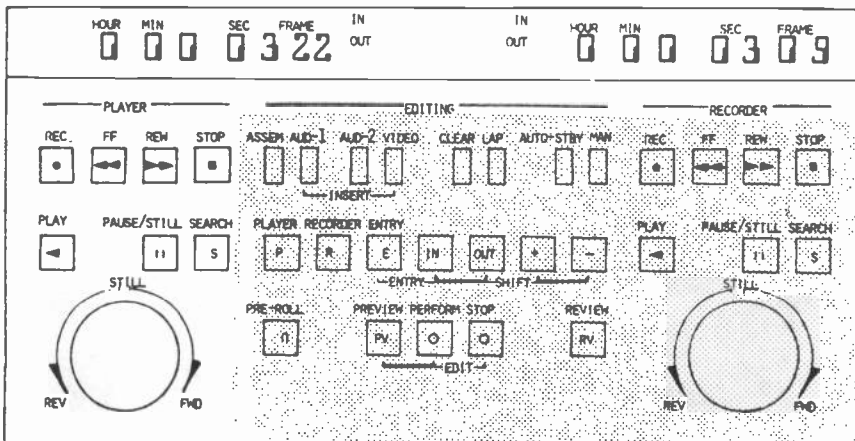


Figure 10-5. Left Side.

The SEARCH button activates the *shuttle control*, which allows the editor to view the tape at slower or faster than normal speed. When the shuttle control is activated, the tape can be viewed at speeds that range from a frame or two per second (each second of video contains 30 frames of picture) to as fast as five times normal speed (up to 20 times on some units). The shuttle control is a great time saver when the editor must locate scenes that are widely separated within the 20-minute field cassette.

RECORDER CONTROLS

The controls that operate the recorder are identical in function to those on the player side of the editing control unit. Their only difference is that they operate the recorder, not the player. Scenes from the recorder are displayed on the right monitor.

EDITING CONTROLS

In this schematic diagram, three rows of buttons control all editing functions. The first row of buttons is marked ASSEM, AUD-1, AUD-2, VIDEO, CLEAR, LAP, AUTO STANDBY and MANUAL.

The first four buttons on this top row are used to tell the editing control unit what type of editing is to be performed. The editor has two choices: (1) the Assemble (ASSEM) mode, or (2) the INSERT mode (AUD-1, AUD-2, VIDEO). To understand the nature of each type of editing, it is necessary to examine a piece of videotape.

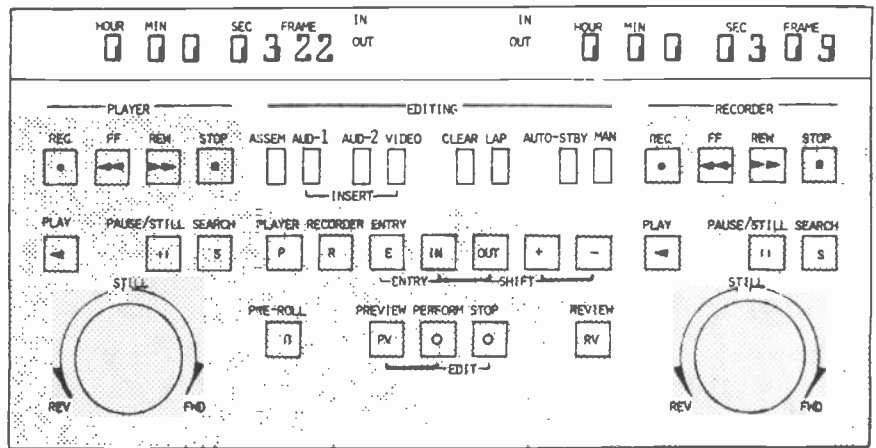


Figure 10-6. Center Section (First Row)

- The control track consists of one electronic pulse for each frame of video and is necessary to regulate recording and playback speed. Film is controlled in much the same way except that film has physical — not electronic — sprocket holes.
- The video track carries the picture information as electronic signals from the camera that are magnetically recorded on the videotape.
- The address track accepts an optional time code, either in hours, minutes, seconds, frames or in real time. The address track requires an accessory time code generator that is used, for example, at sporting events where three cameras simultaneously record an event from different angles. The time code from the address track can later be displayed on the editing console and the editor can select scenes from each tape based on the real time that's displayed from each tape.
- Audio channels 1 and 2 carry the sound tracks. Normally, sound in the field (interviews, standups, wild sound) is recorded on Channel 2, although some stations record sound on both channels. During editing, voice-over narration normally is recorded on Channel 1.

In the ASSEMBLE mode, all information on the field tape is transferred to the master cassette — video, address track and sound on channels 1 and 2. At the same time, a control track (see "The Control Track," page 224) is laid down on the master cassette. Editing in the ASSEMBLE mode is similar to splicing sound film in which sprocket holes, pictures and sound are contained within each scene.

In the INSERT mode, only the video track and/or channels 1 and 2 are transferred to the master cassette. No control track is laid down during insert editing, so a control track already

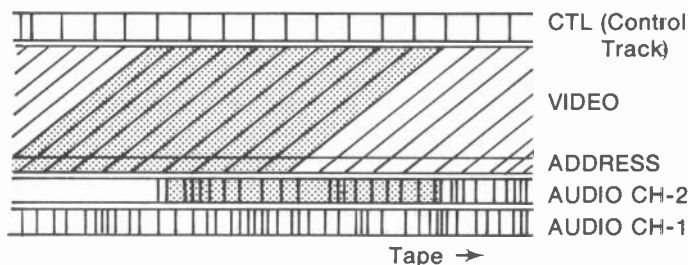
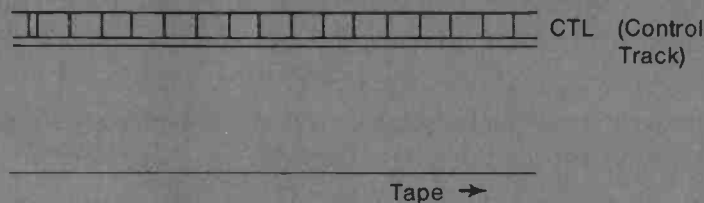


Figure 10-7. A Piece of Videotape.

THE CONTROL TRACK

The control track gives beginning videotape editors more headaches than any other part of the editing process, although it's nothing more than the electronic equivalent of sprocket holes in film. The control track consists of an electronic pulse applied to each frame of video. Since there are 30 frames of video per second, the videotape must have 30 separate pulses for each second of running time. Without these pulses (the control track), the tape will not record or play back at normal speed and a bad picture will result.

To lay down the control track, you must first record black on the master cassette in a manner appropriate to the process established by your station. Once the control track is recorded, you can edit in the INSERT mode and insert or replace any combination of the VIDEO, AUDIO CH-1, or AUDIO CH-2 portions of the program.



To summarize: A control track must be present on the master editing tape. If the existing control track has first been laid down and is suitable, the INSERT mode can be used. If the control track is absent or is unacceptable, the ASSEMBLE editing mode must be used.

must be present.* Hence, if you intend to edit in the INSERT mode (for example, when you wish to lay down only video, or sound only on channels 1 and/or 2), you must first record a control track on the master cassette. Only then can insert edits be performed. Without a control track, scenes on the master cassette will break up and will be unsuitable for broadcast.

Continuing along the top row, the CLEAR button clears the digital counters on either the player display or the record display.

The LAP button, when activated tells the total time of the last edit in hours, minutes, seconds and frames.

When activated, the AUTO STANDBY button automatically enters a new edit-in point and pre-rolls the master videocassette five seconds at the completion of the preceding edit. The button functions only during ASSEMBLE edits. It is inoperative during INSERT editing.

* If the editor wishes to edit in the INSERT mode, a control track must first be recorded on the master editing cassette. Since the process differs from one editing unit to the next, no attempt will be made to explain the proper procedure on a case-by-case basis. A simple process, however, is to drive both player and recorder with a *sync generator* or *black burst* generator. Even an older television camera that feeds an external sync pulse to both player and recorder will suffice. An uninterrupted control track can then be laid down on the master cassette by touching the following buttons on the schematic diagram: ASSEMBLE (on the first row), PLAYER and ENTRY and IN on the second row, and PERFORM on the third row. Be certain the video player is in STOP position.

When activated, the MANUAL button cancels the control unit's automatic editing capabilities, including the memory for electronic edit-in and edit-out points. The MANUAL mode is rarely used at most stations.

On the second row, the first button is marked PLAYER. When this button is activated, editing instructions that relate only to the player side can be stored in the editing control unit.

When the RECORDER button is activated, instructions that pertain to the recorder can be entered.

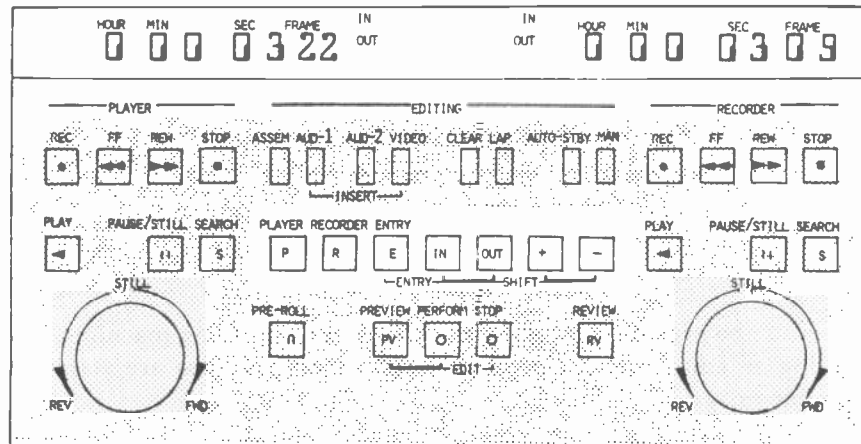


Figure 10-9. Second row of buttons.

The next three buttons, ENTRY, IN and OUT are used in combination. These buttons tell the player and recorder to begin and end edits with frame accuracy. Touching PLAYER, ENTRY, and IN, for example, will enter an edit-in point on the player side. The scene will be transferred to the master cassette in the recorder beginning precisely at this point. Touching RECORDER, ENTRY and IN will enter an edit-in point on the recorder side. The recording of a scene from the player will begin exactly at this point on the master cassette. Conversely, touching PLAYER, ENTRY and OUT will tell the control unit the precise frame on which to end an edit. The out point also can be entered on the record side by touching RECORDER, ENTRY and OUT.

Edit points, once entered, can be shifted forward or backward by touching the buttons marked + and -. To advance an edit point on the player, simultaneously touch PLAYER and the button marked + once for each frame of shift desired. Touch PLAYER and - to retard the edit point. The same procedure is followed if you wish to shift an edit point on the recorder. Simply touch RECORDER and + or - as appropriate.

Whenever entry in or out points are stored, lighted arrows appear next to the IN or OUT designation at the top of the control unit next to the digital frame counters.

The third row of editing controls is marked PRE-ROLL, PREVIEW, PERFORM, STOP and REVIEW.

The first button, PRE-ROLL, backs up the videotape exactly five seconds in anticipation of the next edit. Videotapes must be pre-rolled for three reasons:

- (1) to avoid mechanical damage to the videotape. Videotape heads spin against the tape at high speed and eventually put a small "dent" in the oxide when it is parked in still-frame "pause" for too long a time while the editor is searching for the next scene. Pre-rolling not only backs up the tape but relaxes the tape tension around the recording heads.
- (2) to avoid electronic interference at the point of the edit. Tapes that are not pre-rolled during the lengthy editing process may exhibit a moving line of electronic interference at the point of an edit — a phenomenon known among engineers as "creep."

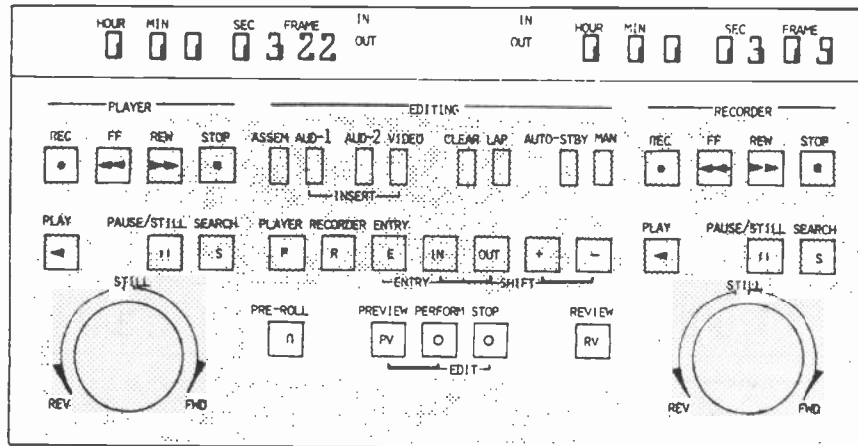


Figure 10-10. Third Row of Buttons.

- (3) finally, tapes must be pre-rolled to allow the player and recording machines to reach full speed prior to making an edit, so that electronic signals from the tape are stable or "locked-in" to produce a usable image.

To pre-roll tape on the player side, press **PLAYER** (on the second row) and **PRE-ROLL**. To pre-roll tape on the recorder side, press **RECORDER** and **PRE-ROLL**.

Note: As previously stated, the pre-roll is performed automatically on the recorder side when **AUTO STANDBY** is activated in the *ASSEMBLE* mode only.

Once edit-in and edit-out points are entered, the edit can be previewed before it is actually made. The **PREVIEW** button allows the editor to see how the edit will look without making an actual edit.

The **PERFORM** button actually performs the edit. When this button is activated signals are transferred from the player onto the master cassette. In addition, if the tape has not been pre-rolled prior to an edit, the **PERFORM** button will automatically pre-roll both player and recorder.

The **STOP** button ends edits that are in progress, i.e., signals that are being fed from player to recorder. It is not necessary, however, to stop an edit manually with the **STOP** button if an edit-out point has been entered either on player or recorder side.

Once an edit is complete, it can be reviewed by touching the **REVIEW** button. This allows the editor to check the edit just made before going on to the next edit.

MAKING AN INSERT EDIT

When making an **INSERT EDIT**, any of the following combinations of sound and picture are possible:

- audio 1 only
- audio 2 only
- video only
- audio 1 and 2
- audio 1 and video
- audio 2 and video
- audio 1, audio 2, and video

To make an INSERT edit, follow the instructions below:

1. First be certain that the master recording cassette contains an acceptable CONTROL TRACK. (See "The Control Track" page 224.)
2. Press any of the three INSERT buttons that you wish to use (Audio 1, Audio 2 and/or Video). In the INSERT mode, the assemble edit capability is cancelled, and the automatic standby feature is automatically defeated.
3. Find the scene you want in the player (use either PLAY or SEARCH mode).
4. When the scene is located, press PLAYER button on second row, center section of editing control unit, then press EDIT button and IN button simultaneously.
5. Next, enter an edit-in point on the recorder side by pressing RECORDER button on second row, center section of editing control unit, then press EDIT button and IN button simultaneously.
6. Once an edit-in point has been entered on the record side, *pre-roll* the recorder by pressing RECORDER and PRE-ROLL. This step backs up the tape five seconds in anticipation of the edit and prevents damage to the tape when it is parked for prolonged times in PAUSE/STILL.
7. Play through the scene on the player side until you find the ending point. At the end of the material you wish to transfer, mark an edit-out point by pressing PLAYER, ENTRY and OUT. During the actual edit, the edit will end precisely at this point (within two to four frames of accuracy on most systems).
8. To preview the edit, press PREVIEW button on editing control unit.
9. To perform the actual edit, press PERFORM button on editing control unit. (Some units require that you press both PREVIEW and PERFORM at this stage.)
10. To review the edit you have just made, press REVIEW button on editing control unit.
11. Repeat procedures #3 through #9 to accomplish the next edit.

MAKING AN ASSEMBLE EDIT

To make an ASSEMBLE EDIT, follow the instructions below:

1. Press ASSEMBLE and AUTO STANDBY on editing control unit.
2. Find the scene you want in the player (use either PLAY or SEARCH mode).
3. When scene is located press PLAYER button on second row, center section of editing control unit, then press EDIT button and IN button simultaneously.
4. Next, enter an edit-in point on the recorder side by pressing RECORDER button on second row, center section of editing control unit, then press EDIT button and IN button simultaneously.
5. Once the edit-in point has been entered on the record side, pre-roll the recorder by pressing RECORDER and PRE-ROLL. This step backs up the tape five seconds in anticipation of the edit and prevents damage to the tape when it is parked for prolonged times in PAUSE/STILL. NOTE: When the editing control unit is in AUTO STANDBY mode, the manual pre-roll is necessary only at the first edit-in point. At the end of all subsequent edits, a new edit-in is entered automatically on the record side, and the recorder automatically is pre-rolled.
6. Play through the scene on the player side until you find the ending point. At the end of the material you wish to transfer, mark an edit-out point by pressing PLAYER, ENTRY and OUT. During the actual edit, the edit will end precisely at this point (within two to four frames of accuracy on most systems).

7. To preview the edit, press PREVIEW button on editing control unit.
8. To perform the actual edit, press PERFORM button on editing control unit. (Some units require that you press both PREVIEW and PERFORM at this stage.)
9. To review the edit you have just made, press REVIEW button on editing control unit.
10. Repeat procedures #3 through #8 to accomplish the next edit.

11

Gathering and Editing the Raw Material for Television News

Television has the capacity to take the viewer to the scene of an event and is unique among news media in showing viewers the news as it happens. Within this context, the field crew's job is at once difficult and rewarding — a task that requires mastery of a complex blend of creative and technical skills.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

At most television stations you will enter the field as part of a crew, its size determined by available staff and operating procedures, station resources and possible union regulations. Regardless of size, each crew is responsible for story research, contacts with news sources, scheduling times to shoot the story, conducting interviews, shooting the videotape, setting up lights, working the sound and videotape equipment, and editing or supervising editing of the story into a product ready for broadcast.

CREWS IN COMMERCIAL TELEVISION

Many small stations operate with one-person reporting crews that are responsible for all the duties just mentioned. The largest stations normally divide the responsibilities between two and often three people: reporter-producer, camera operator-lighting specialist, and sound person-videotape operator.

SPECIFIC DUTIES

The Field Producer

The duties of the field producer are to identify the story (or to consult with the assignment editor about the story), and contact the story source(s), schedule interviews, decide upon story content and treatment, and to coordinate story production with other members of the crew (including shooting and editing schedules, transportation logistics and deadlines).

The Reporter

The reporter presents all on-camera material, conducts the interviews, and scripts all material for the story. In the absence of a producer, the reporter assumes the producer's duties as well.

The News Photographer

The photographer shoots the scenes that are recorded or beamed live to the station.

The camera operator also is responsible for setting up lights and should expect help from the videotape operator-sound person in carrying and setting up the lights, and stringing necessary power cords.

The Photographer-Sound Person

The photographer, or at some stations a sound person, is responsible for the sound quality of all story components and for monitoring battery levels in the field. Sound sources for which this person is responsible include (1) all sound recorded in the field (reporter's voice, interviews, wild sound, etc.); (2) voice-over narration recorded in the studio (unless other personnel normally perform this job); and at some stations (3) music or other sound selections used as part of the story.

During editing, the reporter and photographer may work closely together along with the producer in helping to make editing decisions. Normally, the videotape operator will play less of a role in the editing process, but may be consulted about specific issues that relate to sound quality or editing.

BEFORE YOU ENTER THE FIELD

There are two basic types of stories you will cover in the field — the predictable and the unpredictable — those under your control and those not under your control.

Whenever possible, it's best to do your story preparation and research in advance. Unless the story breaks without warning, you can often make advance telephone calls to gather information, to develop story angles and to set up schedules for any interviews that you may want to tape. In this way you will know as much about the story as possible before you enter the field. You'll have an idea of what questions to ask, what scenes to shoot and which people to contact.

THE SYNC AND THE NON-SYNC STORY

You will have to decide, for example, whether to shoot a "sync" or a "non-sync" story. The non-sync story is a sequence of silent or wild sound shots accompanied by live voice-over narration from the studio that tells the story. It may also include interviews or other shots of people talking on screen (known as "soundbites"). The sync story by contrast is completely edited onto videotape as a finished story. Voice-over narration and all other components of the story, including reporter standup, are edited onto a single, self-contained tape ready for broadcast.

VTR PACKAGES

Both sync and non-sync stories are called packages if they meet one crucial test: by definition, a package must stand alone as a complete report of the event, aside from the few seconds of copy (the lead-in) that the studio newscaster reads to introduce the report. In other words, the package must be a self-contained report.

VTR packages are constructed something like the classic short story with a beginning (the open), middle and the end (the close).

THE OPEN

The OPEN may be any of several forms. Here are some examples that reflect common practice:

- Open with reporter's *voice over* silent or sound-on tape (sound under) throughout the opening segment of the package. This is called a *voicer*.
- The reporter's voice is heard over silent or sound-under tape of the news event for the first few seconds of the open, then the scene cuts to the reporter delivering the balance of the open in an on-camera *standup*.
- Open with *reporter standup* (15-20 seconds). The reporter speaks directly to the television camera in the field.

THE MIDDLE SECTION

The MIDDLE section of the package can be either an interview or scenes of the news event with the reporter's voice-over.

If the middle section is an interview, the sound will be part of the videotape.

If the reporter reads voice-over narration during the middle section, videotape can be played on the air (either silent or wild sound under) while the reporter's voice is delivered (1) live from the studio or announce booth; (2) prerecorded as part of the videotape package; or (3) prerecorded on separate audio tape, cassette or reel-to-reel.

If the middle section of the package contains an interview, it normally would not begin with the reporter's question. Instead, to help keep the pace moving, the reporter should introduce the interviewee with a BLIND LEAD-IN (see page 182) as part of the open and then cut immediately to the interviewee's response.

THE CLOSE

The CLOSE of the package is similar to the open: the reporter's voice-over may be heard over silent or sound-under tape, or the reporter may deliver a standup close on camera. Sign off the close with something to the effect: "For KBNS News I'm (Your Name) at the Federal Courthouse."

A reporter on camera is not the news. Generally, you'll do best to *show the news*. For this reason try to avoid consistently showing the reporter in the open or close of the package. Show the news instead. Your audience will be grateful and you'll have done a more effective job of reporting.

SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE PACKAGE

Avoid beginning your story with a soundbite unless the bite has some extraordinary quality such as unusual emotion or exceptionally dramatic information.

Voice-over stories normally should follow the form of: voice-over lead-in, soundbite(s), voice-over tag. Normally, don't begin or end your package on a soundbite. Begin and end the package with scenes of the news event.

In the case of reporter standup, first show the home audience the story, not the reporter. It is acceptable during live reports, however, to begin the story with the reporter full screen.

If the reporter is shown on camera during the open, the background should be entirely different than the background used for the next section of the package (i.e., the middle). The reporter might, for example, deliver a standup in front of the supermarket where soft drink bottlers are picketing. Some protesters might be visible behind the reporter.

When the next section of the package begins (the middle), the screen might be filled with shots of protesters, followed by a shot of the reporter inside the supermarket interviewing a shopper. Since the shopper is in an entirely different setting than where the standup took place, there is no danger of a "jump cut," the illusion that the interviewee magically pops on and off the screen by the reporter. This jump cut would have occurred if the shopper had been interviewed outdoors, in the same location that the reporter standup was photographed.

If you can't change backgrounds, you might begin with the reporter standup (a wide view), then cut to the shopper in a closeup (without the reporter appearing in the frame). This approach also will solve the jump cut problem.

BALANCE

Be certain that your reports have "balance." In reporting a controversial story, it is necessary to report all relevant sides of the story; often there will be several sides to controversial issues.

If you interview students who are upset by fee hikes, for example, you are obligated to interview administration officials who support the fee hikes.

ON-CAMERA APPEARANCE

As the reporter, dress appropriately for your on-camera appearance. The clothes you would wear to cover a mountain rescue or mine disaster obviously would be different than an interview with city officials or the opening of a symphony concert. Most stations will offer guidelines on appropriate dress for on-air and field talent, and most will discourage casual dress except in extenuating circumstances.

PERSONALIZING THE STORY

Television news can capture the colors, sounds and emotions of news happenings, and you can personalize the story by giving the viewer real human beings to relate to.

Say you've been assigned to do a feature on Mother's Day and you wish to personalize the story. You might want to begin with shots of busy operators at the telephone company, then interview a couple of operators to see how many calls they've handled, go from there to shots of telephone lines reaching to the far horizon and over these shots play some pre-recorded conversations between mothers and their children. Throughout your story the emphasis is on people — people who are special to each other. By emphasizing people you've helped your audience to identify with the story.

Or take another happening — heavy rains that are keeping farmers from planting spring crops. To personalize the story you must talk with the farmers who are unable to plant; learn their feelings; find out how the rains will affect their income. Talk with food experts to learn whether delayed planting will affect supermarket prices. Talk with weather experts to find out when the rains may end. Again, you are personalizing the story by giving your viewers real human beings through whom they can relate to the story.

EDITING THE NEWS PACKAGE

The news package is a standard feature in virtually all television newscasts. Functioning as a self-contained report of an event, the package combines voice-over narration, visuals and interviews or other synchronous sound (known as "soundbites"). Most news packages are able to tell a complete story in as little as one to one and one-half minutes, with an average length of around one minute, 10 seconds. Although packages should not be edited according to any formula, they often follow a standard format: a voice-over open, a soundbite (interview or statement), more voice-over with a standup close.

WHO EDITS THE NEWS PACKAGE

The task of constructing news packages most often falls to the videotape editor working in association with the reporter and/or producer. At some stations, the field camera operator may both shoot and edit the package. Advantages of this system include the photographer's familiarity with each shot on the tape; sometimes the photographer's recall of available shots can save time. Conversely, the editor who has not shot the story may be more objective about scenes that come in from the field. The uninvolved editor, with less emotional attachment to the visuals, may better be able to construct a smoothly flowing visual narrative.

EDITING UNDER PRESSURE

The typical half-hour newscast may contain 10 or more packages. Smoothly-edited packages often appear deceptively simple to those not familiar with the editing process. A rough rule of thumb for packages with soundbites and reasonable sophistication is one hour of editing time per finished minute of edited tape. On the other hand, a simple 2½ minute package that requires no sophisticated editing may be cut in an average time of as little as 40 minutes.

At most stations, four to six videotape editors may be required to edit together the various packages that will be used in a half-hour newscast. News lineups are subject to frequent change

as stories are changed, added or dropped, so each package normally is edited on a separate videocassette to allow for maximum flexibility in the final news lineup.

THE EDITOR'S SHOT SHEET

Field tapes are previewed before the script is written, and they should be logged on a shot sheet before actual editing begins. The pressure of deadlines doesn't always permit these practices, but they are observed at most stations whenever possible.

Previews of all tape shot in the field show which scenes are usable and which are not. Video levels may be too high or too low, sound may be fuzzy or obscured by wind noise; a pan or zoom may be unusable; perhaps hand-held shots are too shaky. The reporter who hurries back to the station and writes a script, assuming that given shots or soundbites are usable, may be sadly mistaken.

When time allows, the reporter or editor normally constructs a shot sheet that contains, in order, a list of all scenes that are to be used in the edited story, with counter numbers for the beginning and end of each scene along with in- and out-cues for soundbites (Figure 11-1).

To log tapes, zero the tape counter at the beginning of the field cassette. Choose each scene that will be used in the final, edited version and enter on the log or shot sheet the following information:

- (1) start and stop times for each scene according to the counter number, and
- (2) the in-cue and out-cue for each soundbite.

List these scenes on the log in order, with the start/stop times and in/out cues for each scene.

Logging requires time, but it also saves time. Imagine the chaos that would result if the reporter brought back six 20-minute cassettes from the field and couldn't remember what scenes were on which cassettes. Without the log a lengthy search through several cassettes might be required before the desired scene was located, with up to half-hour of time lost in the search. With a log, the reporter could have told the editor at the beginning, "I want the scene of the little girl with two front teeth missing. It's in cassette #2 at 5:49:30."

EDITING THE NEWS PACKAGE

Determine the Presence of the Control Track

At most television news operations, master cassettes with prerecorded control tracks are provided each video editor. Tapes with prerecorded control tracks save valuable time in the editing process. If no control track is present on the master tape, it must be recorded before editing can proceed.

All editing from this point proceeds in the INSERT mode. If for any reason, the editor reverts to ASSEMBLE mode editing, the control track will be destroyed for approximately four seconds at the end of each assemble edit and the tape will be unusable for broadcast. This occurs because the spinning video record head randomly disorients signals on the videotape at the end of each assemble edit.

Colorbars and Countdown Leader

The package normally begins with two elements that home viewers do not see. The first element is *colorbars*, a rectangle that contains various colors of the rainbow in vertical-bar

EDITING SHOT SHEET

PAGE 1 OF 1

SEARCH - DAY 2
STORY TITLE

11-24-81
DATE

4
UNIT#

WOODS
WRITER

HCCARTY
EDITOR

JOHNSON
ASSEMBLED BY

IN NO.	REFL NO.	AUDIO				VIDEO				cut duration			cumulative duration				Cues or Remarks.....				
		H	M	S	F	H	M	S	F	H	M	S	F	H	M	S		F			
1	4	-	3	02	29	-	3	05	29	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	IN OUT	SOUND UNDER
2	4	-	5	20	04	-	5	23	10		3	06					6	06		IN OUT	SOUND UNDER
3	1	-	-	30	02	-	-	35	24		5	22					11	28		IN OUT	
4	2		2	14	25		2	23	01		8	06					20	04		IN OUT	
5	1		4	19	04		5	03	12		44	08					1	00	12	IN OUT	"They apparently left... ... No movement since the"
6	4		2	09	09		2	12	17		3	08					1	03	20	IN OUT	
7	1		1	04	20		1	09	20		5	-					1	08	20	IN OUT	"9 NEWS, REPORTING."
																				IN OUT	
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																				IN OUT	
																				IN OUT	

VIDEO INSERTS .. UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.....

INS. NO.	REFL NO.	TIME IN				TIME OUT				INSERT START				INSERT OUT				INSERT DURATION			REMARKS.....		
		H	M	S	F	H	M	S	F	H	M	S	F	H	M	S	F	H	M	S		F	
1	3		2	16	19		2	19	19			6	-			9	-			2	-		
2	3			1	20		1	3	23			19	15			23	10			3	25		No sound on CH. 2

H..Hours M..Minutes S..Seconds F..Frames

Figure 11-1. Shot Sheet.

patterns, plus a contrast scale that ranges from pure white to no exposure at all. The colorbars and contrast scale allow engineers to set optimum video levels before the tape is aired and are available as standard resources in all editing rooms.

The second element is *countdown leader* which allows the tape to be easily cued for playback. The countdown begins with the number 10 and continues through 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3 to the number 2. Two seconds of black follow the last number (2), at which point the first picture of video begins in the news package. During playback, the package is cued to the number 5, which allows five seconds of roll time for the tape to reach stable playback speed.

Editors normally begin sound two seconds after the first picture in the package. This helps avoid “clipping” — the annoying loss of the first word or so when the package is broadcast to home audiences.

Record the Narration Script on Videotape

As the next stage in editing, the voice-over script or “voicer” is written and recorded on videotape (sound only) before the visuals are edited. The normal procedure is for the reporter to record sound through a microphone directly onto a videotape cassette while sitting in a soundproof audio booth. At this point the “voicer” is only an editing resource. It may contain several takes of a given sentence or paragraph — each take an effort on the reporter’s part to achieve perfect delivery of his or her lines.

Good Takes of Narration are Recorded on Master Cassette

The cassette with the various takes of voice-over narration is loaded in the videotape player at the editing console and actual editing begins. Only the good takes of the voice track are laid down, in order, on *Audio Channel 1* of the master videotape cassette. On the editing control unit, only AUD-1 should be activated on the top row, center section of the editing control unit.

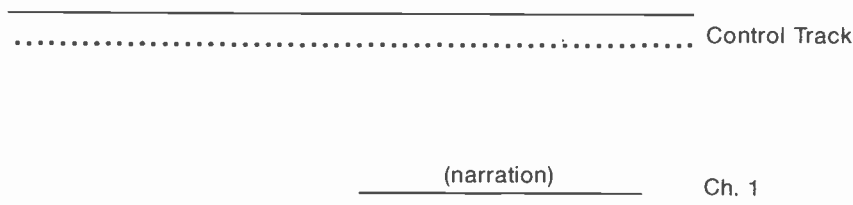


Figure 11-2. A section of videotape showing narration, AUD-1.

Soundbites are Added to Master Cassette

If the package contains any “sync” soundbites — interviews, standups, etc., that contain both sound *and* picture — these are interspersed as appropriate, throughout the voice-only narration. Soundbites are laid in on the INSERT mode by pressing AUD-2 and VIDEO on the editing control unit. Normal spacing between the end of narration and the start of a soundbite on Ch. 2/Video is 15 to 18 frames of video. Such spacing allows for a normal pause between two sound sources.

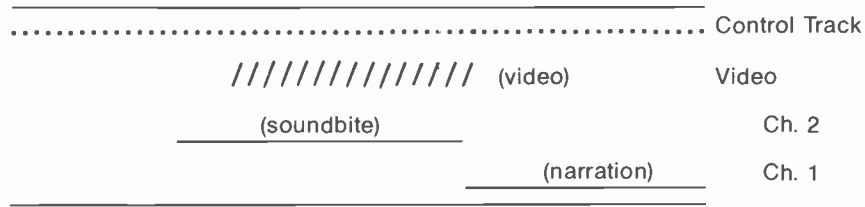


Figure 11-3. A portion of videotape showing control track, narration on Channel 1 and a soundbite on Video/Channel 2.

If more narration follows the soundbite, it will be laid down on Audio Channel 1 (AUD-1), again with 15 to 18 frames of space between the last sound from Channel 2 and the start of narration on Channel 1.

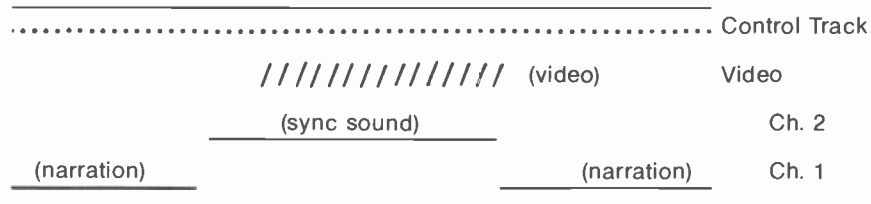


Figure 11-4. More voice-over narration follows the soundbite.

This procedure continues until all voice-over narration and soundbites are laid down on the master cassette. A package at this stage might then appear similar to the following illustration.

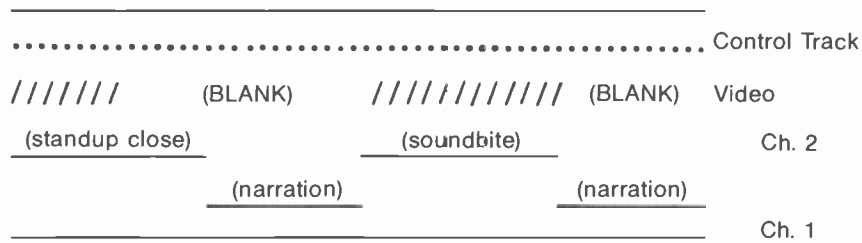


Figure 11-5. A Standup Close is added to the Package.

At this point the master cassette still contains blank sections in video at those places where only the reporter's voice has been recorded (See Figure 11-5). Appropriate visuals are now laid in against the prerecorded voice narration to fill the blanks. If desired, music or other *sound under* can be added to Channel 2, using edit-out points on the recorder side during editing to prevent accidental erasure of the soundbites already recorded on Channel 2.

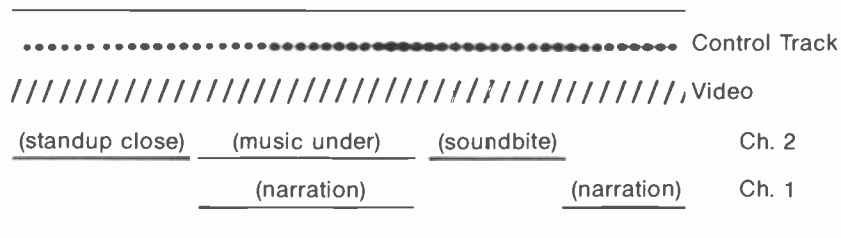


Figure 11-6. The Edited Package

Adding Graphics to the Package

If the reporter wishes to superimpose graphics (names, addresses, etc.) at any point in the videotape package, a log is made that shows that information as it should appear on the screen along with start and stop times for the "supers." Copies of this log are delivered to the studio technical director and to the character generator operator who types up the supers and stores them in an electronic retrieval machine for call-up at airtime. Graphics also may be superimposed as part of the editing process if a character generator is part of the videotape editing console.

Pad Scenes Avoid "Going to Black"

Remember to include plenty of "pad" at the end of the edited package. Pad consists of approximately five seconds of picture after the last section of package that the home audience is to see or hear. The pad is assurance against the screen going to black the instant the package is broadcast. If the studio director momentarily misses the cue to punch up another picture source at the end of the package, the pad can continue playing until the director recovers.

Finally, the master cassette is delivered to the designated room where tapes are played back at airtime.

EDITING GUIDELINES

The Sound Track

The *sound track* is an essential part of the video package and the editor should closely monitor sound quality and recording volume during the editing process. Sound transferred at low volume to the master cassette must be boosted in volume for playback. Boosting low signals, of course, amplifies buzz, hiss and other objectionable background noise on the master video-cassette.

Proper sound levels can only be determined by consulting the VU (sound level) meters on the videotape recorder and playback units. The VU meter provides a visual check of sound levels in units called db's (decibels). A change of one db in level, up or down, is just enough to be perceptible to the human ear.

The VU Meter

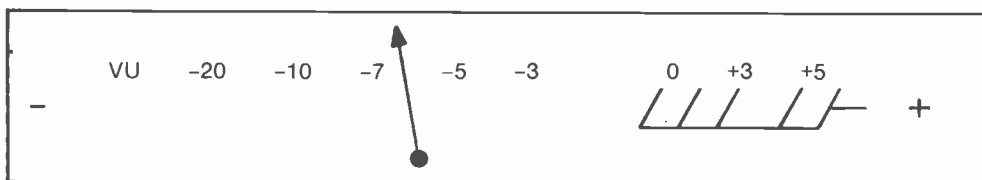


Figure 11-7. The VU meter provides a visual check of sound recording levels.

To assure proper recording volume, the VU meter should register most of the time between -3 and -7 db, with occasional swings into the red zone on the VU meter (between 0 and +5 during extremely loud passages). Recordings made with the needle consistently in the red, however, will be distorted and of poor sound quality.

CONSTRUCTING A PACKAGE FROM A-B-C ROLLS

Non-sync packages — those in which voice-over narration is delivered live by the anchor person in the studio or by a reporter in the announce booth — can be constructed on A-B or A-B-C rolls, depending upon whether two or three separate videocassettes are used.

In non-sync packages the A roll, or first cassette, contains the silent or wild sound footage that leads into a separate soundbite on the B roll, plus 10 seconds of “pad” footage for insurance in case voice-over copy runs longer than anticipated.

When voice-over copy that accompanies the A roll has been read, the studio director punches up a tape cassette called the B roll on a second playback machine. This second cassette contains the soundbite, cued to the first words of the speaker, plus additional footage to accompany voice-over narration after the bite and, of course, another 10 seconds of pad footage.

If only A-B rolls are used, the studio director will punch back to the studio when voice-over narration after the bite ends.

If a second soundbite follows, it is edited onto a third or C roll of tape. Again, the C roll contains a few seconds of pad footage after the bite.

Pad footage at the end of each roll insures that even if the announcer hesitates, coughs, stumbles or reads the script at a difference pace than when it was pre-timed, the story will not go to black on the air. Enough additional footage will be available on each of the rolls to cover the mistakes or changes in delivery.

Editing the package on separate rolls also eliminates the possibility of “up-cutting” an incoming soundbite. “Up-cuts” occur most frequently when on-sync packages are edited onto a single cassette. In such cases 20 seconds of silent footage may be available before the soundbite, while the announcer requires 22 seconds to read the accompanying script. Should the announcer read past the beginning of the soundbite, the first few words of the bite will be clipped or “up-cut.”

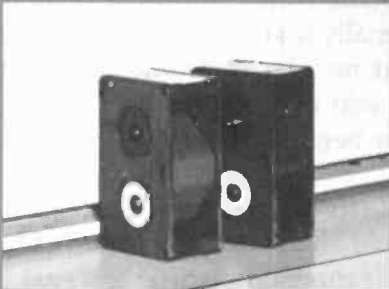
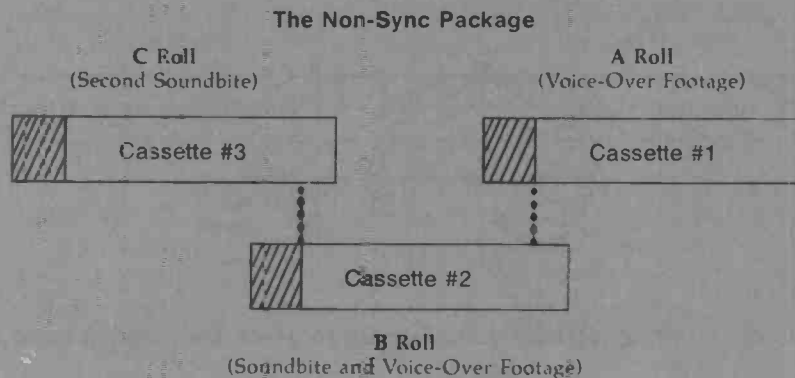


Figure 11-8. An A-B roll package on 2” videotape cassettes is ready for broadcast. The A roll contains scenes that accompany voice-over narration. The B roll carries a sound bite followed by additional scenes that accompany more voice-over narration.

(Photo courtesy KMOX-TV, St. Louis, Missouri)



Many stations use three separate cassettes or videotape — known as A-B-C rolls — to construct “non-sync” packages, those in which voice-over narration is delivered live on-air while the tape is broadcast to home audiences. Shaded areas indicate pad footage that can play in the event the voice-over announcer alters delivery. Dotted lines indicate where the studio director cuts from one cassette to the next.

Sound Overlaps

Sound overlaps help tie the video package together and make it flow smoothly. Overlaps are the extension of a particular sound past the beginning of an incoming sound. Music may be faded out, for example, a couple of seconds after a soundbite begins, or wild sound of playing children may be gradually faded out just after voice-over narration begins.

Overlaps eliminate the abrupt, jarring nature of packages in which sound and picture end together at the end of a cut, to be replaced the next instant by completely new sound and pictures — a phenomenon known among editors as the “cold cut.”

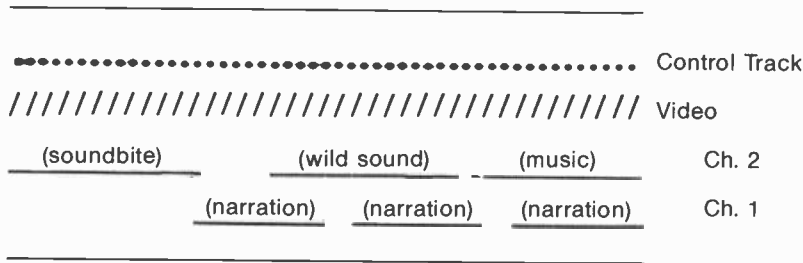


Figure 11-9. Sound overlaps create a smoothly flowing package.

Edit Point Errors

Video editing, for the most part, can be accomplished with frame accuracy, although occasionally edit points may slip. Professional editing units normally feature either ± 2 or $+4/-0$ frame accuracy. An accuracy of ± 2 frames means the edit point may begin or end within two frames from the desired point. An accuracy of $+4/-0$ means the edit may slip forward from the desired edit point as much as four frames, but that it will never begin earlier than the desired edit point.

To correct for the potential of edit points to “slop” forward (often with two or more frames of black between two scenes), most editors retard their desired edit-in points a minimum of four frames. In this manner, edit points that do slop forward are guaranteed not to extend past the exact point that the editor wants the outgoing scene to end.

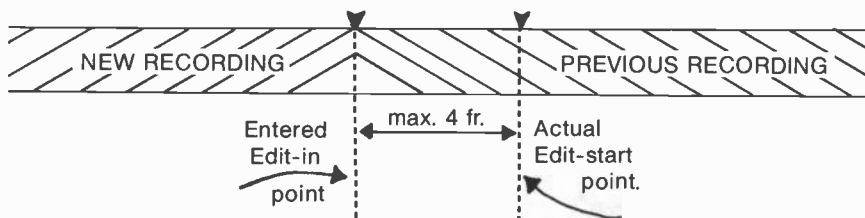


Figure 11-10. The edit point is retarded four frames to avoid the possibility of an incoming scene beginning in black.

To retard the edit point, the editor enters an entry-in for the beginning of the next incoming scene, then retards it at least four frames by pressing the PLAYER button on the control unit and pressing ENTRY and \square simultaneously at least four times.

To meet FCC broadcast standards, all edits on small-format ($\frac{1}{2}$ -inch and $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch videotape) must be free of flags, tracking errors and time-base errors.

Flags

Flags often are evidenced as a series of black and white curved lines in the first frame of incoming video from a new scene (see Figure 11-11). Possible causes include weak video levels when the scene was originally taped in the field, or field cameras that fail to produce a sufficient number of lines of video to fill the television screen. (At least one half-line of picture is lost each time video signals are dubbed from one tape to another, and missing lines may appear as a dark bar at the top of the television screen.)

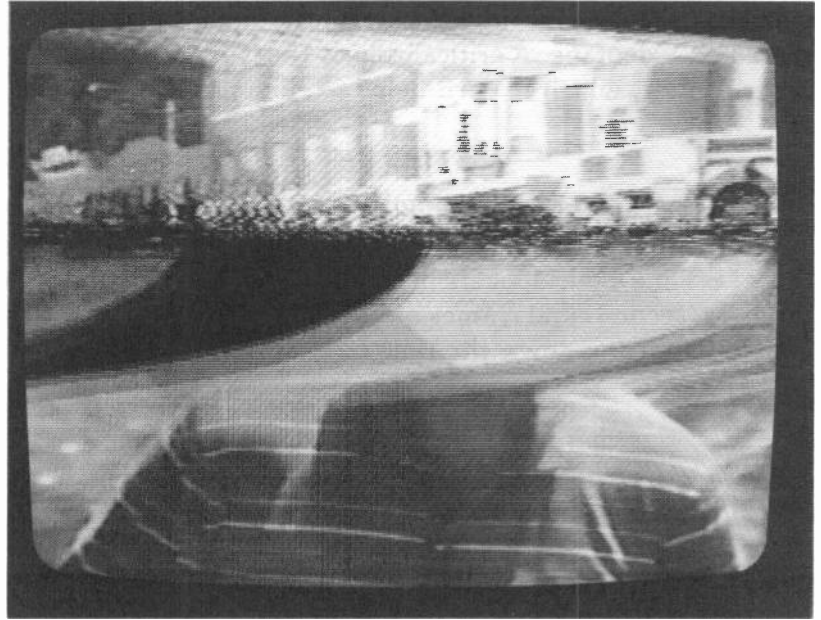


Figure 11-11. The presence of flags, which occur at the edit point between scenes, are evidence of an unacceptable edit.

Adjust Tracking

Whenever a tape is loaded in the player, a few scenes should be previewed prior to editing to determine whether *tracking* is acceptable. Tracking is the process by which the video head on a



Figure 11-12. Tracking errors can be eliminated by adjusting the tracking control on the videotape player until the scene clears.

(Photo by Daniel J. Fanning)

playback machine follows exactly the same path as the video head that recorded the signal. Often a herringbone pattern will appear on the monitor when tracking is bad. If tracking errors appear, adjust the TRACKING control on the player until the scene clears.

The Time-Base Corrector

Almost all small-format videotape must be *time-based corrected* before it is suitable for broadcast, either during editing or during actual broadcast. The time-base corrector (TBC), a small box filled with complex electronics, enhances the picture and other electronic information stored on videotape. A critical role of the TBC is to improve synchronizing information on the control track, which in turn helps to eliminate picture jitter and breakup.

The SMPTE Time Code Helps Editors

The Society of Motion Picture Technicians and Engineers (SMPTE) Time Code helps editors conserve valuable time. Displayed on television monitors only during editing, the SMPTE Time Code appears in small inset as a series of numbers that show accumulated hours, minutes, seconds and frames of video. In- and out-points for each scene to be used can be noted simply by jotting down the time code at each of these points on a master shot sheet.



Figure 11-13. A reporter selects sound bites from a field tape and enters her selections on a “shot sheet” or edit decision list. Note the edit code reader that displays an SMPTE time code in the extreme upper left hand corner of the TV monitor.

Because of time codes, tape of events shot simultaneously by two or more cameras can be quickly located, and scenes of action recorded simultaneously from different camera angles can be match-cut with frame accuracy. Time codes also allow editors to write detailed cutting

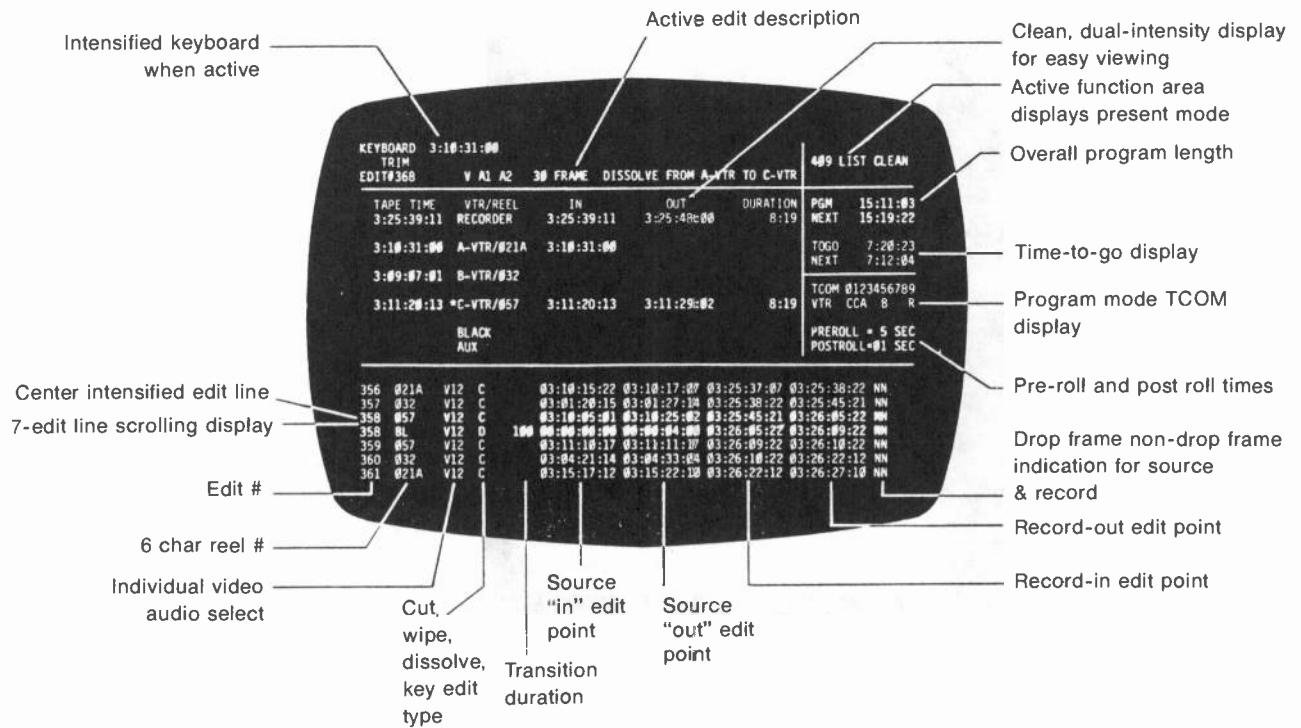


Figure 11-14. For sophisticated editing, a status display generator provides all important edit information on a standard video monitor. The information includes the edit number, record and source in/out points, edit duration, program lengths and VTR reel numbers. The location of dozens of scenes can be stored in a memory for recall in any order. *(Photo courtesy of Convergence Corporation)*

instructions for a news package so that engineering technicians can later edit the tape with no reporter present. In this way, scenes fed live to the newsroom for recording and later editing can be "shot-sheeted" even as they are being recorded.

Another advantage of the time code is that reporters can field-sync tapes with their watches. As the photographer shoots various scenes, the reporter can consult his watch and jot down the times that important scenes were taped. During editing, these scenes can be retrieved with speed and precision from a reporter's shot sheet constructed in the field.

Tape Crease

Occasionally during playback or recording, a videotape with physical damage may emit an unusual noise — something like the sound of a zipper closing — as it moves past the rotating video heads. At the same time a noticeable disruption in picture will move vertically across the television screen. Should creasing (also called wrinkling) appear, the offending videocassette should be replaced.

Skew Adjustment

Skew errors appear during editing as horizontal drift in the top part of the picture. To adjust skew, first adjust the vertical hold on the television monitor until the frame line is visible, then adjust the skew control on the videotape machine until the bend in the frame line is eliminated.

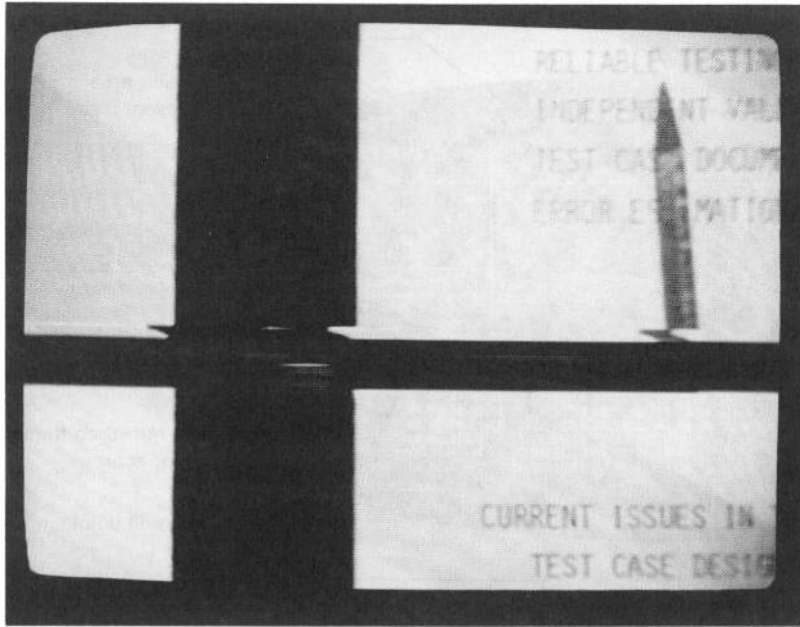


Figure 11-15. Skew errors, visible as horizontal drift along the picture frame line, can be eliminated by adjusting the skew control on the videotape machine.

(Photo by Daniel J. Fanning)

The Recording Button

A tab or removable button on the bottom of videotape cassettes provides a means to prevent accidental erasure of pre-recorded material. If the button is removed, tape cannot be used for recording. Only when the button is in place is recording possible. The same precaution holds true when field recording.

Other problems that may occur with relative frequency during videotape editing include clogged or dirty video recording heads, momentary drops in line voltage, and occasional dropouts in the picture area because of missing oxide on the videotape.



Figure 11-16. The red record button must be in place before the videocassette can be used for recording.

(Photo by Daniel J. Fanning)

11-A

Either as an in-class exercise, or as an individual written assignment, consider how you might cover the following stories in the field and whether you would include interviews and standups or use only silent shots and voice-over narration.

- 1) After a series of high-rise apartment and hotel fires around the country, city inspectors find that only two buildings in your city meet current fire safety codes. The fire department is pressuring city officials to require that all existing buildings be upgraded to meet safety codes. Officials say other high-rise buildings already under construction may not meet national safety codes.
- 2) Workers at a local soft drink bottling company are picketing local supermarkets, trying to discourage shoppers from buying the bottling company's products. The picketers carry signs, and a spokesperson says the major issue is equal job opportunities for minority workers. Supermarket managers also are available for comment.
- 3) Proposals are being made to have Congress designate a local river as wild and scenic, a designation that would protect the river from further commercial or agricultural development. Environmentalists say the river is the last in the state that could be so designated and they want the river protected in its current state for future generations to enjoy. State officials say local agriculture will be seriously jeopardized if the river's waters do not remain available for irrigation.
- 4) A truck carrying radioactive materials has just overturned on an interstate highway outside the city. Officials are trying to determine whether the site is contaminated; the governor has been notified and National Guard troops are guarding the area while traffic is rerouted. All officials at this hour are refusing comment. The truck driver cannot be located.
- 5) Police say a young boy, possibly between 12 and 14 years of age, has robbed a convenience store and escaped with an estimated \$1,000 or more in cash. The store clerk was forced to lie on the floor while her hands and feet were bound with adhesive tape. Police are on the scene and are interrogating the store clerk.
- 6) At 2 p.m. you learn that the School District will cancel all after-school recreational programs for elementary school students at Community Centers within the district. The decision will significantly impact families with "latchkey" children. The story could first be aired at 5 p.m.



Figure 12-1. Satellite dishes and microwave relay facilities are indispensable to the reporting process.

12

Editing and Rewriting Broadcast News

"The task of the journalist is to hold a magnifying mirror before our society to show warts and all."

*Wes Gallagher
Former AP General Manager*

Broadcast stations, whether radio or television, strive for uniqueness in the sound and style of their newscasts. News, after all, is one of the main components of any broadcast station's "image"—how the station is perceived by its listening or viewing community. News is one commodity that can help set the station apart from the similar entertainment and network affiliations commonly found from one station to the next.

Even then, stations within a common listening area are usually served by the same wire services that print out identical news from one newsroom to the next. They probably also receive identical public relations releases, weather news and similar material which, if read as received, would sound the same on all stations.

As one line of defense to preserve uniqueness in newscasts, most stations insist upon complete rewrites of wire copy and similar material that likely will be duplicated at other stations. When deadline pressures or small staff size prevent complete rewrites of such copy, most stations still will insist that you edit the copy so it sounds different than the competition. Editing and rewriting have the additional advantage of tailoring the copy to special styles and rates of on-air delivery.

WIRE SERVICES

The major American wire services, Associated Press and United Press International, furnish stations with news of non-local origin. Each wire service provides multiple wires, a principal or "trunk" wire plus a broadcast wire, sports wire, financial wire, state wire and other special services. Depending upon the number of wire services to which a particular station subscribes, it could receive as many as one to two million words per day. One task of the news person is to select and edit this wire copy for each newscast.

At the beginning of each AP or UPI news cycle, one for the morning news and one for the afternoon, the wire service sends a *budget* or list of the major stories the service will transmit during the cycle. Many late stories not listed in the budget will occur throughout the day, but the budget gives the news person some assistance in planning the day's newscast(s).

If each story were complete when it came over the wire, the news person's job would be much easier. However, many times story corrections, replacement leads or completely new stories are sent, so the news person must check all wire copy for material on a given subject.

The first indication of a major story comes in the form of a flash—two to four words indicating a story of major importance, such as the assassination of a president. It is followed by a

bulletin — a paragraph or two about the story. The bulletin is followed immediately by bulletin adds. Some stories take hours to develop; others may be continued into the next day or several days. It is important for the newscaster to handle the developing story carefully. The folio and slug (identifying elements) of each section of the story must be preserved. For example, the folio number A058 would mean the story was the 58th one on the A or trunk wire. This number will appear on all precedes, inserts, or pickups. See insert on page 251 for the abbreviations and special wire terms.

It is imperative that you edit wire copy or rewrite it entirely. The "rip and read" method is simply not professional, although it is frequently used at some small market radio stations. While wire services may do an excellent job of writing, the copy at the very least needs to be edited to your style and voice. If the station is not using the broadcast wire, extra attention must be given to putting the story into broadcast style. All wire copy needs to be checked for misspellings, excessive modifiers, and too much attribution.

If the broadcaster has a question about a story that cannot be answered locally, he should call the nearest bureau for clarification. Newsrooms commonly display the nearest bureau's telephone number near the wire machines or in a special newsroom telephone directory of important numbers. Additional information is available in the wire service style book, which contains spaces for the numbers of regional, state, national and international wire service news centers.



Figure 12-2. Wire service teletype machines are an indispensable part of the newsroom, providing hundreds of stories each day from around the world.

WHEN TO EDIT WIRE COPY

You can edit wire copy if the required changes are minor, both to improve flow and to make the copy conform more closely to a given style of delivery. This example shows how copy can be edited without changing essential meaning.

~~098CCP~~

~~(LEAVENWORTH) PRISON OFFICIALS IN LEAVENWORTH SAY A 45-YEAR-OLD INMATE~~ ^{WHO} ~~ESCAPED FROM THE U-S PENITENTIARY IN LEAVENWORTH AND REMAINS AT LARGE.~~
~~TODAY. THE MAN APPARENTLY WALKED AWAY FROM THE PRISON'S HONOR FARM~~
~~EARLIER TODAY AND ESCAPED WITH THE HELP OF ACCOMPLICES WHO WAITED NEARBY~~ ^{FROM} ^{PARKED}
~~IN A CAR OUTSIDE THE PRISON WALLS. THE SUSPECT WAS SENTENCED IN KENTUCKY~~ ^{SERVING}
~~IN SEPTEMBER TO A FIVE YEAR TERM FOR IMPORTING NARCOTIC DRUGS FROM MEXICO.~~

The changes made in this wire copy are relatively minor, but do serve to reduce wordiness and improve flow. Even so, unless changes are neatly made, the copy is difficult to read on-air and should be retyped if time permits.

WHEN TO REWRITE WIRE COPY

If major changes are required in wire copy, the entire piece should be rewritten. Consider the following example, first as it was edited then as it was rewritten.

~~083DDR~~

Stress-Women

~~(CAMBRIDGE) A BRITISH ENDOCRINOLOGIST WARNS THAT YOUNG CAREER WOMEN~~ ^{DOCTOR}
~~WHO GET TOO WRAPPED UP IN THEIR ACTIVITIES MAY START TO HAVE SUCH PROBLEMS~~ ^{THAT STRESS MAY TRIGGER HORMONE CHANGES THAT CAN LEAD TO BALDNESS}
~~AS HAIR ON THEIR FACES AND CHESTS; AND BALDNESS OF THE HEAD. ACCORDING TO~~ ^{AND HAIR ON THE}
~~DR. IVOR MILLS OF ADDENBROOKE'S HOSPITAL IN CAMBRIDGE, ENGLAND, THE PROBLEM~~ ^{CALLS}
~~IS KNOWN AS "STRESS DISEASE" AND INVOLVES HORMONAL CHANGES. DR. MILES SAYS~~ ^{HE}
~~STRAIN ON THE BRAIN IS BLAMED FOR INCREASED MALE HORMONE PRODUCTION IN~~ ^{RESULTS IN}
~~WOMEN, RESULTING IN AGGRESSION, RUTHLESSNESS, INFERTILITY AND INSOMNIA.~~

~~UPS 09-19A10:58 AMD~~

This copy is obviously difficult to read, although editing has tightened the story and made it flow more easily. When changes of such magnitude are made, the copy will be almost impossible to read, a problem that can be eliminated through rewriting.

The Story Rewritten

A BRITISH DOCTOR WARNS YOUNG CAREER WOMEN THAT STRESS MAY TRIGGER HORMONE CHANGES THAT CAN LEAD TO BALDNESS, AND HAIR ON THE FACE AND CHEST. DR. IVOR MILLS OF CAMBRIDGE CALLS THE PROBLEM "STRESS DISEASE." HE SAYS STRAIN RESULTS IN MALE HORMONE PRODUCTION IN FEMALES, RESULTING IN AGGRESSION, INFERTILITY AND INSOMNIA.

LOCALIZE WIRE COPY

Wire copy should be localized when appropriate. Many stories of national importance can be localized by an interview with a local authority. A story about the rising cost of automobiles can be localized through an interview with a local import dealer. An economics professor from a local college could be used to add additional noteworthy perspective to the story. Compare the following wire story with the localized version.

Wire Service Story

AMERICAN AUTO PRICES ROSE AN AVERAGE OF 16 PERCENT LAST YEAR, A REPORT RELEASED TODAY BY CONGRESS REVEALED.

REP. THOMAS HANSEN, R-HAWAII, SAID IN WASHINGTON TODAY THAT THE 16 PERCENT INCREASE IN AUTO PRICES HAD CONTRIBUTED TO THE NINE PERCENT DECLINE IN AUTO SALES DURING THE YEAR.

IMPORTED-CAR PRICES ROSE ONLY THREE PERCENT, WHILE IMPORT SALES WERE UP 20 PERCENT LAST YEAR.

Localized Story

The rising cost of foreign-made cars is creating a boom in American car sales. One local dealer says his sales are up 18 percent this year despite a general slow-down in import sales. The owner of Smith Automotive, Robert Smith, says he believes foreign car prices may double within the next five years.

This confirms a national report released today by Congressman Thomas Hansen of Hawaii. Hansen says import car prices have risen 16 percent with a corresponding decline in sales. In contrast, American cars have increased only three percent in price, and U.S. car sales are up nearly 20 percent.

WIRE GLOSSARY

ADV. — advance; a story to be used sometime in the future.

AMS, PMS — morning and evening newspapers.

BC — indicates item can be used immediately by either AMS or PMS, designation used on Sunday advances.

BJT — budget; summary or major stories.

EUN — bulletin.

Cycle — Complete news report for either morning or evening papers.

CQ — correct.

Folio — name, date and page number (or any one of these).

FYI — for your information.

HFR — hold for release.

LD or lede — lead.

Pickup — used to designate where story is to begin after a new lead or insert.

No pickup — revised story containing all previous material.

Roundup — usually an undated story involving more than one location for the story. For example, an election return story

CATEGORY CODES

a and b — domestic, non-Washington news item.

f — news copy designed for financial page.

i — international item.

n — stories of state and regional interest.

q — results of single sports event.

s — sports stories.

v — nationwide news digests, late news advisories.

w — Washington datelined stories.

PUBLICITY MATERIAL

While most public relations agencies understand the importance of preparing material especially for broadcast, many public relations practitioners do not have broadcast experience and do not understand the differences among media. You must exercise sound news judgment in evaluating publicity material not only for style, but because it may represent undue emphasis on special-interest points of view. Many times releases and fact sheets will be newsworthy, but may need to be reworked to meet broadcast requirements.

In editing publicity material, check the following guidelines.

1. Is the self-interest point of view unduly emphasized? If so, can it be eliminated?
2. Is the material localized? If not, can it be localized?
3. Is the lead well written to capture the most important aspect of the story? If not, can you rewrite the lead?
4. Is there unnecessary material in the news story? Can you condense it? (Publicity material is often padded.)
5. Does the material correspond to your broadcast style? If not, can it be edited to conform?
6. Do you have any questions about the story? If you do, call the contact person whose name should appear on the release. Call collect if the source lives outside your area. The public relations practitioner should be happy to answer your questions.



Figure 12-3. Some television weather personalities are meteorologists, specialists in the study of weather and climate. They have the additional ability of presenting complex information in short, concise reports.

WEATHER BROADCASTING

Some sections of the Midwest lie in "tornado alley," a geographical area where tornados routinely form to cause widespread destruction wherever they touch ground. On a muggy summer day several years ago dark clouds formed over Topeka, Kansas, sagging lower with the passing hours. The air grew still and ominous, birds sought shelter and animals became apprehensive. Broadcast stations throughout the area broadcast alerts and severe storm warnings. Finally, people were advised to seek shelter. The tornado was imminent.

It struck first along the southwestern edge of the city, then swept through the center of the metropolitan area causing great property damage, injury and death. At WIBW-TV facilities at the western edge of the city, the broadcast tower toppled and employees feared for a time that the station building itself might collapse. Inside the newsroom Bill Curtis was broadcasting constant updates about the tornado's progress. Finally, Curtis was forced to retreat at the height of the storm to a safer position beneath a newsroom desk. Even though the tower collapsed the station was still able to broadcast on emergency power with a signal of reduced strength. Curtis, still on the air as the tornado swirled around the station, shouted to the camera, "For God's Sake, people, take cover!" Several times he repeated the warning and his broadcasts are credited with saving the lives of hundreds of people who might otherwise have been unaware of the storm's ferocity. Granted, this is an atypical example of weather forecasting, but one that nevertheless highlights the importance of broadcasts and the power of immediacy that has brought radio and television to the forefront as sources of weather information.

SAMPLE WEATHER FORECAST FOR RADIO

Weather for the Dallas-Fort Worth vicinity . . . look for southerly winds five to 10 miles per hour and warmer temperatures through tomorrow. Highs today in the upper 70s, with overnight lows in the mid-50s. Warmer tomorrow with highs predicted to reach 85 degrees. Increasing cloudiness and a 20 per cent chance of rain by tomorrow evening at this time. Currently, the downtown temperature is 68 degrees.

Weather Reports

Television and radio rank number one and two respectively in the public's media preference and use for weather information. Each broadcast medium has advantages and disadvantages in its weather reporting, though. Television provides visual reports and includes the weather reporting as an integral part of its regular news shows. However, local weather information is not normally available except during regularly scheduled news shows.

Radio, then, has an advantage of being the medium that includes updated weather reports throughout the day both as a part of the regular news show and in special reports as the weather changes. Until the emergence of Electronic News Gathering by TV, radio was the medium most sought as an information source during major weather disasters because of its mobility in providing on-the-scene reports. TV is still reluctant to interfere with normal programming to provide on-location reports, except in the case of severe storm fronts, but ENG provides TV the ability to provide on-the-scene coverage, even if it is used only during regular newscasts.

What type of weather information does the audience want? The public wants especially to have information about temperature, precipitation, and wind. Of lesser importance is information about the chill factor, humidity, frost, pressure, and pollution levels.

At a minimum you should provide the most up-to-date, accurate information you can get. That information should include present temperature, total precipitation (if any), and wind speed. Forecasts should include predicted highs and lows, wind and precipitation possibilities. If possible, approaching storms should be described as soon as it appears they will be moving into your area.

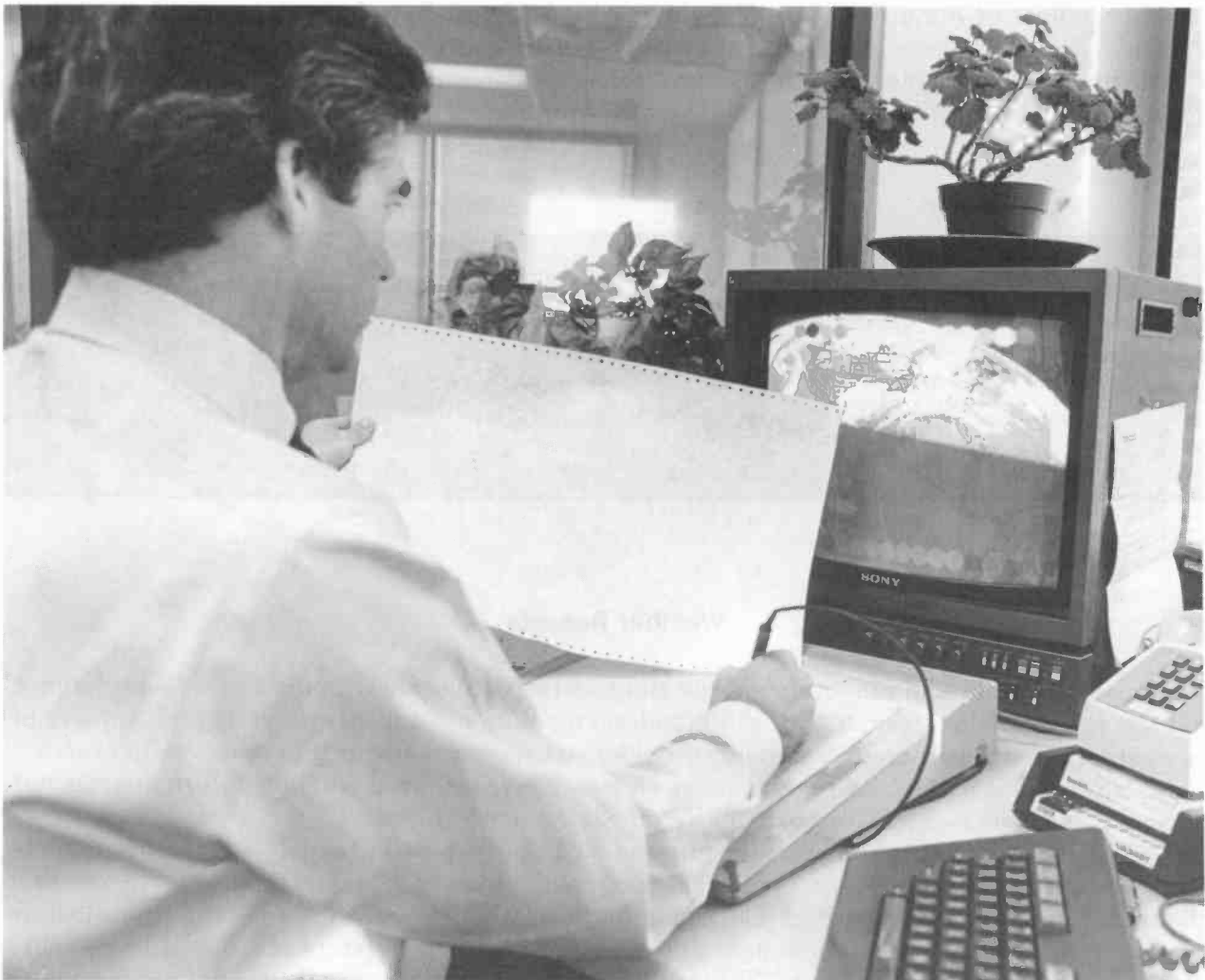


Figure 12-4. Some television weather personalities are meteorologists, specialists in the study of weather and climate. They have the additional ability of presenting complex information in short but comprehensive reports.

Directions: Edit the following wire copy. Indicate which copy could have possibilities to localize and to add visuals or taped actualities.

12-A

OIL IS ONCE AGAIN FLOWING IN THE TRANS-SIBERIAN PIPELINE. REPAIR CREWS PLUGGED A LEAK IN THE PIPELINE TUESDAY WITH A WOODEN WEDGE. THE LEAK, WHICH WAS CAUSED BY A TRUCK RAMMING INTO THE PIPELINE, CAUSED THE SEVEN AND THREE-QUARTER BILLION DOLLAR SYSTEM TO SHUT DOWN ONLY 24 HOURS AFTER IT HAD BEEN REOPENED. THE PIPELINE HAD BEEN SHUT DOWN FOR TEN DAYS FOLLOWING AN EXPLOSION AT A PUMP STATION.

-30-

AUTHORITIES IN PROSPECT, CONNECTICUT, HOPE TO HAVE AUTOPSIES COMPLETED TODAY ON THE NINE PERSONS WHO WERE APPARENTLY MURDERED AND THEN LEFT IN A BURNING HOUSE EARLY FRIDAY MORNING. FIVE AUTOPSIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED. DR. ELLIOT GROSS, WHO'S CONNECTICUT'S CHIEF MEDICAL EXAMINER, SAYS MRS. CHERYL BEAUDOIN DIED OF A COMBINATION OF HEAD INJURIES AND A STAB WOUND IN THE CHEST. FOUR OF HER CHILDREN ALSO SUFFERED HEAD INJURIES. IT IS THE WORST MASS MURDER CASE IN CONNECTICUT'S HISTORY.

-30-

12-A cont'd.

THE LABOR DEPARTMENT SAYS THOUSANDS OF PERSONS RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS WILL NO LONGER RECEIVE PAYMENTS BECAUSE OF A DROP IN THE NATION'S INSURED UNEMPLOYMENT RATE. LABOR SECRETARY RAY MARSHALL SAYS THE CUTOFF IN BENEFITS WILL AFFECT AN ESTIMATED 218-THOUSAND PERSONS IN 37 STATES WHO HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED 26 WEEKS OF REGULAR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION.

-30-

WHEN THE TOWN OF HONDO, TEXAS, APPLIED FOR FEDERAL FUNDS TO HELP BUILD A MILLION-DOLLAR CIVIC CENTER, IT WAS TURNED DOWN BECAUSE ITS THREE PER CENT JOBLESS RATE IS BELOW THE MINIMUM REQUIRED FOR ASSISTANCE. TOWN OFFICIALS BELIEVED THEY WERE BEING PENALIZED FOR HAVING TOO MANY HARD-WORKING CITIZENS SO THEY SENT OUT A REQUEST FOR WELFARE-COLLECTING LOAFERS TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN HONDO. MAYOR WOODROW GLASSCOCK SAYS SO FAR HE'S RECEIVED OVER 600 RESPONSES, INCLUDING ONE FROM A GERMAN MAN WHO SAID HE'D CONSIDER HELPING OUT . . . IF THE TOWN WILL PAY HIS FARE TO THE U.S.!

-30-

THE SENATE IS EXPECTED TO SPEND MOST OF THE WEEK LOOKING AT A BILL PROVIDING PARTIAL PUBLIC FINANCING FOR SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS. THAT BILL WOULD GIVE CANDIDATES THE CHOICE OF ACCEPTING PUBLIC FUNDS OR RAISING THEIR OWN. IF THEY ACCEPTED PUBLIC MONEY THEIR SPENDING WOULD BE LIMITED BY A FORMULA BASED ON THE POPULATION OF THE STATE. REPUBLICANS ARE OPPOSED TO THE MEASURE, CALLING IT A WASTE OF MONEY, AND ARE THREATENING A FILIBUSTER.

-30-

Wire Copy Editing
Chapter 12

Name _____

Date _____

12-A cont'd.

THE STATE-RUN BRITISH AIRWAYS ANNOUNCED TODAY IT WILL ASK GOVERNMENT APPROVAL TO CUT ITS ROUND-TRIP NEW YORK-TO-LONDON FARE. THE AIRLINE IS ASKING FOR A 17 PERCENT REDUCTION BEGINNING SEPTEMBER FIRST. TWO AMERICAN AIRLINES PAN AM AND TRANS WORLD AIRLINES, HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO LOWER THEIR PRICES.

-30-



Developing Story
Chapter 12

Name _____

Date _____

12-B

Directions: From the three wire stories that follow, edit and/or rewrite the information into **one single** story for today's 5 p.m. newscast that emphasizes most recent developments. Please note that only one story is required, which should contain the most recent and pertinent facts. Avoid innuendo and the possibility of libel in this story. Pay particular attention to the guidelines entitled "Crime Stories" on page 353.

A45

BUN zyrzzyccs 3-22, dx

Urgent

d140

CENTRAL VALLEY — A twenty-two-year-old woman was found shot to death near here today. The body was discovered about 9:30 a.m. this morning on Richards Lane near Lake Arlington.

Police suspect sexual assault since the girl's half-clad body was in a ditch near the lake. Richards Lane is considered a "Lover's Lane" by local residents.

An autopsy will be conducted to determine the exact cause and time of death, according to Police Detective Ralph R. Smith.

-30-

A68

2nd Id.

Precede A45 Central Valley xzzzzla 3-22 d140

CENTRAL VALLEY — Laura L. Alexander, 22-year-old senior at Central Valley University, was found shot to death early this morning near Lake Arlington.

Miss Alexander was sexually assaulted, then shot about 2 a.m., according to the police report. Her half-clad body was discovered this morning by construction workers repairing a bridge on Richards Lane.

Miss Alexander, a dietics major, had been to a sorority dance last night, according to her sorority sisters. She left with an unidentified male companion about midnight, they said.

Police are checking into leads about the identity of the companion.

-30-

A98

12-B cont'd.

3rd Id.

Precede A68 Central Valley

qzzxlla 3-22, dl

CENTRAL VALLEY — Thomas R. Jordon, 35-year-old bartender, was arrested this afternoon for questioning in the murder of Laura Alexander.

Jordon was seen leaving a sorority dance with Miss Alexander about midnight last night. The coroner's report placed the time of death about 2 a.m.

Miss Alexander was raped, shot to death and left in a ditch near Lake Arlington. She was found near a bridge on Richards Lane by construction workers this morning about 9:30.

Jordon, who lives at 3232 Live Oak St., has been in Central Valley for about three months. He was released from the state prison in December after serving three years of a five to 10 year sentence for second degree sexual assault.

Formal charges have not been filed in the Alexander case.

-30-

Assignments
Chapter 12

Name _____

Date _____

12-C

1. Call or write to a public relations agency or department and ask for a copy of a news release sent to a radio or TV station. (Use the news release on page 269 if you cannot obtain one from your area). Analyze the release by answering the following questions.
 - a) Is it written in broadcast style? Are there any changes that must be made? What are they?
 - b) Is the lead the best it could be? If not, rewrite the lead.
 - c) Is there any material that you could delete? If so, delete it.
 - d) Is the story important to your local community? Can it be localized? If so, localize it.
 - e) Are there any gaps, problems with the story that you cannot find out about on your own? If so, call the public relations practitioner and ask.

2. Edit or rewrite the news releases on pages 269-281 for a radio broadcast.



Assignments
Chapter 12

Name _____

Date _____

12-D

1. Watch the late evening weather show on one of your local television stations. Answer the following questions.
 - a) What was the structure of the show? That is, what categories of information were first, second, third, etc.
 - b) What categories of information were included?
 - c) How do you think the weather program could have been improved to provide you as the consumer with better information for personal, occupational, and recreational use?
 - d) Discuss the use of electronic graphics in weather programs, radar, lightning strike detectors, satellite time lapse photography, etc.

Assignments
Chapter 12

Name _____

Date _____

12-E

Write a 20-second weather summary for a radio news broadcast using weather information from your local newspaper. (See page 253 for Sample Weather Forecast.)

NOTE: Edit the following news releases into stories suitable for broadcast. Rewrite if necessary.



Keystone

Keystone Summer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Lois Barr
303/468-2316
Ext. 3830

KEYSTONE RIVER-RAFTING COMBINES FUN WITH RELAXATION

Water.

In the winter, skiers enjoy its frozen whiteness. But, in the springtime, when it melts and fills up the mountain rivers, it offers excitement of a different sort.

Floating down mountain rivers near Keystone in a large, rubber raft is a fantastic journey. You see sheer, multi-colored canyon walls rising from the river banks, mountain vistas and meadows full of wildflowers. You also experience the river's many moods - calm, wide waters, good for swimming or sunbathing, and adventuresome, whitewater rapids.

At Keystone, rafting is one of this resort's most popular summer activities. Guided one-and-two-day trips down the Colorado and North Platte Rivers are offered daily by Wild Water West, a firm headed by Jim Temple, a Denver schoolteacher turned summer "river rat."

Visitors may make reservations for either trip by calling First Gear Sports Rentals in Keystone Village at 303/468-2316, Ext. 3868. The cost for one day on the Colorado River is \$20 per person. The two-day Colorado trips cost \$75 per adult and \$65 per child. The price of the North Platte trip is \$85 for adults and \$75 for children.

(More)

Transportation, food, equipment, including mandatory life preservers, and guides are furnished on all trips. Buses pick up participants at the Keystone Lodge and at other points in Summit County.

The Colorado River excursion begins at Radium, a small town about 30 miles north of Keystone. The rafts are put into the river there and float downstream 12 miles to State Bridge, another small town. This easy-going trip, available from May through August, offers stretches of calm, floating water, where water fights inevitably develop between rafts, plus spray and thrills aplenty in the rapids.

The river runs through the beautiful Gore Range, picturesque canyons and ranchland meadows. Guides do most of the paddling, but ask for help occasionally.

The North Platte River has a more exciting personality, and trips are offered only from May through July, when the water is highest. This excursion begins in Northern Colorado near the Wyoming line and includes more advanced white-water rapids bearing such colorful names as Narrow Falls, Stovepipe and Cowpie. The North Platte descends quickly through alpine meadows and canyon walls soaring 300 to 500 feet. The visitor also sees spectacular views of otherwise inaccessible mountain wilderness during this two-day trip.

In addition to rafting, other summer activities at Keystone include tennis, sailing, horseback riding, rodeos, guided "Jeep" and historical tours and scenic chairlift rides. Keystone is an all-seasons resort located 72 miles west of Denver in the heart of the Colorado Rockies.

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AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION of COLORADO

INFLUENZA FACT SHEET

Contact: Michele McCandless

Infectious diseases such as cholera and small pox have largely been eradicated, but every year mankind still suffers from Flu. In medieval times people believed that the mysterious plague was caused by the "influence" of the stars.

Today, we know that an attack of influenza is caused by one of a number of viruses. Within each virus type are numbered strains that have caused epidemics of flu. The most common causes of epidemics now are influenza A or B. Although both types have strains that produce severe illness, type A seems to have more of them.

Currently, there is an epidemic of Type A Influenza occurring in Southeast Asia called "Taiwan Flu" which is expected to reach the Rocky Mountain Region by December. The Taiwan Flu will primarily affect people who are under 35 years of age and who have underlying chronic illness.

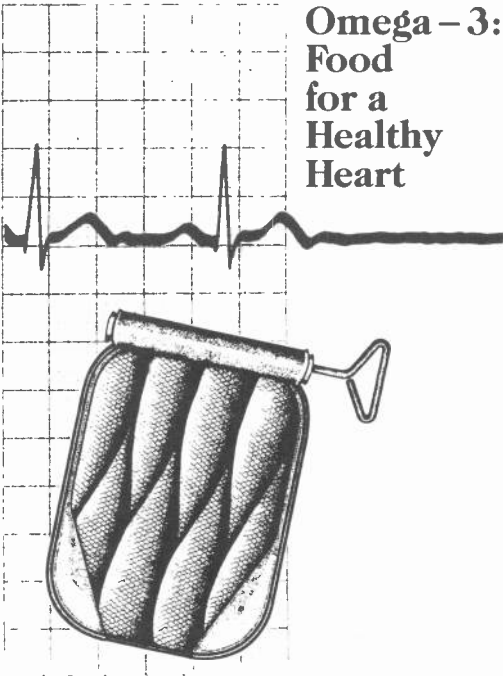
All individuals suffering from a chronic illness such as lung, heart or kidney disease, diabetes or anemia, and persons over the age of 65 run the risk of contracting serious complications if they get the flu, including pneumonia and even death. Prevention is extremely important for these high-risk groups.

To be protected for the flu season, high-risk individuals should consult their physicians and receive their vaccinations in the fall, before the end of November.

- * Influenza is among the 10 leading causes of death in the U.S.
- * An estimated 500,000 persons have died during flu epidemics during the past 20 years
- * 40,000 excess deaths have been documented in each of recent flu epidemics
- * Even in a 'non epidemic' year, 10,000 people die from influenza
- * Influenza has been estimated to cost over \$760 million in lost productivity

The Christmas Seal People ®

**Omega-3:
Food
for a
Healthy
Heart**



FOR: THE NORWAY SARDINE INDUSTRY

FROM: KETCHUM PUBLIC RELATIONS
55 Union Street
San Francisco, CA 94111
Phil Siegel
(415) 984-6313
Tracy Weir
(415) 984-6336

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FISH OIL LINKED TO PREVENTION OF HEART DISEASE

Can fish oil prevent heart attacks? As unlikely as it may sound, exciting new research shows that a substance found exclusively in the fat of salt and fresh water fish may stop heart disease in its deadly tracks.

"Fish oil may be one of the keys to preventing cardiovascular disease," according to Dr. William E. Connor, head of the division of Endocrinology, Metabolism and Clinical Nutrition at Oregon Health Sciences University. Connor says that fish contain high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids -- a potent

(more)

combination of polyunsaturated fats which may act in concert to prevent or alleviate arteriosclerosis, coronary heart disease and abnormal blood clotting.

Omega-3 fatty acids seem to act in three ways to benefit coronary heart disease.

First, omega-3 fatty acids of fish oil lower blood fat levels. The fish oil seems to sweep away harmful levels of very low density lipoproteins (VLDL) and low density lipoproteins (LDL) by changing the balance of lipid (fat) levels in the blood. Studies show that when patients are given eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) (the predominant omega-3 fatty acids found in seafood), total blood triglyceride levels decrease by two to five times as much as those given polyunsaturated vegetable oils.

Secondly, omega-3 fatty acids work to keep blood flowing. By making platelets (the cells which clot blood) less "sticky," omega-3 fatty acids seem to make the blood less likely to clot and jam arteries -- one of the chief causes of strokes and heart attacks. Red blood cells also become more flexible in their passage through blood vessels.

Finally, omega-3 fatty acids have been shown to lower total cholesterol levels -- as much or more than polyunsaturated vegetable oils. High levels of cholesterol and triglycerides have been firmly linked to heart disease.

Are there other therapeutic effects from a diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids? The answer appears to be yes, according to

researchers examining the relationship of omega-3 fatty acids with breast cancer, migraine headaches and rheumatoid arthritis.

In animal studies, researchers are examining the role which omega-3 fatty acids may play in preventing breast cancer. Women with high saturated fat intakes (over 30 percent of daily caloric intake in fat) typically have a higher tendency to contract breast disease. Though the research is not yet conclusive, scientists believe that omega-3 fatty acids may reduce this risk by cutting the rate at which the body produces dienoic eicosanoids (compounds associated with tumor production).

Omega-3 fatty acids have also been implicated in the amelioration of migraine headaches. Experts are examining the theory that omega-3 fatty acids' blood-thinning effects may actually reduce the amounts of serotonin (the nerve chemical which painfully constricts blood vessels during a migraine attack) in the blood. It appears that migraineurs may actually be deficient in omega-3 fatty acids (meaning that they have "thicker" blood) -- making them more prone to frequent releases of serotonin.

Rheumatoid arthritis may also be improved by extended intake of omega-3 fatty acids. The latest research suggests that omega-3 fatty acids may soothe aching joints by helping the blood produce anti-inflammatory prostaglandins. Perhaps the best news is that the benefits appear to be cumulative, meaning that long-term

(more)

consumption of omega-3 fatty acids may significantly ease joint pain if combined with a low-saturated fat diet.

Where can you get omega-3?

"Eat fish," advises Dr. Connor. "Virtually every kind of fish has at least some level of omega-3. While the results still aren't in on just how much fish you should eat, my recommendation is to eat up to six ounces of fish per day several times a week or more frequently."

Fish that swim in pollutant-free waters, such as sardines, salmon, herring and mackerel have some of the highest concentrations of omega-3 fatty acids and are an excellent catch. Experts suggest that you steer away from fish that swim in contaminated waters; these fish can store pollutants in their fat.

Researchers do not recommend the new fish oil supplements as a dietary staple, primarily because they are not yet sure of their long-term effects. Further, since humans metabolize omega-3 fatty acids differently, it's impossible to prescribe an exact dosage at this time. However, some patients with high blood fats may take EPA on a daily basis under orders from their doctors.

With this in mind, what are the best lifetime diet and exercise strategies for heart health?

First off, though experts recommend increasing your consumption of omega-3 fatty acids, cut down your total fat intake to 30 percent of your total calories or less, with most of

that reduction coming from saturated fat intake. Dietary cholesterol should be reduced to 200 milligrams per day or less. Though the findings are not yet conclusive, research suggests that substituting fish oil for some vegetable and animal fats while simultaneously reducing overall levels of dietary fat may be an important key to long term cardiovascular health.

Next, follow all of the current medical recommendations for optimal heart health: Stop smoking. Exercise regularly and try to reduce stress. Lose weight if you're overweight and take care to avoid saturated fats and cholesterol-rich foods.

#####

2141w

THE 50/50. Walk for the health of it!
50 // // // 50 // // //

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Barbara Kalunian
Cathleen Toomey
Cone & Company
(617) 227-2111

**MARATHON WALKER FIRST TO WALK
ALL 50 STATES IN 50 WEEKS**

**Longest Solo Walk in History
Ended Today in New York City**

New York, Sept. 5, 1985 — Rob Sweetgall's year long solo trek of over 20 million steps ended today. The 37 year old Brooklyn native walked more than 11,208 miles through all 50 states to promote cardiovascular health and fitness through walking. In contrast to the solitude of his journey, he was greeted at the final mile by hundreds of cheering well wishers, triumphant music and thousands of red, white and blue balloons.

The driving mission behind Rob's walk was apparent in the attitude of the crowd, and Rob's words after he crossed the finish line at South Street Seaport's Pier 16.

"I walked across America alone — yet I was never alone. The farmer in Utah, the truck driver in Ohio, the businessman in Boston, and school children everywhere heard of my walk and came out to walk a few miles with me. Months later, I hear from them — and they're still walking on their own. That's what this year is all about -- to reach people and help them understand the importance of walking for good cardiovascular health. Seeing this crowd, and knowing of all the people I've talked and walked with, I feel this year has been a success."

Rob was awarded a Seal of Recognition from the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, as well as a plaque from the American Podiatric Medical Association in a brief ceremony at the conclusion of his walk. Bruce Katz, president of The Rockport Company, a co-sponsor of Rob's walk, presented Rob with a new pair of Rockport shoes,

- more -

as Rob had logged over 8,700 miles in his current pair. Doug Tibbetts, of GORE-TEX Fabrics, the other co-sponsor, presented Rob with a plaque. GORE-TEX provided the windproof, waterproof suit Rob wore throughout his walk.

Rob, a 37 year old ex-chemical engineer, dedicated a year of his life to demonstrate the importance of walking for good cardiovascular health. He began his odyssey on Sept. 7, 1984 in Newark, Del. With only a five pound fanny pack to carry his supplies, he crossed deserts, mountains and plains and walked through rainstorms, blizzards and broiling heat. While averaging 31 miles per day Rob has spoken to thousands of children and adults and has been awarded proclamations from several cities and states in recognition of his efforts in promoting cardiovascular health. Now considered the Johnny Appleseed of walking for many Americans, he has been an integral part of the current national walking boom.

While devoting a year of his life to walking, Rob also dedicated his body to science. He was the subject of one of the most exhaustive series of tests ever conducted on an athlete. Under the direction of Dr. James Rippe, cardiologist and medical director for the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Center for Health, Fitness and Human Performance, and Professor Frank Katch, chairman of the Department of Exercise Science, Rob was tested throughout his walk to examine the pulmonary and cardiovascular effects of his extensive walking. Seven times during his walk, Rob has walked to the nearest airport and flown to the University of Massachusetts for more than 14 hours of medical tests during each visit.

"This has been significant research on the long range effects of walking on one individual," said Dr. Rippe. "We anticipate that these results will dramatize for the average American that walking is one of the safest, most effective exercises to lose weight, tone muscles and strengthen the heart."

Rob will continue his work in the promotion of health and fitness as executive director and founder of the Foundation for the Development of Cardiovascular Health. He is also committed to organizing walking programs for public school systems. Rob has been appointed as development director and a member of the Board of Directors of the Rockport Walking Institute.

- more -

In-kind supporters of the 50/50 included Lyons Studios of Wilmington, Delaware, who supplied artwork and slides for Rob's presentations, University of Massachusetts Medical School and Department of Exercise Science, as well as Dupont Biomedical Products Department.

In total distance this 50/50 walk surpasses Sweetgall's previous 1982 - 1983 run/walk along the circumference of America. He covered 10,608 miles during that trek as noted in the 1985 - 86 Sports Edition of the Guinness World Book of Records.

###



Figure 13-1. Voice-over narration is recorded from an announce booth.

13

Radio News

*"This — is London."
Edward R. Murrow*

News is an integral part of our daily lives. At the very least we read the headlines in our local newspapers over breakfast or in waiting rooms. We watch it on local and network television newsbreaks during prime-time television programs in the evening. On our way to work, or as we drive to the grocery store, our radios are tuned to our favorite radio stations, where we hear more of the day's events.

News is definitely a part of our everyday lives, but we can become so accustomed to hearing it on radio that we sometimes forget it's there. We find ourselves hearing news stories without really listening to them. That is an unfortunate side effect of "passive" media. They can be easily ignored.

During World War II, however, Americans sat around their radios and listened as CBS's Edward R. Murrow described events as he saw them from various vantage points in London, England. Murrow, through radio, brought a terrifying war into living rooms all over America. His style and his dedication to news helped a nation understand the devastation of the "blitzkrieg" and the personal strength of a nation under siege. Such men as Murrow, Lowell Thomas and others took news beyond the scope of newspaper coverage and gave events a reality apart from the written word.

Today, radio news is so much a part of most of our lives that we almost ignore it. However, before the war years the idea of radio news created a sort of knee jerk reaction within the news industry. The years between 1933 and 1939 were a time of conflict between newspapers and radio news. Radio was becoming a powerful force in the news industry and print media fought to protect themselves from the "threat" of radio. News services like Associated Press boycotted the fledgling medium. As a result NBC began its own news collection efforts and CBS soon followed. To head off an expensive media news war, both sides in 1933 agreed on a compromise called the *Biltmore Program*. In this pact between radio networks and print media, the networks essentially agreed to stay out of the news collecting business. The pact established a Press-Radio Bureau which provided 30-word bulletins based on news service stories. It also assured newspapers the opportunity to "scoop" radio news by limiting newscasts to certain hours. Finally, it prohibited commercial sponsorship of news programs.¹ World War II forced the pact out of existence and opened the door for networks to cover news events as they happened.

¹ Bittner, John R., Denise A. Bittner. *Radio Journalism*, (Prentice-Hall 1977), pg. 5.

It was a time of growth in radio news unparalleled in the medium's history. The years between 1939 and 1944 saw radio emerge as a powerful and credible information source. Stations expanded news programming year after year until they reached a peak in the mid-1960's when social and technical growth pushed news into the background behind Top-40 entertainment radio and television news.

The glory days of radio news may have waned in the colorful glow of the television screen, but radio has survived as a viable conduit for news. Networks continue to cover events for their radio affiliates. Associated Press and United Press International news organizations provide wire and audio services to their radio subscribers. Programs like National Public Radio's *All Things Considered* have recaptured some of the flavor of those glory days when audiences would tune in just to hear the news.

In part, radio news has survived because the Communications Act of 1934 mandates broadcasters to serve the community. The "... *interest, convenience and necessity* ..." clause suggests that broadcasters should provide their communities with basic information service. License approval and renewal has often depended on how well a station has served its community's needs and, until recently, the Federal Communications Commission has held news coverage in high regard when considering whether a station has indeed fulfilled its mandate.

The Commission's recent mood of deregulation appears to have deemphasized its past interpretation that news programming meets the public's interest, convenience and necessity. This is evidenced by the fact that many stations have cut back or completely dropped their local news coverage to make room for more entertainment programming.

Despite this, radio news has survived alongside television, because the public demands fast, accurate, credible news sources. A 1983 Radio Information Center survey revealed that 52% of Americans claim radio as their first source of daily news especially between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. The survey also showed that 56% of this nation's population turns to radio for "fast-up-to-the-minute" reports in times of emergencies.

Radio news remains so important in our lives that we refuse to give it up. It's alive and well because it is where we want it — when we want it. It gives us the local election results hours before our local newspapers and usually ahead of the area television station. It can be on the scene live and broadcasting usually within minutes of an emergency. It brings us the mayor's voice explaining the latest tax proposal while print and television news people are still planning their layouts and line-ups. Only television has the capability to reach the audience as fast, but even television is limited by economics, equipment complexity, and scarcity of local stations.

Radio news has a long and distinguished history of meeting the nation's information needs. As a public, we expect it more than demand it. We rely on it, yet we take it for granted. It is a reliable source of national and international news, but its most important contribution to a news-hungry public may be its commitment to its local community. Radio news might be "low-tech" in a "high-tech" world, but it's still here, and it's still bringing us the news — not only from London, but from city hall.

RADIO STATION ORGANIZATION

Radio is a business, and as a business it's organized into *departments*. At most stations you will find *programming, operations, sales, and news departments*. Some larger stations might also have

promotional, research, and legal departments. Station size, community size, financial support, and station commitment to its community play major roles in how top management organizes and operates a radio station.

In a small town on the east coast near Washington, D.C. where radio stations are plentiful and signal reception is good, you may find a radio station owned and operated by a husband and wife. They may only be on the air for eight hours a day from sun-up to sundown. Their *programming department* staff meetings might take place over eggs and toast in the morning before they leave for the station. The *operations department* which is responsible for equipment, production facilities, and engineering might be run entirely on advice from a consulting engineer. They might sell advertising time for as little as \$20.00 a *spot* with special discounts for long term contracts that bring the price of an ad down to as little as \$15.50. The local churches might get free air-time on alternating Sundays and Saturdays. Their news department might employ a local high school or junior college student who is paid by the story plus minimum wage for working an on-air shift. They never miss city council or school board meetings, and they try to be on the scene when there is a local emergency. They know that success, to a great extent, depends on their dedication to serving the community.

The type of station you have been reading about is called a *mom and pop* station. In the early days, these stations were the backbone of American broadcasting. As networks expanded the potential of radio, national and international news coverage was greatly improved in most cases. They brought the world to every community's front door. To compete, small mom and pops had to do something the corporate giants could not or would not do. For local stations, the key to success became local news and information.

Larger stations or stations in larger markets have similar organizational responsibilities, but they are operated quite differently. The *programming department* makes decisions about program content, placement and length — essentially to determine the "sound" of the station. Its staff meetings might include donuts and coffee, but they are conducted in a more formal environment. The decisions made in those meetings have repercussions not only for the station, but for the program director's future with the company.

In the *operations department*, the atmosphere is no less formal and operating decisions are a full-time job. In some very large stations, this department is responsible for millions of dollars worth of equipment and facilities.

The *news department* might be staffed with several full-time reporters, a news anchor person, a news director, and possibly a news producer. They might have a *news wire* service for national and regional news. The service might include a regular audio feed of selected comments to be included with stories coming over the wire. Reporters will depend on scanners to help them cover their beats and find fast breaking stories. They might have specially equipped mobile vans to help them transmit "live from the scene." In the larger markets, the equipment inventory might include a helicopter or small fixed wing airplane from which a reporter can broadcast live from "over the scene" of a traffic jam or accident.

The organizational needs of the larger stations might also include a *promotions department* through which the stations can design their own promotional campaigns. The station might conduct prize giveaways or advertise on billboards, or it might use airtime to promote a certain program or on-air personality.

The *research department*, would be found mostly at larger stations. The research staff might be charged with conducting on-going audience, market, and content analysis, equipment research, or programming trends.

In the *legal department*, the staff would spend its time and efforts defending the station in courts and advising management on potential legal problems and talent contract matters that might develop if actions are not taken to avoid them.

Whether the station is a mom and pop operation or owned by a corporation, each department exists to improve the radio station's business profile. Department staffs work not only for their department, but for the overall profit picture of the station.

NEWS DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION

Although station departments tend to affect each other in varying degrees, we are primarily concerned with the *news department*. It will be headed by a person called a *news director*. Her or his responsibilities may vary depending on whether or not the station is unionized, how large the station is, how large the market is, and how much commitment the station has placed on its news operation. Basically, we can say the news director is responsible for generating new audiences and for the overall quality of the news program.

The station's *newscasters* and *reporters* are directly responsible to the news director. If the station has an *assignment editor*, the reporters work through him or her in reporting individual stories.

The news director must know which stories will have the greatest impact on the community, and what information is available on the *wire*. A quick check of the *program log* will tell the news director at what times and how long the newscasts will be, and which commercials will be aired during the newscast. Knowing the advertisers and the order of the spots is important since it might affect the order of the stories on either side of the commercials. For example, it would be in poor professional taste to place a hail damage story just before or after a commercial for an insurance company's hail policy.

Besides overseeing newscasts and reporters, the news director must also work with "operations" to assure the station has the right kind of equipment to be able to gather and produce news stories. Production rooms must be scheduled in advance, mobile van equipment must be checked and made ready for the next assignment, new equipment might be needed as old equipment wears out, and management needs to be kept up to date on what is happening in the news department. The news director's job is a varied one that, in the course of a week, will probably involve every other department at the station.

The *reporters* cover and write the stories the news director and assignment editor have decided to include in upcoming newscasts. A reporter may be sent out to cover a local meeting, interview a city official, or talk with local merchants about how a recently passed piece of legislation will affect business. If the station has a wire service, the news director might assign a reporter to rewrite selected wire copy and pick the *actualities* for those stories off the audio feed.

If there is such a thing as "footsoldiers" of the news department, they would be the reporters. The words of a newscast are theirs. The interviews are theirs. The sweat, frustration and anxiety of meeting deadlines are theirs. It's the reporter who attends the city council meetings that last past midnight, or interviews the belligerent union official who "doesn't listen to your station anyway," or waits in a blizzard for four hours to get the fire chief's confirmation that the fire was possibly started by an arsonist. After all the effort and all the time, the reporter must then turn his or her story over to the newscaster to be read on the air.

The most "visible" member of the news department is, of course, the *anchor* or *newscaster*. It's the newscaster's voice that listeners will hear when they tune-in. The newscaster does his or her own share of sweating and being anxious as the newscast draws near. The stories she or he must read flawlessly, are often in someone else's words, yet, regardless of the quality of the writing or the quality of the journalism, the newscaster must prepare to read it as professionally as possible. The newscaster's voice and name are well known to the listening audience and that voice becomes a credible source for news. A "bad" story might be the reporter's fault, but it's the anchor whom the audience will blame. Just as the reporter must rely on his or her personal

credibility to be assured of faithful news sources, the anchor must rely on personal credibility to assure faithful listeners.

The newscaster is the most recognizable voice in the news department, but sometimes the reporters get to go on-the-air with their stories. The following are tips to help you improve your on-air delivery:

- speak at a comfortable pace as though you're telling your story to a friend rather than reading it to strangers
- relax and concentrate on *enunciation*
- try to keep your voice in as low a register as comfortable
- be interested in the subject matter because audiences can tell if you're just "going through the motions"
- avoid movement or mannerisms that might take your mouth away from the direction of the microphone or create unwanted noise in the studio
- if you make a mistake with a word or phrase, correct it quickly and pleasantly — *don't draw attention to your mistake*
- vary your pace slightly as you read, and avoid rhythmic reading patterns
- be sensitive to people involved in the stories you are reading as well as to the people who are listening to you



Figure 13-2. A radio broadcast engineer monitors voice levels at the master control board during a live in-studio interview.

- pause between stories to let your audience know you are changing subjects
- avoid opening and closing your mouth at the end of each sentence
- if you must clear your throat or cough, turn down the microphone pot
- finally, *remember you are a professional when you're in front of the microphone*

PREPARING THE NEWSCAST

Most radio stations today subscribe to at least one "outside" news source in order to provide their audiences with national and international news. The *AP* or *UPI* news wires have been a mainstay of newscasts for many years. Stations that cannot afford a full-time news department, or have not committed to a full-time news operation, might resort to *rip and read* to satisfy the mandate to operate in the public's ". . . interest, convenience and necessity . . ."

"Rip and read" is a method of producing a newscast by selecting stories off the wire and reading them on the air. The newscaster might be a disc-jockey who is on the air at the time, or it may be a station employee whose part-time responsibility is being the news director.

The wire services allow stations on a tight budget to provide their audiences with regional, state, national, and international news. If the station buys both a wire service and its accompanying *audio feed*, the newscast can provide the added dimension of actual comments from sources. These are known as *actualities*.

Wire services might provide the only news a station uses, but they can also be an integral part of a full-time news department's newscast. News directors read the wire service copy before each newscast looking for important stories. If they find one, they might rewrite it to fit the newscast length or station's "sound," or they might tear it off the wire and assign a reporter to find a *local angle* for tomorrow's newscast. Wire services can be a news department's most valuable tool in the battle to serve the news needs of the community.

Wire services are not the only resource option the news director has. The station might belong to a *network* such as NBC, NPR, or Mutual. Networks provide regular newscasts that are fed to their subscribers at scheduled times during the day. A news director might opt to do a newscast just before or just after the network feed. Since the network news would cover national and international news, the station's news department is free to concentrate on local news. A station that has the financial resources might subscribe to a network, wire service, audio service, and a feature service.

Of course, all those options won't replace the reporter covering local news. News directors still have to rely on their reporters to *collect information, check the facts, conduct the interviews, recheck the facts, write the stories, edit the tapes, recheck the facts, and do the follow-up if necessary.*

The word *lead* in journalistic circles has three basic meanings. It may mean the first sentence of a story. It may mean the first story in a newscast. It may also mean the *idea* for a story. Story coverage begins with following up this last kind of *lead*. *Story leads* come in many disguises. You may find one in the local newspaper classified ads, on the bulletin board at the laundromat, in conversation with a police officer, in the court records, or in the mayor's indiscriminate remarks during a heated discussion at the city council meeting. A reporter must be alert to leads. If the station has a scanner, *and* if you pay attention to it, you can get your leads directly from the police and fire dispatchers.



Figure 13-3. A radio journalist reporting news live from the scene of a news event.

The *story lead* is only the beginning. Once you get your lead, you have to decide whether or not you can do the story. Who do you need to contact to get information? Can you reach the people who have the information while the story is still timely? Are there ethical considerations? Is the story a hard news story or a soft news story?

By answering these questions, you will have begun *organizing* your story. In part, you will have defined what you want to write about and how you need to proceed. These are the same questions your news director will ask if he or she has any doubts about the story. So, always begin by investigating your *lead*.

This is just the beginning. Don't start looking for a typewriter yet. You will want to keep defining the story to make sure you actually have a story. Who were the key figures? What was the most important thing that happened? How did that affect the community? Why did it happen? Who will be the best sources to contact? *Is it news?*

Once you have defined your story, you are ready to follow up your *lead*. As you begin asking questions and researching the facts, there are some points to keep in mind.

1. The interview:

- a. conduct yourself as a professional — regardless of how unprofessional your source might behave
- b. have your questions ready — know what you want to find out and how you plan to find it out

- c. ask the tough questions — don't be intimidated and don't let the tough questions go unasked or unanswered
 - d. try to end the interview on a positive note — you might ask permission to call back if you find you need more information
 - e. don't take "no comment" for a final answer — find out why your source will not or cannot answer
 - f. be prepared to tape record everything your source says — let the source know you will be taping the interview
2. The equipment:
- a. high quality cassette recorder — a recorder that meets minimum broadcast standards
 - b. high quality microphone and mic cable — you want a good quality audio signal
 - c. batteries — at least two complete sets of fresh batteries
 - d. the AC cord for the recorder
 - e. cassette tapes — have two or three extra tapes handy
3. Procedures to note:
- a. if possible, familiarize yourself with the interview environment — the room, office, or underground garage
 - b. relax your subject — talk to him or her directly and casually
 - c. before sticking a microphone in his or her face, check your meter levels and start the tape
 - d. avoid looking at the recorder once you start the interview
 - e. say your name and your subject's name on tape and record your announcement that the interview is being recorded for your station's news program
 - f. place the microphone close enough to the subject to get a meter reading between -10 to 0 dB
 - g. encourage your subject to speak slowly
 - h. you need to speak slowly, deliberately and in even tones — keep your voice under control and in as low a register as is comfortable for you
 - i. pause after your questions — let your subject answer
 - j. pause after your subject's answer — sometimes a short pause will result in an answer you didn't expect

The quality of the recording will determine two very important aspects of putting together a radio news story; one — which *actualities* you will be able to select; two — how long it will take you to find the one you want while you're reviewing the tape in the production room. The sound bite must not only contribute to the story, but it must also be of high sound quality. If the comment you select is a mass of garbled noise, it is worthless as an actuality. If your tape is filled with hissing and background noise, you will spend a great deal of time listening, searching and hoping to find one usable bite.

Once you know which actualities you will use in your story, you can start looking for the typewriter.

WRITING THE STORY

You followed up your lead. You collected the information. You interviewed your sources. You reviewed the tapes. Now, you have a notebook full of scribbled notes, a couple of good

sound bites you *think* will be useful, and a blank sheet of paper in the typewriter. It's time to write.

We would be remiss if we did not offer an initial word of caution about writing for radio. Radio news presents some special problems not faced by writers in its print or television counterparts. For one thing, there can be no visual references to clue listeners into the story. Everything the audience will learn by the end of your story, they will learn from having *heard* it. If you tell them of a raging fire that destroyed a beautiful Victorian mansion on Baker Street, each of your listeners could get different impressions of what you mean by the words "raging," "beautiful" and "mansion." Visual references help make adjectives seem more objective to the audience. In radio, you don't have the luxury.

Another problem with which radio news writers must come to terms, is the brevity of their stories. In part, the visuals help print and television reporters include more information in their stories. You might need 10 or 15 seconds to describe the condition of a subcompact car after it has been hit by a runaway snowplow. However, you might only have 30 seconds to tell the whole story.

Another is that of having someone else deliver your story on the air. The *newscaster* who will read your story to the audience is a different person than you. He or she will not deliver the story exactly as you would and you must write with that thought in mind. You might know just the perfect way to deliver a novel sounding line that would help your story, but your newscaster might not see it quite the same way. The result can be, at best, unprofessional, and at worst, disastrous if the story is of a sensitive nature.

At this point, it would be nice to say, "just follow this formula and you will be a great radio news writer." However, we will try to be more realistic than that. What we can say is that there are certain aspects of writing that are consistent from story to story and station to station.

Begin before you start typing. Set your margins at 10 and 75 and on double space. This will give you 65 spaces of type per line. Double spacing and using normal upper-case/lower-case letters makes it easier for the newscaster to read on-the-air. Using these guides we know that the average broadcaster will deliver at a rate of about 16 lines a minute. Although this is only an approximation, it gives us a point of reference. If your story has to be 30 seconds, you know you will need to write an eight line story. If your news director has only five minutes to put together a newscast, this line count technique can be very helpful.

Another aid your news director might use is the following guide to help organize the time within a newscast.

A GUIDE TO RADIO NEWSCASTS

NEWSCAST LENGTH	MINUTES OF COMMERCIALS	NUMBER OF STORIES	NUMBER OF ACTUALITIES
5 min.	:60	10	2
10 min.	1:20	18	3
15 min.	1:20	25	5

A news director could use this type of rough guide to plan various length newscasts. We will use it as reference guide for you as a writer. In order to get all 10 stories into a 5-minute newscast, your stories must average 30 seconds in length including the actualities. You can also see that the news director will limit the number of actualities to two.

This exercise should help you understand the importance of writing for *time* as opposed to writing for *space*. It also demonstrates how valuable a tool the line count technique can be.

Once you have the margins set and you know how long your story must be, you will need to provide some reference information. Since it is information that will not be read on-the-air, we call it *non-copy reference information*. This information helps the news director plan the newscast. There is not, at this time, a single format used by all stations. However, certain information is recognized by most stations as being important. If your news script is formatted it might look like this:

NEWS

REPORTER: S.K. OOP

NEWSCAST: 4:00 PM

DATE: NOV. 16, 1987

SLUG: AIR CRASH

LENGTH: :30

TEXT

Federal Aviation Administration investigators are at the scene of this nation's latest air disaster. A Denver bound Airward flight 21 carrying 85 people crashed into a wheat field near Goodland, Kansas after colliding with a jet fighter. F-A-A spokesman Howard Friese (FREEZE) says the crash raises some serious questions.

FRIESE CART :05 "IT'S A MYSTERY WHY . . . AS A COMMERCIAL AIRLINER."

Names of the crash victims are being withheld this hour pending notification of relatives.

Notice the use of phonetic spelling for "Friese's" name, and the way we have set the *actuality* apart from the copy. It is also helpful to the newscaster if we provide the first few and last few words of the actuality.

The *non-copy reference information* is a valuable planning tool. At a glance, information is available about story length, content (slug), and the time of day for which it was written (newscast). This information is important in planning the upcoming newscast and subsequent newscasts for which the same story may need to be rewritten. If a station is so inclined, it may also use the non-copy reference information to create a reference file of its newscasts for the week, the month or the year.

News organizations agree that as you type your story, you should pay special attention to the following points:

- keep your words and sentences simple
- focus on one or two elements of the story — you must decide which of the who, what, when, where, why and how elements is most important to your audience

- Use the following guidelines for punctuation and grammar:
 - elipses (. . .) indicates an incomplete quote or a deliberate pause
 - dashes (--) and commas (,) indicate pauses
 - hyphens (-) separate alphabetic groups like Y-M-C-A
 - spaces () draw attention to a word like N O T when it's important for the anchor to notice a negative statement
 - contractions (won't) for the most part are acceptable — avoid contractions for "it will," "is not," "could not," "should not," and "is not." These contractions are difficult to enunciate and as a result may cause a misunderstanding.
 - pronouns (he, she, it) must be kept close to the noun they replace
 - "we vs. I" construction — if first person comment is necessary keep it plural — use we — "I" is acceptable in commentaries
 - titles (president, gubernatorial candidate, spokesman) should precede the name of the person to whom it refers
 - "the" and "that" — eliminate them whenever possible
- always keep your listener and anchor in mind while you write
- recheck your copy for typographical errors and "hearability" — read it aloud and listen to it with a critical ear
- write for the ear — write your story as though you were carrying on a conversation with a friend

PUTTING IT ON THE AIR

Once the story is written, a newscast must be put together. Stories will be selected according to which will be most important and interesting to the audience. In the last few minutes before a newscast, the news wire and the weather wire will be checked one last time. You may have to recheck your story by phoning your source "just to check for last minute developments." If your station has a mobile van out on the road, the news director or assignment editor might call the reporters on the two-way radio to see if they have anything to report, or if they are ready for their regular live report.

The newscaster will also select a couple of stories as *pad*. *Pad* stories will be used if the newscaster still has time to fill after the last regular story has been read. With that done, the stories will be placed in a specific order based on the relative importance of the stories, and which commercials are scheduled during the newscast.

The newscaster will preread the stories for content and pacing. It's a normal practice to *backtime* the last couple of stories that will air after the final. *Backtiming* allows the newscaster to end on time. If the local newscast must end at a specific time, say 5:05 for example, so the station can join the network newscast, it's important that the newscaster wrap-up the local news at exactly 5:04:59. As the station comes out of the last commercial, the anchor will check the time — it might be 5:03:29. He knows he has one minute thirty seconds to finish the newscast. Since he has *backtimed* the last two stories and found they will take one minute fifteen



Figure 13-4. A radio newscast is delivered from the announcer's booth.

seconds, he knows he will have 15 seconds to do his sign-off. If he does his job, he will be saying his "good byes" as the network theme music fades in.

Even before the newscast is over, reporters will be calling their contacts for new leads and the news director will be checking the wires for those big stories.

Reporters with a serious commitment to bringing the world a little closer to their audiences thrive on the fast paced schedule of a radio news department. At first, having to tell a story in less than a minute seems futile, but with practice you will discover just how much you can really say in 30 or 40 seconds. If you develop the skills and talents necessary for good story telling, you will discover how memorable your stories really can be to your audience. You will also find out how important those story telling skills are to building an audience who will think of your station first whenever it's time for "the latest in news, weather and sports."

13-A

Directions: Select, edit and schedule a 5-minute newscast from the following copy. Figure two minutes for commercials. Be sure to include introductions, transitions, pad copy, etc.

Legalize Marijuana

A spokesman for a local group says the City Council will be asked to legalize marijuana Tuesday night on behalf of the more than 10,000 Central Valley residents he claims regularly smoke pot.

Bill Sperry, founder of the local chapter of the Citizens Association to Legalize Marijuana (CALM), said the group will ask the council to remove penalties for private possession of one ounce or less of marijuana.

Sperry said a Central Valley University Drug Information Team survey of CVU students two years ago showed about 10,000 of them regularly use marijuana.

A recent public information poll nationwide showed that 70 percent of all college students regularly smoke pot., he added.

The CALM proposal follows the intent of recent legislation passed by the state legislature, he said.

The home rule portion of the legislation enables cities like Central Valley to enact their own ordinances prohibiting possession of not more than one ounce, provided that penalties do not exceed the state law (\$100 fine for possession of one ounce or less), Sperry said.

The CALM proposal follows the recommendations of the National Commission on Marijuana and Drug Abuse which found that possession in private use should no longer be an offense, he said.

Sperry added that the American Bar Association and the American Medical Association also urge the elimination of all penalties, he said.

Eliminating the fine and court appearances (in private possession cases) would help direct police time to serious crime and engender respect for law enforcement and government authorities, he said.

Such action also would save taxpayers money because it currently costs from \$700 to \$800 to prosecute each possession case, he said.

He added that about 200 to 300 letters have been sent by CVU students to city council members in the last two months asking council members to adopt CALM's proposal.

Council members have not made their positions on the issue known, however, he said.

The request for the change is to be presented to council members at 7:15 p.m. during the citizen participation portion of the meeting.

Sperry announced the group's intentions at a press conference held this morning on the steps of the Municipal Building, 300 Laporte Ave.

-30-

Tax Program

By a party-line vote of 38-25, the Democratically controlled House this morning approved the governor's tax program.

The bill must now go to the Republican-controlled Senate where major parts of the package are expected to be scrapped.

According to the governor's office, Republicans seem inclined to salvage only higher income tax emxs exemptions and tax breaks for the elderly.

-30-

Oil Shale

Nearly 6-thousand barrels of oil and other petroleum products produced form Colorado and Wyoming oil shale will soon be in use by the military.

The oil, gas and aviation fuel will be tested at various military installations around the country.

According to company spokesman for the Paonia refinery that produced most of the oil, if the tests are successful large government contracts may be forthcomingd.

-30-

Railroad Derailment

A broken drawbar may have caused the derailment of one car of a Union Pacific train near Central Valley early this morning, according to a company spokesman.

However, railway officials have not made any official report as to what caused one car to go off the tracks apporximately three miles south of Central Valley at 4:30 a..m.

There were no reported injuries or property damage . Sheriff officers were called to the scene to help direct traffic, but there werewfew problems, according to reports.

The train was traveling northwest with a load of coal, the company official said.

-30-

Health Department

The State Health Department announced today an massive inoculation plan for all school children who have failed to have all their shots prior to school entrance.

A meeting between health department officials and state school administrators has resulted in a plan to require suspension of any student who refuses to receive in a plan to require suspension of any student who refuses to receive the free shots.

Recent outbreaks of measles and mumps has caused the concern among state officials. One school district had a 320 per cent decrease in attendance one during one week last month largely due to a measles epidemic.

-30-

Water Break

A major water main broke around 7:00 this evening at Cedar and Raritan Streets effecting hundreds of homes.

Water Department authorities say the 12-inch main broke when a valve popped out of a conduit. Repairmen are working now to restore full water facilities to the huge area, extending from Virginia to Third Avenue—North to South, and Zuni to Franklin-p East to Ea West. The area is roughly 3 miles long, and one-half mile wide.

Water is being directed through auxilliary lines, but pressure is low, and officials say it could be morning, before than the main break can be repaired.

-30-

Hospital malpractice insurance

Possible alternatives to CentralValley Memorial Hospital s malpractice insurance program will be considered by the board at its meeting Wednesday.

The meeting will be at 1 p.m. in the hospital conference room.

According to CVMH administrator, T. R. Peterson, the alternatives are being considered because of the rising costs of premiums in the hospital s current insurance program.

One alternative being investigated includes establishing an individual trust fund within CVMH supported through an increased mill levy in the district. If such a person is approved by the board, Peterson said it could go into effect as early as next year.

Another possibility is forming a joint malpractice insurance fund with other Area hospitals.

Also on the board s agenda is a discussion of remodeling the CVMH Family Practice Center. Peterson said there may be some controversy on the item since the building is currently on a temporary lease. An exact cost for the remodeling has not been determined.

-30-

Leash Law

Opposition to the current city leash law has led one resident to begin a campaign to modify the law.

Alexander Gaebler, a self-employed painter, has been knocking on doors in an effort to get signatures on a petition supporting a modification.

In a little more than a week, he said he has obtained 300 signatures.

His modification of the leash law would allow the dog owner the option of not only physical control, such as a leash, but verbal or hand control within a reasonable distance, as stated in the petition.

This would alter the city ordinance which states that a dog should either be restrained and controlled by being in an enclosure (such as a fenced yard) or on a leash, according to Lt. Clarence Davis of the city Police Department.

A leash is defined as a thong, cord, rope, or other material that isn't longer than six feet, according to the city ordinance.

It is unlawful for the owner of any dog to allow that dog to run-at-large within the city, Davis added.

Gaebler said he is in favor of a leash law. But it has to be flexible for the people who are responsible enough to walk their dog without having a leash, he said.

He added that even if he had to take a test or be certified in some way, he'd be willing to meet requirements in order to have the freedom to use or not use a leash on his dog.

Something has to be done. People can't sit on their front porch without having their dog chained up.

-30-

MS Dance

Approximately \$15,400 was raised by the enduring marathon dancers who participated in the weekend's Dance for Those Who Can't at Central Valley University.

The money will be presented by check to Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon in Las Vegas, Nev., in September, said Jean Bradley, dance chairman and member of the event's sponsor, Chi Omega sorority.

Ms. Bradley estimated that 183 dancers participated in the 30-hour event. Two years ago, she said approximately the same amount of money was raised in a 48-hour dance.

-30-

Railroad

Spurred by recent train derailments, the National Transportation Safety Board, Thursday called for emergency replacement of 300,000 steel wheels on railroad cars that carry hazardous materials.

The board acted after its investigators said fractures of such wheels — cast by Southern Wheel Co. in Birmingham, Ala. — had been involved in four railroad car derailments, including the Feb. 22 one near Waverly, Tenn. that cost 12 lives and injured 50.

In its recommendations to the Federal Railroad Administration (the NTSB itself had no enforcement powers), the board urged FRA to use its emergency powers to prohibit the use of cars equipped with Southern high-carbon wheels from carrying hazardous materials or being placed in trains moving hazardous materials.

The replacement will take a year to 18 months and will cost private railroads about \$85.5 million, James L. King, the NTSB's chairman-designate, estimated.

The cast-steel wheels fractured after they were subject to overheating, Elmer Garner, the NTSB's chief railroad investigator, told the board before it issued its recommendations Thursday afternoon.

They were cast with high-carbon content to make the wheels wear longer, King and Garner said, but the carbon also made them brittle and subject to cracking.

-30-

U.S. Dollar

The United States and Germany today jointly announced new measures to protect the battered U.S. dollar from further unwarranted poundings on international markets, including making available to the United States an additional \$2.7 billion in German marks to buy dollars when necessary.

A high U.S. Treasury official said the measures demonstrate a very clear mobilization of resources to counter disorderly markets in which the U.S. dollar has lost substantial value in recent months against the German mark, Swiss franc and some other currencies.

The American currency, which stood at 2.0841 marks on the Frankfurt market in morning rates, slipped to 2.0630 immediately after the announcement. In Zurich, the dollar fell from 1.9805 Swiss francs to 1.9525 within the hour.

The key to the American-German plan was a commitment by the U.S. Federal Reserve Board to increase buying up dollars from foreign, exchange markets when the U.S. currency drops in value.

-30-



Figure 14-1. A typical television studio from which live broadcasts originate.

14

Preparing the TV Newscast

"It is a civic duty to humanity . . . for reporters to bring the whole picture into focus repeatedly and everyday if possible."

Howard K. Smith, ABC News

The chef and the television journalist share a common problem: what takes them hours to prepare is devoured in minutes. Dozens of people invest hundreds of hours in the average newscast, then airtime arrives and the 30 or more stories they have prepared flash by on the screen and into oblivion. Each day the process is the same — write another show, shoot another videotape, edit another story, and hurry. The clock never stops.

FORMAT

The form in which you serve up the news is the *format*. In earlier times the format was simple: the half-hour allotted for news, weather and sports was divided into three segments. Each night the pattern was the same — national and international news came first, followed by local news, then sports and weather. The news was delivered straight to the camera, formally, without "happy talk" or other diversions between personalities.

Today the emphasis is on a floating format with two dominant anchor personalities working in tandem to tie the entire show together. The news "floats" in the sense that given stories can be placed anywhere within the newscast, depending upon the news-, sports- or weather day. In this way emphasis is placed where it should be, irrespective of whether the news is local, regional or international. If major weather is the big news of the day, the newscast may begin with a brief report by the weathercaster who can then admonish the audience to stay tuned for more weather details later in the regular forecast. If a major sports story dominates the day's news, it too can be placed higher in the show. Connecting the entire newscast are the two news personalities who do "hand-offs" to sports and weather, and may occasionally or regularly engage in brief conversation between themselves and other reporters.

THE TELEVISION NEWSCAST

The job of shepherding the newscast into a finished unit falls to the news producer. The producer is concerned with the total content of the news — the organization, length, visuals, which stories to add, shorten or drop. In any newsroom, the producer's job demands intimate knowledge of journalism, writing, television production and showmanship. Every component of the newscast, from script and visuals to talent and timing, must be orchestrated into a smooth-

flowing presentation that builds logically throughout the half-hour. The show must maintain audience interest, end within a few seconds of the exact time allotment, yet look so professional that what in reality is a complicated orchestration appears so simple anyone could do it.

COMPONENTS OF THE TELEVISION NEWSCAST

The Script

There could be no television newscast without a script. If you doubt this, try handing the director 40 pages of blank copy and see how far the newscast goes. The script (see figure 14-2) is the foundation of your show and most commonly is written in split-page format. The left half of the page carries instructions that will be carried out in the control room by the director—who will call up shots from the various studio cameras, create special effects, orchestrate the various sources of sound and visuals that make up the newscast—and by other personnel who are responsible for the audio (live mikes, sound tracks from videotape, cartridges and cassettes, etc.), name supers, still pictures and charts. The right half of the page carries the actual story that will be read by on-air talent. Clearly, the script is the heart of the newscast, essential to a professional presentation.

The Visuals

Visuals in a television newscast come from many sources. The most common forms (see below) are often used in combination with each other, so that a still picture behind the newscaster might precede a videotape, which might then give way to a live, in-field report that is aired during the news.

VIDEOTAPE. (VTR). Either silent or sound (SOT) that has been edited to length for air presentation. Videotape content might be a prerecorded insert from a reporter, recorded either in the field or the studio; a previously recorded story from the network or syndication service; or a story "lifted" from the early evening network news. All the visual stories to be used in a newscast may be assembled onto a master reel of videotape in the order they are to be used, or can be edited onto separate cassettes for maximum flexibility in the news lineup.

GRAPHICS. Computer-generated graphics are created and stored in an electronic slide storage (ESS) or similar electronic storage systems, then recalled as needed throughout the newscast. Staff artists and photographers may prepare supplementary charts, graphs, still photos and artwork.

These visuals can be displayed full screen or combined electronically as part of a composite image with a separate shot of the news anchor or other talent as, for example, when a national weather map appears behind the weather forecaster.

<u>VIDEO</u>	<u>AUDIO</u>
<p>LIVE (MEDICINE PIX)</p>	<p>SCIENTISTS TODAY ANNOUNCED THE ISOLATION OF A NATURAL CHEMICAL PAIN KILLER. THE SUBSTANCE IS ENDORPHIN, AN AMINO ACID FOUND IN THE BRAIN. ENDORPHIN APPEARS TO BE FIFTY TIMES MORE EFFECTIVE THAN MORPHINE. THE SUBSTANCE WAS ISOLATED SIMULTANEOUSLY BY AMERICAN AND SCOTTISH SCIENTISTS.</p>
<p>LIVE:</p>	<p>BESIDES COMBATING PAIN, ENDORPHIN MAY BECOME PART OF THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUG ADDICTION . . . SINCE IN REGULAR DOSES IT KEEPS ADDICTS FROM GETTING A KICK FROM HEROIN.</p>

Figure 14-2. The TV script format.

BLOCKING THE HALF-HOUR NEWSCAST

The challenge of filling a 30-minute telecast with from 20 to 30 or more news stories is compounded as you subtract time for commercials, weather and sports. An average half-hour newscast breaks down to about 16 minutes of actual newstime.

30 minutes
-7 commercial minutes
-3 minutes weather
<u>-4 minutes sports</u>
16 minutes remaining for news

Some producers insist that 30 to 35 items be used in the 16 minutes left for news, both to give the show a faster pace and the illusion of more news content. Since time is inelastic, however, the more stories that are added, the shorter they must become.

FORMAT SHEET

The most convenient road map in producing a television newscast is the *format sheet*, a handy guide that shows you each element of the newscast, its length, accumulated or elapsed time after each story in the newscast, and in what order the stories will appear. The format sheet also indicates the writer, source of visuals, and who will deliver each story in the newscast. A quick glance shows the producer the relationship of each story to the next, as well as commercial lineup and placement.

KCSU NEWS — SHOW ORDER

Date: _____

NEWSCASTERS:

P = Peterson

L = Lang

VIDEO: CART — Cartridge

DVE — Digital Video Effects

P — Picture

S — Slide

SF — Still Frame

VF — Vidifont

VTR — Videotape

AUDIO: AT — Audio Tape

B — Booth Annnc'r.

C — Audio Cart

CART — Cartridge

L — Live

VTR — Videotape

Time	Subject	Writer	Length	Elapsed Time	Video	Audio	Remarks
10:00	A. HEADLINES P	VH			VTR	L	Art & Pics
	1. AIRLINE CRASH L	MR	1:30	1:30	VTR	L	(CRASH)
	2. INFLATION P (2-SHOT)	MR	1:30	3:00	VTR	L	(INFLAT)
	3. DEMONSTRATION L	GR	1:00	4:00	VTR	L	
	4. RECOUNT P	VH	1:30	5:30	VTR	L	(SCOTT/WIRTH)
	5. FAMILY HOUR L	MR	1:00	6:30	VTR	L	
	6. TEASE P&L (WIDE SHOT/ STUDIO) SUPER TEASE	VH	:10	6:40			
	BREAK 1 2:00		2:00	8:40			
	7. TOWER P	BP	1:00	9:40	VTR	VTR	(TRAFFIC TOWER)
	8. EAGLE POINT L	MR	1:15	10:55	VTR	L	
	9. DISCOS P	BP	2:30	13:25	VTR	VTR	(DISCOS)
	10. TEASE P&L (WIDE SHOT/ STUDIO) SUPER TEASE		:10	13:35			
	BREAK 2 1:30		2:30	15:05			
	11. BUS DRIVER L	VH	:20	15:25	L	L	(BUS)
	12. ACCIDENT P	VH	:30	15:55	VTR	L	
	13. TUNNEL P	BP	:20	16:15	L	L	
	14. QUAKES L	VH	:20	16:35	L	L	(QUAKE)
	15. BURNOFF L	VH	1:25	18:00	VTR	VTR	
	16. TEASE P&L (WIDE SHOT STUDIO) SUPER TEASE	VH	:10	18:10			
	BREAK 3 2:00		2:00	20:10			
	17. WEATHER		1:30	21:40			
	BREAK 4 1:00		1:00	22:40			
MORE WEATHER		1:30	24:10				
18. TEASE L&P (WIDE SHOT/ STUDIO) SUPER TEASE		:10	24:20				
BREAK 5 2:00		2:00	26:20				
SPORTS		4:00	30:20				
19. TEASE L&P (WIDE SHOT/ STUDIO) SUPER TEASE	VH	:10	30:30				
BREAK 6 1:30		1:30	32:00				
20. FACES & PLACES P	BP	:45	32:45	L	L	(F&P) PICS	
21. BELLY DANCING L	GR	1:45	34:30	VTR	VTR		
22. GOODBYE P		:30	35:00				

Figure 14-3. A typical television news format sheet showing elements within the newscast, their order and length.

BLOCKING THE SHOW

It is 6:30 p.m. on a weeknight. Your early evening newscast has just finished and now you must think ahead to the late evening news. In national news today the president announced a major tax cut. Middle East nations raised crude oil prices, a conservative senator was accused of an illicit affair in Washington, a major American city was threatened by radioactivity that leaked from a nuclear generating plant, and the network has advised you it will feed a special live report on today's Senate debate over the future of nuclear power generation at 10:03:30 p.m.

In local news, police have tipped you that they will raid a massage parlor tonight at 9, you have videotape of a gigantic traffic snarl that occurred when a bridge collapsed during rush hour (four persons killed), inspectors say local restaurants are among the most unsanitary of any in the state, and you have videotape of the capture and arrest of two suspected bank robbers. Besides these stories, a stringer has sent you film of recovery efforts for the bodies of two children who drowned in a nearby lake. You are inundated with wire copy and have prepared several strong feature stories that have not been aired and are becoming less timely as the week progresses.

It's obvious, as usual, that you have more news than you can air. Selection begins at this point as you decide which stories to drop and which to air. You turn now to the format sheet and begin to block out the show.

DECIDE STORY ORDER

You have major stories and major visuals. They may or may not be equally important. The biggest story of the day, especially if it breaks late in the evening, may have no visuals at all and you will have to lead your show with "eyeball" copy (read live on camera). Some producers insist on leading with a dramatic tape story to catch and hold viewer interest, often cutting to it within 10 seconds after the show begins. The technique of hitting viewers hard (and quickly) with dramatic footage is used to lessen the chance they will leave the room or switch to another station.

The same reasoning lies behind the use of *teases* and headlines that promote the upcoming newscast throughout the evening or just before the commercial break that precedes most newscasts. A theory prevails that viewers who have just finished their favorite program suffer momentary inertia. If you can tickle their interest with a tease, before they change channels, you may be able to hold them throughout the entire newscast and count them in your ratings.

In its most effective form, the tease should intrigue viewers with a story that will not be broadcast until late in the show, in the hopes they will stick around until it is aired. Teases may drive part of your audience away from a broadcast, however, if viewers don't care about the latest in French fashions, for example, or how many frogs are marching on Miami tonight. The same considerations hold true for teases within the newscast that are read just before commercial breaks.

Block The Visuals

Assuming that you have visuals for all major stories you will air, you decide their order and choose the copy that will be read live to accompany them.

Block in Commercials

Lay in commercials where they interfere least with news continuity. Some stations have rigid requirements for commercial placement — Break #1 at 10:07, Break #2 at 10:12, etc. — but

this practice artificially restricts how you play your stories and how long news packages can run between commercial breaks. (In this context, a news package is defined as a series of stories in one general area of news, whether geographical or similar subject matter.) A better guide is to let the news determine commercial placement.

You will find all commercials listed and identified in the station's *daily program log*, a reference that lists all commercial breaks, station I.D.'s, program elements, their running times, and sources for the entire broadcast day. The log should be consulted before each news program to identify commercial sponsorship. In this manner, for example, if you report the story of a major airline crash on a day you are scheduled to air an airline commercial, you can pull the offending spot in time to avoid embarrassment.

If you have long news packages on a given day, international news, domestic politics or major local crime, for example, you may want to run the package over a break instead of artificially delaying the break. Usually, however, you should not extend a news package past a break, then begin another unrelated news package (from local crime to Mideast peace talks, for example). Occasionally, you may have to break up a single story with a commercial, but few stories warrant such length. Stories that might warrant extended coverage of this nature include major disasters, historical developments or assassinations. If you use commercial breaks as natural transitions in the news show, your broadcasts will look smoother and more professional, so consider the commercial break as another of your production tools.

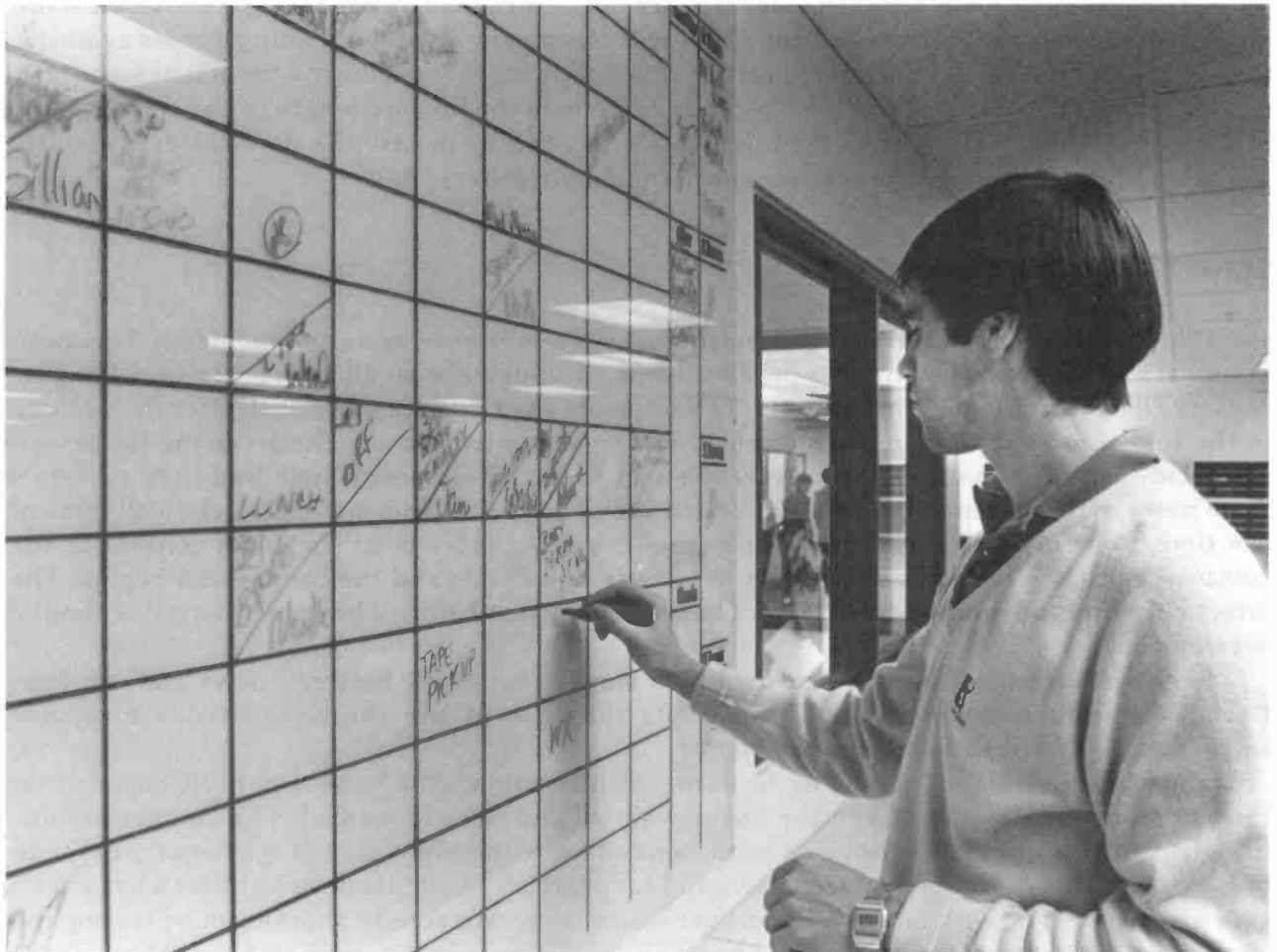


Figure 14-4. The assignment board provides ready reference to the day's local stories, and which reporters will cover them.

ASSIGN COPY TO WRITERS

The format sheet includes space to identify which writer will prepare each story. So far you have identified the following local items that must be written: Massage parlor raid; bridge collapse/traffic jam; unsanitary restaurants; capture of bank robbers; two children drown. Reporters just back from the field may write their own copy, staff writers may write and rewrite other copy, and air talent and the producer may write still other stories. In all cases the producer assigns maximum length to each story that is to be prepared, although negotiations between the producer and reporters may result in somewhat different times than originally assigned. Usually the reporter feels a story is worth more time than the producer does, and negotiations begin from that point.

TIME THE NEWSCAST

The producer now determines actual total length for each story (lead-in, plus taped story length and tag, etc.) and accumulated or elapsed time following each element in the show. Such precise arithmetic is necessary when shows must end exactly on time in order for the station to join a network or other program that begins at a set hour. Often the director has as little as 10 seconds leeway between the end of the newscast and the start of a new program.

Often, running times for each videotape are not determined, nor is the tape edited until the talent has written and/or timed all copy that will accompany the tape. Timing stories against a stopwatch may not reflect the altered rate at which copy is delivered during the actual broadcast, so most editors automatically add five seconds of scene to the finished length of the visuals. Such practice protects the show from "going to black" on the air in case the newscaster stumbles, hesitates, stops to cough or otherwise alters the on-air delivery rate.

SCRIPT COMMERCIAL BREAKS

Whether you should script commercial breaks is a matter of taste and judgment. Few professional journalists will mention a product name, although almost all journalists are willing to say, "We'll have more news in a minute." To say more than this, they feel, is to place themselves in the role of sales person and their feeling is, who wants to hear a pitchman giving the news?

Lead-ins to commercials take several distinct forms.¹ The most simple lead-in is a *direct cut* from news to the commercial without a transition of any kind. This method works well some of the time, but causes trouble when, for example, a news story is so similar in content to the commercial that it becomes difficult to tell where news ends and the commercial begins. The direct cut also is obvious and awkward when the story just before a beer commercial is about a brewer's strike.

Slightly more separation is provided by a simple *fade-to-black* between news and commercials. This technique momentarily interrupts the pace of the show, and tends to appear somewhat awkward to the viewer at home.

More professional and conducive to station identification is the *bumper graphic* that appears on the screen momentarily between the last news item and the commercial. The bumper graphic usually identifies the station or news team, sometimes with a short slogan against artwork, and provides distinct separation between news and commercials. A similar device utilizes a live studio shot of the news set, with talent in place, over which is superimposed a short headline teasing the next story that follows the commercial break.

¹ Green, Maury, *Television News: Anatomy and Process*. (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1969), pp. 243, 244.

PREPARE HAND-OFF TRANSITIONS

As ludicrous as it sounds on close reading, you also may wish to “script” the ad-lib transitions (hand-offs) from news to sports and weather, and back again to news, if your station requires such interchanges among personalities. We don’t mean that you should script the transitions verbatim, because to do so will sound stilted and contrived. Rather you can consult with news, sports and weather personnel (including field reporters who will be delivering “in-studio” reports) to determine what brief conversation they might engage in as the show switches between news personnel and from news to weather and sports. Brief, light-hearted banter — sometimes even serious discussion about important topics — is considered at some stations a way to help the news team appear more cohesive, friendly and competent, if the banter is not overdone. This concept, often referred to as *Eyewitness News*, was widely imitated when it was introduced by WABC-TV, New York, and represented one more step in television’s search for new ways to present the news.



Figure 14-5. Entire live newscasts can be directed from this control room, or the facilities can be used for pre-production of complicated television news stories, complete with graphics and special effects.

PROOFREAD AND TIME SCRIPT

As the script begins to flow in from writers, reporters and newscasters, it should be edited, checked for obvious errors and timed for final length. All scripts should be checked for length against the original times assigned on the format sheet. If the copy contains mistakes, this will be one of the last chances for correction, and reading the copy aloud at this point is a must. Consider the poor newscaster who, without benefit of rehearsal, comes across the following sentences which he must read aloud to his audience: "Swarms of angry, pro-Castro crowds stormed the city street," or "Connors said he be the could win the match with one arm tied behind his back."

STACK THE NEWSCAST

Next, assemble all pages of the newscast in consecutive order and NUMBER THE PAGES in the upper right hand corner of the script. News copy generally is typed on special carbon packs that yield from five to seven copies — one each for newscasters, director, producer, audio person and teleprompter operator. Additional copies may be necessary for the vidifont operator who types out on a special keyboard name supers and other information which will be electronically displayed on the television screen during the newscast. Caution: It is essential to number each page of the script in consecutive order. Then, if the script is dropped or otherwise shuffled out of order, it can quickly be reassembled.

ASSEMBLE VISUALS IN ORDER

All visuals should be in order by this time. The visuals include all graphics, still art and pictures, vidifont information, and videotape. All visual elements are numbered in consecutive sequence, just as the script is numbered. At this point you can check the copy against the order of your visuals and the line-up of all other elements in the show. The one time you fail to compare copy against the line-up of all visuals inevitably is the time you wind up with "egg on your face" as the out-of-order newscast falls to pieces before a trusting audience of thousands.

BACKTIME FINISHING COPY & PREPARE PAD COPY

The art of backtiming a show makes the job easier. Backtiming assumes that you know:

1. when the last commercial break begins and ends,
2. how long the last story of the newscast will run,
3. total time required to close the show and say your goodbyes.

Assume in this example that your last commercial break in the newscast falls at 10:23:20 and runs exactly two minutes. Assume further that your station must join the network at exactly 10:29:30 after a two minute station editorial, and that your "kicker" or closing story runs 1:10 with an extra :10 needed to close the show.

10:23:20 — final commercial break begins
 2:00 — commercials
 10:25:20 — end of final commercial break
 1:10 — length of lead and kicker
 10:26:30 — editorial begins
 2:00 — length of editorial with intro
 10:28:30 — editorial ends
 :10 — close
 10:28:40 — elapsed time of newscast
 :50 — deficit left to fill to 10:29:30

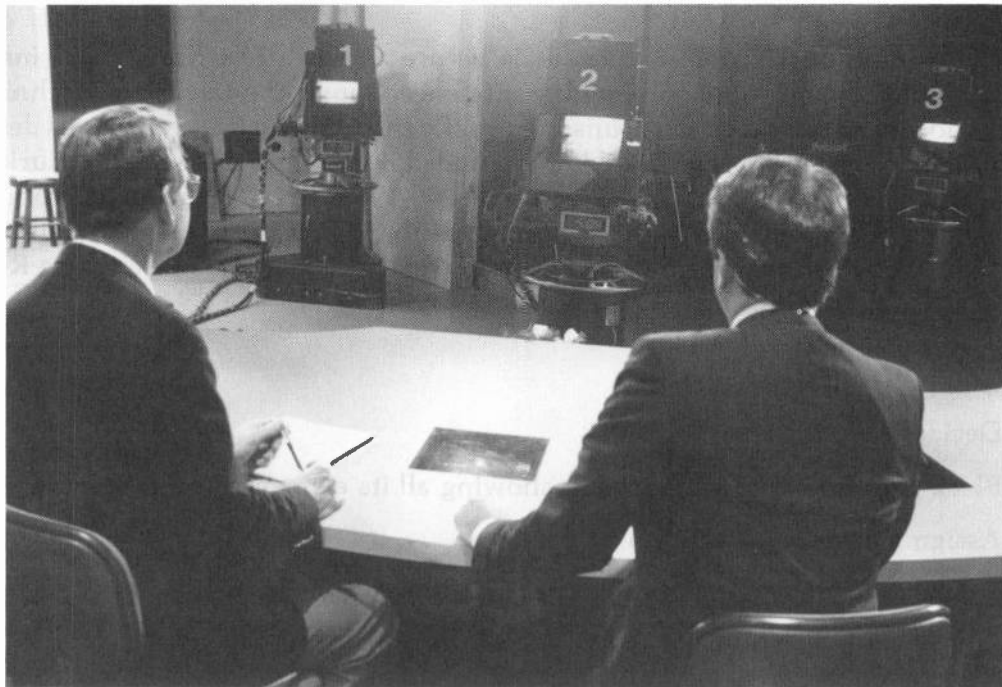


Figure 14-6. The teleprompter, as seen from the studio news desk. The teleprompter is mounted in front of the television camera lens and allows the newscaster to maintain more direct eye contact with the audience. This in turn helps the newscaster appear more credible than if he or she simply reads from copy on the desk.

In this example, the producer backtimes to determine how much copy will be necessary to close out the show. The figures show that :50 remain to be filled. Another story can be chosen, exactly :50 in length, or *pad copy* can be assembled.

Pad copy is simply two or three minor stories kept in reserve in case the newscast runs short. Pad copy can be rewritten from wire service news, a minor local story, amusing event or something as simple as the list of guests who will appear in the network show that follows the newscast. In any event, choose at least three stories of approximately :15, :20 and :30 in length. The three pad stories, in combination, yield a total of 1:05 if a story is killed, or a videotape machine fails to run during the newscast. Other combinations of the three stories will yield differing times — anything from :15 minimum to 1:05 maximum.

:15 Story A
:20 Story B

:35 Total time, A and B

:15 Story A
:30 Story C

:45 Total time, A and C

:20 Story B
:30 Story C

:50 Total time, B and C

REHEARSE AND TIME THE SHOW

Two schools of thought govern rehearsals before airtime. The first school insists that rehearsal time polishes the show and builds confidence among the talent and technical staff. The second school maintains that first runs are usually the best and that rehearsals destroy the energy and vitality that otherwise would be expended in front of the audience during actual broadcast. Regardless of which method you prefer — rehearsal or straight-from-the-cuff presentation — be certain you are as prepared as possible when the magic moment of airtime arrives and you are aware that it's time for "News, Weather and Sports — Coming Right Up."

The process of preparing the TV newscast, in summary:

1. Choose stories and visuals
2. Decide story order
3. Block the show on format sheet, showing all its elements and times
4. Assign stories to be written
5. Figure individual and accumulative times for the show
6. Script commercial breaks and hand-offs to sports and weather
7. Edit, proofread and time all scripted stories
8. Stack all copies of the newscast in order and NUMBER PAGES
9. Assemble chromakey cards and other visuals in order. NUMBER IN CONSECUTIVE SEQUENCE
10. Check copy against order of stills, videotape stories, vidifont information and the line-up of all other elements in the show
11. Backtime finishing copy
12. Prepare pad copy
13. Rehearse and time the show
14. Distribute copy to teleprompter, audio person, director, anchor talent and producer
15. Air final newscast

14-A

Directions: Format a complete ½-hour television newscast, using the format sheets provided immediately following this assignment.

1. Assume you are formatting your newscast for a metropolitan audience.
2. You have 7 minutes of commercials to slug.
3. Weather lasts 3 minutes.
4. Sports, intro, lasts 4½ minutes.
5. Your newscast begins exactly at 10 p.m. and ends at 10:29:30.
6. Follow guidelines in Chapter 14 (pp. 301-312) as you prepare your format sheet.
7. To the following list of available stories, feel free to add any eye-ball copy you wish — with or without graphics. Identify any additional copy you add with an asterisk.



VTR pkg., 1:09: Some area restaurants said to be among the most unsanitary of any in state

VTR SOT bite, :45: President signs major tax cut bill into law

VTR 1:15 — (from CBS) Saudi Arabia raises crude oil \$3.20 a barrel

Reader: U.S. Congressman arrested on homosexual charges (graphic available)

VTR 1:40 pkg: This area threatened briefly today by minor radioactive leak at nearby nuclear generating plant.

Live net feed, 1:20: Today's Senate debate over future of nuclear power generation. Will begin at 10:03:30.

Live feed and videotape to cover live report anytime during the 10 p.m. newscast: Police raid a massage parlor at 9 p.m. — Prostitution arrests expected — This is the start of a city-wide crackdown on unlicensed massage parlors. Good visuals expected.

Giant traffic snarl that occurred when Cherry Creek bridge collapsed during rush hour this afternoon, 4 persons killed. Good video. You decide time.

Two suspected bank robbers arrested, video of both arrest and capture. Not aired at 5 p.m. You decide time.

Assignments
Chapter 14

Name _____

Date _____

14-A cont'd.

VTR of recovery efforts for the bodies of two children who drowned today in nearby lake. You decide time.

VTR used at 5 p.m., ran :38 seconds; Senior citizens rally at State Capitol for support of a threatened meals on wheels program.

A high school student speaks against violence in her school.

VTR package (feature) 1:30 as is. Can be recut to 1:10. Do high food prices deprive you of a nutritionally balanced diet?

Bombsquad almost blows up briefcase with man's lunch. VTR; Sound Bite with bomb squad technician, sheepish to say the least.

Public hearings in State Senate on hunting controversy. Governor appears to recommend that all hunters must pass hunting safety course, regardless of age. Cover footage available of hunters, today's hearing, and Governor's statement that too many people are being killed in hunting accidents. Calls it a crisis. You decide length and treatment.

Two-man burglary and robbery team broken up in robbery attempt last night in which one of the men is shot dead. VTR used at noon and 5 p.m. but fresh info on identities and the fact that both men operated together.

VTR package, 1:09 + Druggists are often robbed following major drug busts.

Reader: Airlines pilots and technicians begin work slowdown tonight at Airport to protest unsafe airports. VTR may be available by 10 p.m.

Reader: Fluorescent lights may cause cancer. You decide length of story.

Reader: Number of teenage pregnancies is on the rise, again. You decide length.

Reader with graphic: Metro transit drivers may strike for more pay. You decide length.

Reader with graphic: GM is recalling 3 million cars and trucks with defective suspension systems. You decide length.

Reader: Someone is stealing pet rabbits all over town. One resident lost eight rabbits and five feeding dishes last night.

VTR of recovery efforts for the bodies of two children who drowned today in nearby lake. You decide time.

VTR used at 5 p.m., ran :38 seconds; Senior citizens rally at State Capitol for support of a threatened meals on wheels program.

FORMAT SHEET

Date: _____

NEWSCASTERS:

VIDEO: CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 P — Picture
 S — Slide
 SF — Still Frame
 VF — Vidifont
 VTR — Videotape

AUDIO: AT — Audio Tape
 B — Booth Annc'r.
 C — Audio Cart
 CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 L — Live
 VTR — Videotape

Time	Subject	Writer	Length	Elapsed Time	Video	Audio	Remarks

FORMAT SHEET

Date: _____

NEWSCASTERS:

VIDEO: CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 P — Picture
 S — Slide
 SF — Still Frame
 VF — Vidifont
 VTR — Videotape

AUDIO: AT — Audio Tape
 B — Booth Annc'r.
 C — Audio Cart
 CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 L — Live
 VTR — Videotape

Time	Subject	Writer	Length	Elapsed Time	Video	Audio	Remarks

FORMAT SHEET

Date: _____

NEWSCASTERS:

VIDEO: CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 P — Picture
 S — Slide
 SF — Still Frame
 VF — Vidifont
 VTR — Videotape

AUDIO: AT — Audio Tape
 B — Booth Annc'r.
 C — Audio Cart
 CART — Cartridge
 F — Film
 L — Live
 VTR — Videotape

Time	Subject	Writer	Length	Elapsed Time	Video	Audio	Remarks

Assignments
Chapter 14

Name _____

Date _____

14-B cont'd.

As a class project, write and deliver a half-hour television newscast complete with commercials, sports and weather. Follow the steps outlined in Production of a Television Newscast in Chapter 14. Follow the outline given below only as practical according to facilities available for your use.

Step I

Assign personnel to the following positions:

NEWSCASTERS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

WEATHERCASTER

- 1.

SPORTSCASTERS

- 1.
- 2.

LIVE COMMERCIALS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

NEWS PRODUCERS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

SCRIPT WRITERS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

COPY EDITORS

- 1.
- 2.

FIELD PHOTOGRAPHERS AND

VTR OPERATORS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

VTR EDITORS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

TELEVISION STUDIO HELP

(Floor directors, audio control, etc.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

GRAPHIC ARTISTS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Assignments
Chapter 14

Name _____

Date _____

14-B cont'd.

STEP II (Due _____, _____)
Write Copy day date

Each member of the class should submit a minimum of three stories (five copies of each) suitable for broadcast. One or more of the stories, at your professor's option, should be accompanied by a chromakey card.

STEP III
Decide story order

Producers should list all stories available for broadcast, assign stories that remain to be covered locally, then determine story line-up for the entire newscast. Late-breaking stories within the community can be covered just before the newscast is aired on a particular day. Don't forget commercial placement in the line-up.

STEP IV
Prepare format sheet

The producers should assign final length for each element and story in the newscast, and channel all copy that must be rewritten to the writers. Remember to provide at least five copies of each story!

STEP V
Time the show

Producers at this time should determine the accumulated time of the show following each element in the newscast.

STEP VI
Editors begin to edit videotape.

STEP VII
Writers script commercial breaks and hand-off commentary between newscasters and sports and weather talent.

STEP VIII
Prepare Visuals

Graphic artists prepare all graphics and other still visuals to be used in the show. All visuals are numbered and stacked in order.

STEP IX
Edit, proof and time copy.

Talent edits, proofreads and times all copy against a stopwatch.

Assignments
Chapter 14

Name _____

Date _____

14-B cont'd.

STEP X

Commercials are produced and videotaped.

(Note: Many TV stations will make old commercials available for your use. Contact the general manager or program director of the station.)

STEP XI

Stack newscast

The producer and on-air talent stack all copies of the newscast in order and NUMBER PAGES.

STEP XII

Assemble graphics and other visuals

All visuals are assembled in order. NUMBER EACH GRAPHIC IN CONSECUTIVE SEQUENCE.

STEP XIII

Check copy against visuals

The producer and on-air talent check copy against graphics, VTR, vidifont and the line-up of all other elements in the show.

STEP XIV

Backtime finishing copy and prepare pad copy

Writers are responsible to prepare pad copy while the producer backtimes all finishing copy with assistance from on-air talent.

STEP XV

Prepare teleprompter copy

A volunteer from class can now prepare teleprompter copy if a prompter machine is available.

STEP XVI

Distribute copy and rehearse show

Copy is distributed to the teleprompter operator, audio person, director, anchor talent and producer and the show is rehearsed.

STEP XVII

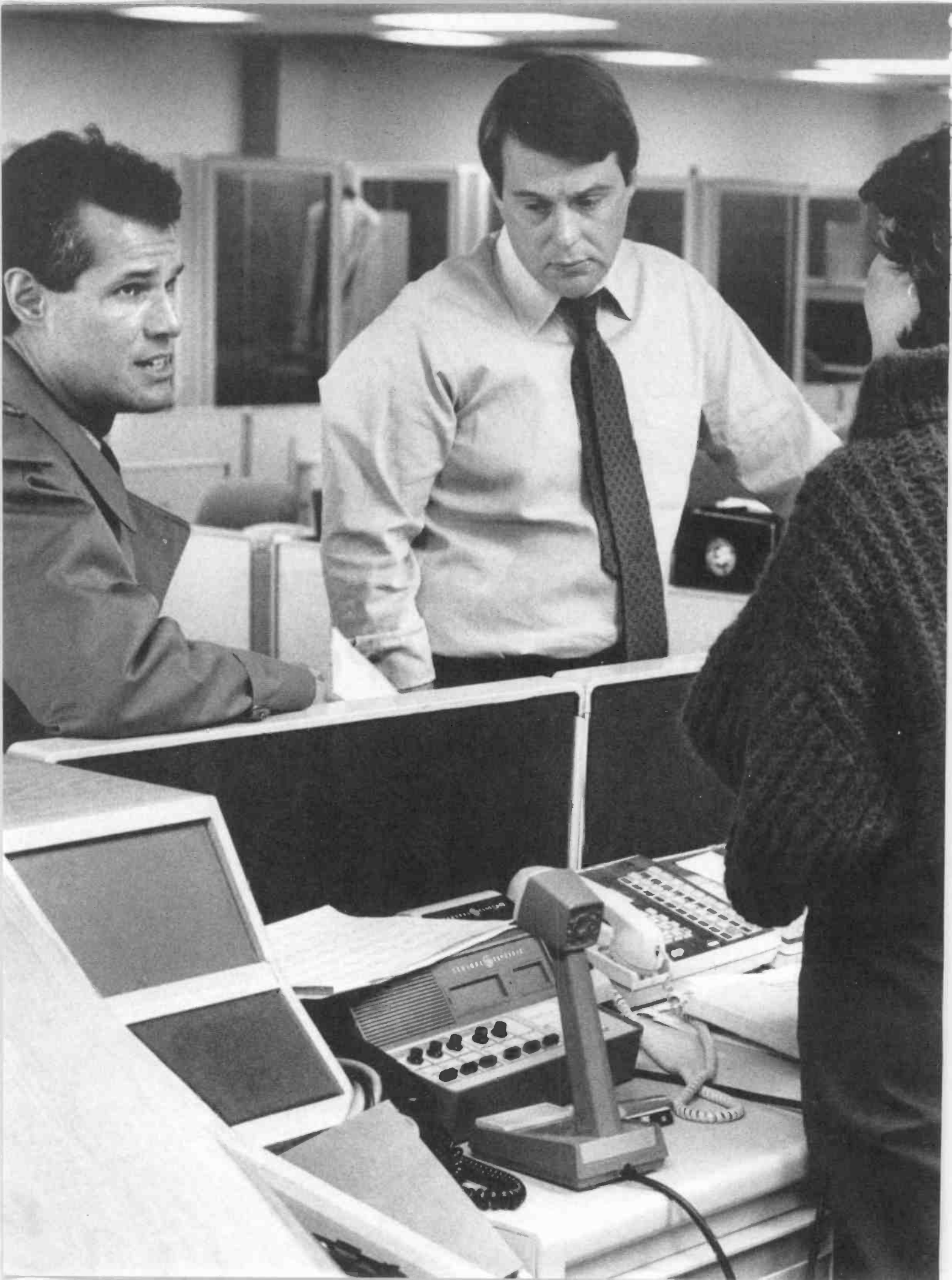
Present final show

Finally, it is "airtime" and the show is presented for videotaping, playback and final critique by your class.

Part IV

Broadcast News

Problems and Potentials



Introduction

The purpose of this section is to familiarize you with the major legal constraints and ethical questions that confront broadcast journalists.

To fully understand the legal framework and potential of broadcasting requires a sense of the major historical developments of the industry. For that reason, several of the chapters in this section provide a historical context for understanding present legal restraints.

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Legal Considerations

"The price of such rules (Fairness Doctrine) for news has been dangerously neutral and bland journalism."

— Fred Friendly

Journalists rely on the First Amendment to the Constitution for protection against legal constraints of freedom of the press and speech. Through the first 200 years of U.S. history, though, journalists have continuously had to fight to maintain the concept as expressed in the First Amendment. While many restraints against free press and speech have been lessened over the years, in some areas there has been an increasing growth of restraint. Privacy law is a good example of increasing restraint.

Additional restraints have accompanied the evolution of the broadcast media. Broadcasters have never been fully protected by the First Amendment. The justification for strong government regulation has come from the assumption that the airways are public property and that given the limited number of frequencies available for broadcast signals, government must act as a representative of the public and regulate the use of those airways.

Actually government regulation was requested by early broadcasters when radio was still in the experimental stages. Historically, there have been three major regulations that have dealt with broadcasting. The first attempt at regulation was the 1912 Radio Act. Under that act the government was empowered to allocate licenses and wave lengths to anyone who applied for them. The act gave the Secretary of Commerce little power. If stations did not stick to assigned frequencies there was little enforcement. For example, the woman evangelist, Aimme Semple McPherson, operated a pioneer radio station from her Temple in Los Angeles during the early 1920's. The station wandered all over the dial. After repeated warnings a government inspector ordered the station closed down. Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover received the following telegram from McPherson:

Please order your minions of Satan to leave my station alone. You cannot expect the Almighty to abide to your wave length nonsense. When I offer my prayers to Him I must fit into his wave reception. Open this station at once.

With the chaos occurring during the early days of radio, broadcasters had low credibility. The audience never knew if the station it wanted would be disturbed by another station's "wandering" signals. To make radio profitable for advertisers that were increasingly interested in the new medium, broadcasters requested stronger government regulation. The result of the request was the Radio Act of 1927.

Further control of the media came soon after the 1927 act. Partly as a response to court rulings that had nullified some of the Radio Act, and partly as a consequence of the recognition of additional broadcasting technology that would make telecommunication possible, Congress

established the Federal Communications Commission in 1934 Federal Communications Act. Building on the concepts of the Radio Act, the Communications Act is the present legal framework for broadcasting. It has been amended and expanded by Congress, and through additional regulations passed by the FCC, but it remains as the legal foundations of broadcasting.

These regulations are extensive and commission rulings and court interpretations add to the volume of legal guidelines. In most large stations and in case of any problem with the FCC or the government, stations will bring lawyers to handle the matter. However, as a working broadcast journalist you should be familiar with the major FCC regulations. The major regulations involving the journalist are the Fairness Doctrine, and Section 315. Also of importance is the concept of Staged News.

FAIRNESS DOCTRINE

The Fairness Doctrine was passed as a regulatory statement by the FCC in 1949. The doctrine came from a decision by the FCC to reverse an earlier ruling, the Mayflower Decision, made in 1941. The Mayflower Decision kept broadcasters from advocating an editorial viewpoint on controversial issues. The 1949 statement on editorializing reversed that position by the FCC and incorporated the concept of fairness. In essence, the doctrine said that to operate in the public interest a station should devote reasonable time to coverage of controversial issues of public importance and to do so fairly by providing a reasonable opportunity for contrasting opinions to be aired on those issues.

The FCC's concept of fairness was later incorporated into law in 1959 with the passage of Section 315, the so-called "Equal-Time" provision. Section 315 applies to political broadcasting, but through inclusion of the fairness concept as law, the Fairness Doctrine became entrenched in broadcast regulation. In 1964 the FCC issued what has been called its "Fairness Primer." In that regulation the FCC spelled out the differences between the Fairness Doctrine and Section 315. It said:

The Fairness Doctrine deals with the broader question of affording reasonable opportunity for presentation of contrasting viewpoints on controversial issues of public importance. Generally speaking, it does not apply with the precision of the 'equal opportunities' requirement. Rather, the licensee, in applying the Fairness Doctrine, is called on to make reasonable judgments in good faith on fact of each situation — as to whether a controversial issue of public importance is involved, as to what viewpoints have been or should be presented, as to the format and spokesman to present the viewpoints, and all other facets of programming . . . There is room for considerably more discretion on the part of the licensee under the Fairness Doctrine than under the 'equal opportunities' requirement.

That's the problem for broadcasters. There is considerable room for interpretation and for discretion on what to do in any given situation.

The 1964 primer made certain specifications for a complaint under the Fairness Doctrine. It said the following information must be included in any complaint:

- 1) the particular station involved;
- 2) the particular issue of a controversial nature discussed on the air;
- 3) the date and time when the program was carried;
- 4) the basis for the claim that the station has presented only one side of the question;
- 5) whether the station had afforded, or has plans to afford an opportunity for the presentation of contrasting viewpoints.

Upon receipt of valid complaint the FCC will notify the station in writing. The station can then respond with a letter giving its side of the charge and providing what, if anything, is being done about it. In most cases there is no further involvement by the FCC, especially if the station is honest and complete in its reply to the FCC.

The notion of fairness is that the audience will receive balanced information about controversial issues of public importance. A determination of whether the requirements of fairness have been met is a two-step process. First, the subject of the broadcasts must, in fact, be a controversial issue of public importance. If it is, then the station must be able to demonstrate that it has broadcast a balanced set of viewpoints on that issue. Stations cannot avoid fairness problems by avoiding controversial issues. If the issue is of community significance, the Fairness Doctrine requires that broadcasters address it.

In 1967, the FCC added its "personal attack and political-editorializing rule" to fill the gap which existed for fairness to individuals. The Fairness Doctrine provided access to the media for ideas. Section 315 provided equal time for politicians, but the personal attack rule created "a reasonable opportunity to respond" to the broadcast media for those individuals or identifiable groups attacked during the presentation of a controversial issue. The station has the responsibility under this regulation to give the person(s) attacked notification of the place, time and date of the broadcast and must furnish a script, tape, or summary of the attack with an offer for reasonable reply. The station has seven days in which to notify the individual.

Under the political-editorializing section, a candidate for office must be notified within 24 hours, or if the election is less than 72 hours away when the editorial is broadcast, the station must notify the candidate in reasonable time for reply.

There are several important exclusions to the personal attack section of the regulation. Excluded from this responsibility is the necessity to provide access for foreign public figures or groups. Also, political candidates are protected under Section 315 of the Communications Act; thus, this regulation does not affect them except for the political editorial. Another important exclusion is personal attacks made during "bona fide newscasts, bona fide news interviews, and on-the-air coverage of bona fide news events." Key to the personal attack rule is the provision that the attack be "upon the honesty, character, integrity or like personal qualities of an individual or identifiable group."

When the station provides time to reply under the personal attack rule, it has the responsibility to edit the response in order to delete any defamation or obscenity. This is contrary to the responsibility in political programming where the station cannot edit the material.

The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality for the Fairness Doctrine in the 1969 *Red Lion* decision. The court ruled that, in fact, the fairness concept might be a required part of the First Amendment. "It is the purpose of the First Amendment to preserve an uninhibited market place of ideas in which truth will ultimately prevail, rather than to countenance monopolization of that market . . . by a private license."

Reasons the Court gave for upholding the Fairness Doctrine included scarcity of broadcasting frequencies and differences between broadcast technology and other media. Implicit is the idea that the First Amendment rights of the viewers are paramount to the rights of broadcasters. This argument is based on the right to receive information, which the Court has suggested is a part of First Amendment protection.

The FCC reviewed the Fairness Doctrine from 1971 to 1974 and issued a report in 1974 entitled, "Fairness Doctrine and Public Interest Standards." The report justified the doctrine and outlined an interpretation of it. The interpretation basically gave the broadcaster responsibility for deciding if an issue is important, if it is controversial and if it stirs debate in a community. It did give the broadcaster the duty to seek out opposing viewpoints, but it doesn't require that every viewpoint be aired or that exactly equal time be given.

While most regulations are likely to be interpreted by the station attorney, it is important for the broadcast journalist to understand the basis for the Fairness Doctrine so as to seek controversial issues of public importance. That means the issues of importance to your community. The demographics of your audience may not be the same as that of other stations. It is up to the journalist to find the major controversial issues by seeking out the opinions of community leaders and a cross section of the public. The "spirit of the law" is to present major issues of importance in a balanced approach that lets various opinions on the issue be expressed. A good-faith effort to seek out that opinion will make much of the worry about the regulation unnecessary. That's the discretion you have as a broadcast journalist — to make judgments about what is fair and balanced coverage.

A number of attempts have been made recently to modify or repeal the Fairness Doctrine. In its 1985 Fairness Report, the FCC suggested that the Supreme Court's reasons for requiring the Fairness Doctrine may no longer be applicable. Concludes the FCC, "the Fairness Doctrine, as a matter of policy, no longer serves the public interest."

Although the FCC has indicated that it wants to abolish the burden of fairness on broadcasters, Congress has been unwilling to change. Although the Fairness Doctrine was originally an FCC regulation, which means that the FCC could change it at will, the inclusion of fairness in Section 315 may make it a federal statute, which can be repealed only by Congress. This issue is currently before the federal courts. If the final determination of the courts is that Section 315 does not require fairness, the FCC will be able to abolish the doctrine on its own.

However, until the federal courts make such a determination and until the FCC does repeal the Fairness Doctrine, broadcasters retain the burden of finding controversial issues of public importance and giving them balanced coverage.

SECTION 315 — EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES PROVISION

Section 315 of the Communication Act specifically concerns fairness in political broadcasting and it gives precise regulations of that content. The major thrust of the section says this:

If any licensee shall permit any person who is a legally qualified candidate for any public office to use a broadcasting station, he shall afford equal opportunities to all other such candidates for that office in the use of such broadcasting station, provided that such licensee shall have no power of censorship over the material broadcast under the provisions of this section. No obligation is hereby imposed upon any licensee to allow the use of its station by any such candidate.

— Section 315a

This law applies both to free and commercial time given by a station. The rules for what constitutes a "legally qualified candidate" include announcement of intention to run, qualifications for holding the office for which the candidate is running, and either qualification for the ballot or a "substantial showing of being a bona-fide candidate." Also, if one group or candidate uses the station facilities to produce a program, any other group has the same right.

In 1971, the Federal Election Campaign Act revised Section 312 of the Communications Act, which actually serves as a prerequisite to Section 315, to require reasonable access to broadcasting by political candidates for federal office. The revision means that stations can either give free time or commercial time or both, but they must make time available for political campaigning. They cannot refuse all access to the media by politicians. Stations are also required to charge the lowest price for a given time period for political advertising. Note that Section 312(a) (7) does not apply to state and local candidates.

Section 315 does not apply to a bona fide newscast, news interview, news documentary or news event, nor even to unedited news conferences broadcast live in their entirety. In October 1975 the FCC also excluded political debates and presidential news conferences as "on the spot" news events.

The FCC also exempts political debates sponsored by someone other than a candidate. This ruling allowed stations to carry the 1980 Ford-Carter Debates which were sponsored by the League of Women Voters, without allowing minor party candidates equal time. In 1983 the FCC struck down the Equal Time Provisions of Section 315. Broadcasters can now decide which candidates are allowed to debate. One of the goals is to stimulate more public debates among major political candidates.

If a candidate makes a nonpolitical use of a broadcasting station, the requirements of Section 315 are still applicable. For example, when comedian Pat Paulsen ran for President, his comedy appearances were held to trigger equal-time requirements.

The section often called the "equal time provision" does not mean that a station has to provide exactly the same time for each candidate, but it does mean that candidates must receive equal opportunity at approximately equivalent time. This time must be made available within seven days after the first appearance by the political opponent. Unlike the personal attack rule, the station does not have to notify candidates of use of the media by their opponents. The responsibility is the candidate's. Also, if the candidates don't take advantage of the opportunity within the seven-day period, the station is not obligated to provide time after that.

STAGED NEWS

Another concern of the FCC has been staged news — falsifying or recreating an event for a newscast.

Examples of news staging have occurred infrequently because it is not only against FCC regulation, but it is also unethical journalism. There are several important examples of staging, however. The most famous and the one that initiated the FCC's concern was the Orson Welles' production of the "War of the Worlds," obviously not a newscast although excerpts from the program were represented as spot news that interrupted "normal programming" from time to time.

In 1969 an FCC investigation of news staging held up the broadcast license renewal of the CBS-owned Chicago station, WBBM-TV. A reporter filmed a "pot party" by Northwestern University students to show the prevalence of marijuana on a college campus. The reporter was a recent Northwestern graduate and charges of staging were levied against the reporter and the station.

A station is ultimately responsible for everything except political broadcasts that it airs. Generally, though, the FCC has tended to not be too hard on the station for what a reporter has done. In fact, the FCC usually tries to avoid involvement in staging or slanting charges.

The FCC will investigate charges that tape has been edited to give a dishonest or false impression, but it requires considerable evidence of a deliberate attempt to stage or slant a news event before it will become involved.

However, the penalty for violation can be refusal to renew the station license — the most severe penalty the FCC can assess. In the case of WBBM, however, the FCC held up the renewal for 18 months. Legal fees cost the station hundreds of thousands of dollars.

CBS Policy on "Staged" News

Staging is prohibited. Broadcasts must be just what they purport to be. We report facts exactly as they occur. We do *not* create or change them. It is of the utmost importance, therefore, that these basic principles be adhered to scrupulously by all personnel.

- Say nothing and do nothing that may give the viewer or listener an impression of time, place, event or person which varies from the facts *actually* seen, heard and recorded by our equipment.
- It may be necessary, in occasional situations (e.g., a moon-walk simulation), to re-create an event for subsequent broadcast. In each situation, however, (i) the fact that a re-creation is being broadcast must be made explicitly clear to the viewer or listener and (ii), the re-creation must be a faithful reproduction of the original event. Re-creations should be used sparingly.

These basic principles are expressed, necessarily in broad language. Any doubts or questions as to their applicability to specific situations should be checked promptly with management. However, the guiding principle, always, is "when in doubt, don't." Producers, correspondents and reporters working with camera crews are responsible for the actions of the crews.

Any employee who has information indicating that this standard is being violated should submit it promptly to senior management.

LIBEL

Traditionally libel laws have been among the most pervasive of all the restraints on broadcast news. As the courts have defined libel, it is published defamation which damages an individual's reputation. Traditionally, a statement must be malicious in order to be libelous, although to prove malice one has only to prove "reckless disregard of the truth." Does published mean that the broadcaster is exempt from this restraint? No, the courts have generally ruled that because a broadcast is disseminated to a mass audience and is often from a written script, it is libel. There is some possibility that an ad or live report might fall under the lesser law of slander, or oral defamation. With electronic news gathering that possibility becomes more likely than ever before.

Civil libel is covered by state law. Thus, each state has its own libel regulation. You should be familiar with the particular law in your state. However, federal courts often have final say in interpreting those laws, and there are some general guidelines, therefore, that may apply in the state in which you work.

First is the requirement that someone be defamed — that his or her character is damaged by what was said. Libel is considered of two types: *per se* and *per quod*. Libel *per se* is use of words which by their use constitutes defamation. For example, calling someone a murderer is defamation by the very use of the word. Libel *per quod* is defamation by the surrounding circumstances — the context of the report defames the person.

The publication requirement is that the report be communicated to a third party. Again, broadcast is considered to be published defamation according to the courts.

In most states a report must be false before it can be libelous, but a few states have certain restrictions that apply even to true defamation. For instance, truth may not be justifiable in some states if natural defects of the persons are held up to ridicule.

New York Times Versus Sullivan

Another requirement coming out of the 1964 Supreme Court ruling in *New York Times v. Sullivan* is that the defamation must be malicious. This was a landmark case involving a man named Sullivan, one of three elected commissioners from Montgomery, Alabama. In 1960 a full-page editorial advertisement appeared in the *New York Times* under the headline, "Heed Their Rising Voices," which claimed the civil rights movement in the south was being met by a wave of terrorism. The suit was based on a portion of the editorial advertisement which Sullivan claimed implicated him as a racial bigot. The Supreme Court ruled, however, that Sullivan as a public official was not maliciously libeled.

As the court put it, "Constitutional guarantees require, we think, a federal rule that prohibits a public official from recovering damages for a defamatory falsehood relating to his official conduct unless he proves that the statement was made with 'actual malice' — that is, with knowledge that it was false or with reckless disregard of whether it was false or not."

This standard applies to plaintiffs who are public figures and public officials — persons who have voluntarily exposed themselves to publicity or to the public limelight. Whether the actual malice standard applies to private plaintiffs who are suing mass-media defendants is not clear. The Court, in *Gertz v. Welch*, left the question to state law. Some states have adopted a standard of "neutral reportage," which gives reporters freedom to repeat charges they suspect are false without fear of a libel suit. Other states require reporters to investigate reports they suspect to be false before repeating them.

LIBEL DEFENSES

Some situations may exonerate the communicator of libel. The three principal defenses are truth, fair comment, and privilege.

TRUTH: This is the best defense possible, but it is not always usable because of its difficulty to prove. Proof of truth comes mostly from people not connected with the station because journalists seldom witness the actual event. The journalist must be able to use sources to prove the truth if needed. Thus, doctors, lawyers and ministers may prove to be dangerous sources, because they would not have to testify about information obtained from a client's privileged communication.

In using the truth as defense, objectivity is tested. A journalist who fails to cover both sides of a story or to check information thoroughly, runs the risk of showing carelessness and indifference to others' rights. Journalists cannot afford such negligence.

FAIR COMMENT: Journalists have a right under the First Amendment to comment on public activities of people and institutions affecting the public's interests. Entertainment activities such as plays, concerts, political addresses, and sporting events may be safely criticized. But, the comments must be fair, have some basis of truth, and not be done maliciously. Aside from libel, careful attention must also be given to FCC regulations in this area.

PRIVILEGE: Of the three complete defenses, privilege is the most complicated because what is privileged material in one state may not be in another. It is safe to say, however, that privileged materials can be used even though they may be false.

Privileged material primarily involves so-called judicial, congressional and presidential records and such proceedings as legislative and city council meetings. Reports of these events are privileged if they are fair and accurately reported.

Citizen's advisory meetings or other group meetings are not included in this defense, no matter how official they are in a community. Reporting of charges made at such meetings should be avoided.

PRIVACY

A much younger concept in terms of legal development is privacy law. Privacy is the concept that a person has the right to be left alone. The concept began evolving in the 1880's, but was first discussed in a Harvard Law Review article by two Boston lawyers, Louis Brandeis and Samuel Warren, in 1890. New York state had the first privacy law in 1903, but the concept has still not been codified in most states. The courts are increasingly recognizing it, though, and with the Federal Freedom of Information Act in 1964, privacy has become more and more a national question.

In general, individuals are considered to have the right to privacy. However, there are two reasons why a person may not be entitled to privacy: (1) if that person is a public figure, or (2) if anyone voluntarily or involuntarily places him or herself in the news. Involuntarily being thrust into the spotlight also can cause some loss of privacy. The crippled Vietnam veteran who grabbed the gun from a person attempting to shoot former President Gerald Ford was thrust into the public's attention. When he was accused in the media of being a homosexual, he argued that his privacy had been invaded. Not so, said the courts, because he was now a public figure. What constitutes a public figure is not always clear, however, given recent court interpretations of libel.

Trespassing in order to secure the story may violate a person's privacy and must be carefully avoided. Many states also provide legal protection for the names of juveniles accused of crimes, as well as victims of rape and other sex crimes.

False light privacy is a mixture of privacy and libel law. Whenever journalists broadcast information that is false about a private person, and which does not harm his or her reputation, they may have committed an invasion of privacy. Defenses to claims of false light privacy include truth, accurate reporting of public records, fair comment, privilege, and absence of malice.

Invasion of privacy claims may also be based on the broadcasting or publication of embarrassing private facts such as sexual matters, the commission of a crime, poverty, or idiosyncratic personality traits. This area of law is new and the standards are not clear, so journalists are cautioned to be especially careful about such disclosures.

As in all invasion of privacy suits, defenses include arguments that the disclosure was not "highly offensive to a reasonable person" and that the disclosed material was "newsworthy." These defenses are frequently successful, especially if the plaintiff has claimed the broadcast of embarrassing private facts.

CONTEMPT OF COURT

The power of the courts to regulate news reporting involves two major areas: *Free Press v. Fair Trial* and the right of reporters to protect their news sources.

Free Press — Fair Trial

Free Press v. Fair Trial is quite involved since it brings into conflict the First, Sixth and Fourteenth amendments to the Constitution. Since the 1964 Sam Sheppard case in which the

Supreme Court ruled that excess publicity might deprive a defendant of a fair trial, there has been a deluge of "gag orders." Gag orders, prior restraint rulings by judges that keep the media from reporting some aspect of the case, have increased considerably since the Sheppard case. Violation of a gag order will bring contempt of court penalties from the trial judge. Prior restraint orders have usually been overturned by appeals courts.

TRIAL COVERAGE

The broadcasting of trials has posed special problems. In 1965 the Supreme Court ruled that the televised trial of Billie Sol Estes had made a fair trial impossible for him. The court said, "Televising and broadcasting parts of his trial over objection deprived him of his right to due process under the Fourteenth Amendment."

In 1972 the American Bar Association adopted Canon 3A(7) which bans radio broadcasting, television and film from the courtroom. The bar association has contended that broadcasting may inhibit witnesses or bother other court proceedings. However, many states have press-bar compacts which provide guidelines for press coverage of trials. You should check your state press association for a copy.

In an era of investigative reporting a major legal restraint is the contempt of court citation issued when journalists refuse to divulge news sources or to turn over notes or videotape for use in apprehending or punishing criminals.

SHIELD LAWS

Until 1972 journalists thought that the First Amendment gave them the right to protect news sources. However, in the 5-4 Caldwell decision the Supreme Court ruled that journalists did not have that protection. The court did suggest that protection might be afforded under "shield" legislation.

Shield laws first appeared in Maryland in 1896. They protect journalists from having to divulge the identity of news sources. The problem is that there are two types of shield laws: absolute and qualified. An absolute law gives protection under all circumstances. Qualified shield laws provide certain instances where the journalists may be forced to testify or face contempt of court charges. While approximately 20 states have shield laws, the protection provided is often of little value because of the qualifications.

Many journalists oppose any shield legislation and still argue that the First Amendment should provide the protection.

They feel that when the First Amendment says "Congress shall make no law . . ." the statement also applies to shield legislation.

The protection of news sources became a crusade for many journalists in the 1970's as they sought to change the existing legal environment. It is important that journalists work to reduce restraint on the news media, but you should be aware that present court interpretations do not always give you the right to withhold information.

OBSCENITY

Obscenity is one of the most difficult concepts to define. Court interpretations have changed the definition many times in the past 50 years, but today the court requires three tests before a work can be considered obscene:

1. Does the work taken as a whole lack serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value?

2. Would the average person, using contemporary community standards, find the work as a whole appealing to prurient interest (morbid interest in nudity, sex or excretion)?
3. Does the work depict or describe, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law?

That's the law as it applies to all media and has been interpreted by the courts. However, broadcast media have other restrictions. Until 1963 the FCC had control over obscenity. In 1963 the provision of the Communications Act which authorized the FCC to forbid the use of obscene language was moved to the U.S. Criminal Code. It reads:

Broadcasting obscene language. Whoever utters any obscene, indecent, or profane language by means of radio communication shall be fined no more than \$10,000 or imprisoned no more than two years or both.

Section 1464
U.S. Criminal Code

Such things as the broadcasting of George Carlin's "seven-dirty-words" comedy routine at times of the day when children could be in the audience, have been held to violate Section 1464.

The FCC did not drop its involvement with obscenity, though, and under the general charge to stations to provide for the "public interest, convenience, and necessity," the FCC in 1978 won Supreme Court approval to regulate broadcast obscenity. The standards by which broadcasting are regulated *vis a vis* obscenity are more stringent than the print media as a result of this decision by the Court.

COPYRIGHT

The Copyright Act of 1976 replaced the outdated 1909 statute to conform to a recognition of electronic media. The act says officially that film, videotape, and photographs may now be copyrighted. Copyright law protects the work for the lifetime of the author or producer plus 50 years. Portions of a work may be used under a concept known as "fair use," however, as long as it does not impair the market value of the work. Restrictions on "fair use" are many and varied, and this section is the most ambiguous and unclear of the new copyright law. Such things as off-air taping are left without specific guidelines.

MISCELLANEOUS

There are many other restrictions that may have some applicability to broadcasting. For example, it is against federal law to publicize a lottery. You may report *newsworthy* results of a major lottery or a state-operated lottery in your state, but you should not broadcast a public service announcement promoting a local club raffle.

The journalist also faces restrictions that may or may not be legal. If your state has an open meeting and open records law, does it apply to local government? It may take a court case to find out.

Many times, government agencies also place restrictions on employees about how they are to handle the media. As you gather spot news, you will deal with the full spectrum of public officials. Many of them, especially law enforcement officials, work under *news policy guidelines* similar to those listed below. As you read these guidelines consider the types of news coverage they might restrict.

SAMPLE GUIDELINES

1. **Using News Media for Personal Gain:** An employee will not, directly or indirectly, seek publicity through the press, radio or television.
2. **News Media Credentials:** Representatives of the news media who produce credentials will be admitted to coverage of any scene or disaster, crime, accident or similar occurrence — when cleared by the officer in charge of same.
3. **Interviews with News Media:** Representatives of the news media are authorized to interview any member of this department on a person-to-person basis, regardless of rank; but, this privilege shall not extend to any act which may in any manner jeopardize the investigation in progress, or a future court proceeding.
4. **Courtesy to News Media:** All courtesies will be shown to news media in the field, as well as within the facilities of this department. An employee, in turn, should expect the members of the news media to extend like courtesies to which members of this department are entitled in the exercise of their duties.
5. **Preferential Treatment:** No preferential treatment will be shown to any representative of the news media.
6. **Photographing Prisoners:** Photographing of any individual who is in the custody of this department by the news media will not be authorized within the confines of the Sheriff's Department Building. Federal prisoners in the custody of the department may be photographed by the news media only upon authorization by the arresting Federal Agency or the U.S. Marshal. When escorting a prisoner outside the facilities of this department, photographing by the news media *will not be restricted*.
7. **Releasing Names:** An employee will not release the name of a person killed by a criminal act or accident until identification has been verified, and an earnest effort has been made by the Coroner's Office to notify the next of kin; however, if the next of kin has not been notified after a reasonable length of time, this information will be released.
8. **Information that will be released:**
 - (a) The victim's name, address, age, sex, race, occupation and next of kin.
 - (b) A description of subject(s) involved in the crime.
 - (c) Amount of money taken (if any) except in robberies, amount to be withheld.
 - (d) Weapon used (if any).
 - (e) Type of force used.
 - (f) Injuries suffered by victims or subject(s).
 - (g) The facts and essential circumstances of any arrest or incident; which includes name, address, sex, race, occupation, age, and if over 18, charges.
 - (h) All events occurring in the judicial process.
 - (i) Accident reports, miscellaneous incident reports, arrest reports.
 - (j) On rape or sex offenses only the age, race and general location of incident.
 - (k) Witnesses' names on drownings, accidents, etc.
9. **Information that will not be released:**
 - (a) Names, addresses and exact location of female victims of sex offenders.
 - (b) Names, addresses of witnesses to Class 1 crimes.

- (c) Statements made by subject(s) after arrest.
 - (d) Names, addresses of subject(s) wanted for crimes, unless help is wanted from the news media in an effort to locate subject.
 - (e) Details of a subject(s) previous arrest record.
 - (f) Juvenile offenders' names or addresses.
10. **Police Lines:** At the scene of a major crime incident or disaster, police lines are set up to control crowds and preserve evidence. Representatives of the news media with proper press credentials will be allowed past lines, when the preservation of evidence and order will not be affected.

15-A cont'd.

4. In a political broadcast one of the candidates accuses his opponent of forgery of tax documents. He doesn't produce any evidence of the charge. What can you do in editing the tape for broadcast tonight?

5. In a news story the city attorney endorses a proposed ordinance to require property owners to pay for a new sewage system. An attorney for the home owners association requests equal time on the news show to refute that endorsement. What must you do? What will you do?

6. You and the cinematographer are sent to cover a story on a campus demonstration at the president's office. When you get there, the student leader has just finished his speech. The cinematographer suggests you ask the student to give it again for the cameras. What do you do?

Exercise 15-A
Legal Problems

Name _____

Date _____

15-A cont'd.

7. You produce a documentary on government graft in your county. The county welfare director had retired two years ago, but in the documentary three people on welfare accuse the former director of requiring them to pay monthly "kickbacks" of \$20 each in order to remain on the eligible list. The director denied the charges and threatened to sue for libel if the charges were broadcast. You have other witnesses who attest in writing to the graft, but who were unwilling to say so on videotape. What should you do? If you are sued, what defense do you have?

8. You mistakenly accuse Timothy Cornet of being the person arrested for kidnapping a 4-year-old girl. The man accused was really Timothy Corinth. Mr. Cornet calls you immediately after the radio news broadcast accusing you of libel. Would he have a case? What should you do?

9. You are reporting the city council meeting. In your report you quote the council's denial of a license renewal for one of the local restaurants. The council's report noted that the restaurant had numerous sanitary violations, some of which you note in your report. The restaurant manager calls your station soon after your report complaining that it was erroneous. The council report had made a mistake and it was another restaurant that was losing its license. Are you guilty of libel? What would be your defense? What should you do?

10. You are taping the arrival of the Queen of England at a local hotel. In your taped report a prominent business leader in your community can be seen checking in or out of the hotel with a woman who is not his wife. He calls trying to get you to discard the film claiming his privacy as a private citizen has been abridged. Has it? What would you do?

11. You are doing a report on the nude bars in town. In editing the videotape the editor cuts everything except tape of the dancers from the knees down. You are disappointed at the censorship. You check with the news director. What should the news director tell you?

12. You produce on your own time a documentary on welfare reform. Should you have it copyrighted? What protection would a copyright give you?

13. You falsely report that an individual has won \$87,000 in the state lottery. She is called by literally hundreds of opportunists seeking her financial help. Does she have a case against you? Why or why not?

16

Ratings Versus Professionalism

"If we are to be faithful to what journalism really stands for, we cannot operate by what surveys tell us our customers want."

*Richard Salant, President
of CBS News*

Today television news carries clout. It is big business, and at many stations has become the most profitable item in the programming line-up. No longer is broadcast news merely a way to meet public service obligations imposed by the FCC at license renewal time.

As a big money item, news is the focus of the ratings game just as any other kind of television program. Fortunes are made, heads roll and content is altered as the nightly news is juggled to attract ever larger audiences.

Commercial television survives by delivering audiences to advertisers, much in the way produce is harvested and sold. The more people the station delivers to an advertiser, the more it can charge, on a cost-per-thousand-viewers basis, for commercial time slots.

Ratings measure audience size, with emphasis on the primary buyers of goods and services in our society — those from 18 to 49 years of age. Ratings numbers are expressed in two ways: as the percentage of the *total number of sets* in a given market area that are tuned to a particular program (the rating); and as a percentage of the *sets in use* that are tuned to a particular station (the share).

Thus, a station in the St. Louis, Missouri, metropolitan area might have a 20 rating (about 1 in 5 of all sets in the area) with a 41 share of audience (about 4 of every 10 sets actually in use), representing 146,000 homes watching its newscast. A competing station in second place might have a 17 rating with a 34 share, representing 112,000 homes.

Such numbers are the bible that rules television news formats. They help determine which personalities are hired and fired and sometimes even affect news content itself, because the numbers represent money.

News in some markets account for as much as 40 percent of a station's profit; it is the one local form of programming that enhances station identity and prestige on a daily basis while generating big money. In one city, for example, four additional ratings points in the news might represent \$1 million in annual revenue. In a much larger city, only one extra ratings point might earn the same \$1 million.

CONSULTANTS

One issue when news becomes such big business is the question of who controls it. Since news has arrived at its current status, it increasingly is being examined by news consulting firms,

specialists in news programming, market research, set design, make-up, acting, talent development and motivational research. Ultimately, their goal is to help their clients attract larger news audiences.

Stations can choose from among a dozen or so of the primary news consulting firms in the nation. The goal of any station is to be number 1 in the market. So important are ratings, and hence consultants, that stations frequently spend more money on the look of the show than on gathering the news itself.

Typically when they contract with a station, consultants first perform market studies that determine the demographics, or audience make-up, by age, income and life style. They assess air personalities and conduct interviews to see what viewers like and don't like about news personalities; they recommend changes in sets and wardrobes, hairstyles, the number and pace of stories and visuals per newscast; they may suggest changes in promotion, formats, and the nature of the news itself ("drop some of the hard news and put more how-to-cope stories on the air").

Recommendations may include suggestions for specific reporter involvement. Reporter involvement occurs whenever a reporter in the field interacts physically with the environment in which the news event occurs. Typical examples of reporter involvement include the following stories:

- a reporter is shown flying an aluminum kite to illustrate the hazards of electrocution present when metal kites and string touch high voltage power lines.
- a reporter handles test tubes or laboratory research animals during a report on cancer research.
- a reporter, wrench in hand, explains ways to beat the high cost of car repair.

In most cases of reporter involvement, the reporter interacts physically with the news environment by touching or handling some part of it. In such reports, the stimulus for reporter involvement is the desire to heighten the reporter's credibility by showing him or her on the scene, obviously knowledgeable about the subject under discussion.

Properly executed, reporter involvement may heighten viewer interest in the subject; on the other hand, the reporter's imposed presence and subsequent influence may change the story's dimension and viewer's perception of the event.

Some consultants survey reporters' F and Q quotients.

The F quotient is a measure of how well a reporter is recognized in the market, or the primary area a station serves; the Q quotient is a measure of the reporter's "likeability." Such tests are scientifically conducted. Sometimes computers are used to help collect and interpret data fed from electronic skin sensors that are attached to subjects in research laboratories.

Favorable emotional responses to air talent ostensibly can be detected in these tests through measurements of pupil dilation, heart and breathing rates, and levels of perspiration on viewers' hands as they watch laboratory television monitors.

As the result of such tests, some news personalities have been fired for failing to elicit what are considered favorable responses from viewers.

Some news consultant firms act also as talent agencies and help merchandise news personalities from market to market. Such firms maintain banks of videotape that feature various talent at his or her best; any station, for a fee, can scout through the tapes for a new personality to hire.

At issue among many broadcast journalists is whether such practices are ultimately in the public interest. Can news shows that offer predominately slick, fast-paced entertainment and little real news fulfill their obligation to help inform audiences so they can make reasonable judgments about crucial social issues? The feeling among many journalists is that they cannot.

Still, there are legitimate arguments for the new approach to news. Paul Rhodes, news director at KCCI-TV in Des Moines, says emphasis on news reporting in the last 10 years has changed from spot and beat coverage to "idea" reporting. Under this heading fall stories that deal with health, medicine, consumerism, gardening and the like, stories that somehow affect viewers whether by hitting them in their pocketbooks or helping them "cope" with life.

When news coverage changes, Rhodes says, so does the breed of journalist required to cover it. "We aren't the same mold of journalists today," he says. "In the old days we gave people more government news than they wanted, could absorb or cared about. Today we're concerned more with stories that deal with day to day living — 'how to' stories."

Coverage of such stories implies the need for reporters who are aware of many things, people who have a general overall knowledge of what makes a good story, people with imagination who are aware of people's needs. But journalism has always needed such people.

ETHICS

Essential to the definition of professional broadcasting is the journalist's sense of ethical standards. Legal standards protect society against unethical and abusive conduct, and if you have a strong commitment to professional ethics, most of the legal restrictions will be academic to you. Many of the ethical decisions that you will make relate to the concepts of privacy and fairness and to the specific codes and policies of professional conduct.

Privacy

Privacy is a concept that has legal definition in most states and has been interpreted variously in the federal courts. Beside the legal constraints of privacy law, critics often ask the question, "Does the media have the ethical right to invade a person's privacy even if the legal right is there?" For example, in the TV interview by ABC's Barbara Walters with tennis star Billie Jean King, did Ms. Walters have to probe into the homosexual affair Ms. King had with Marilyn Barnett? How far into a person's private life should an interviewer delve? Not very far if you ask the viewing public. More than 80 percent of the people polled by ABC News thought it was wrong to invade the privacy of a person while gathering the news.

On the other hand, as a journalist you must balance that criticism with the responsibility to the public's right to know. That balance must be struck with an acute sense of news judgment and fairness.

On the local level these ethical questions are faced almost daily. The TV reporter and cameraman on assignment in San Angelo, Texas, faced a difficult decision when they followed police to do a report from inside the murder victim's house. The reporter and cameraman were allowed into the home by the police, but the victim's husband requested they leave. They did, but not until after they had the story. Did they invade the privacy of the husband even though

police had given their permission? That's both a legal and an ethical question. The legal question was never answered, however, because the husband who brought suit died before it ever came to trial. The ethical question is perhaps easier to answer in this case.

Perhaps some of the tougher questions fall into a "gray" area. Should the drowning victim be shown being pulled from a lake? Should the reporter do a live interview from the hospital with the father of a flood victim? Should the names or visuals of juveniles who have committed a crime be used in a story? (In some states there are legal restrictions regarding the use of juvenile names in a story, but in many states it is up to the media's discretion.) These, and many similar questions, are faced daily by broadcast reporters and editors. How should you respond ethically to such decisions?

Fairness

Something of a writer's personal sense of ethics and fairness show through in any story in the writer's choice of words, the order in which the words are expressed, and what facts in the story receive most emphasis. David Brinkley of ABC has said it is impossible for the journalist to be objective in the sense that to be totally objective is to have no likes or dislikes, no feelings one way or another about anything. What is possible, Brinkley says, is to be fair — to make a totally honest effort to report the news event or the newsmaker as representatively as possible. Most stories are neither all black nor all white; they usually have more than two sides if the issue at stake is especially controversial. To be fair in your reporting of such stories you must report with equal emphasis all salient points of view, irrespective of your own social and political views and feelings. You must be, as former CBS News President Richard Salant says, "just as skeptical of those news sources we admire and of stories with which we agree as we are of those we dislike and the stories with which we disagree." The difficult if not impossible goal of being totally objective does not overrule your responsibility to strive for fairness.

Professional Codes

Ethics can be divided into two major categories — professional ethics and personal ethics.

Journalists have initiated several codes of conduct during the Twentieth Century — the social responsibility era of mass communications. The Canons of Journalism and the responsibilities of a free press as recommended by the Commission on Freedom of the Press provide two of the more significant codes for all news media practitioners. Of special importance to broadcasters has been the National Association of Broadcasters (NAB) Code. These codes provide guidelines for ethical conduct of broadcast journalists. You should be well acquainted with them. See the appendices for the codes.

Station Policies

In addition to codes, many stations have their own policies which specify certain conduct required by that station. The policy statements may cover many aspects of behavior expected of the broadcaster. For example, the station policy may cover how to handle sex crimes, other crimes, race, suicide, and the handicapped. Typical policy statements about these aspects of broadcast behavior might be written by the station this way:

SEX CRIMES: Handle with as much care as possible. State that the crime was committed provide essential facts, but don't go into detail. For example, you might report a rape case like this:

A 21-year-old Central Valley woman was raped early this morning as she returned home from work. Police are seeking a 6-foot man, weighing about 175 pounds.

CRIME STORIES: Provide the facts, but don't sensationalize with morbid details. Avoid going into the "how" of the crime. Juvenile names should never be used without the court's permission. Don't report that a person is arrested for questioning. Report suspect's name only when a charge has been filed.

RACE: Unless the race is an important part of the story, it should not be mentioned. If, though, John Smith is the first Black mayor of Central Valley, use it. Sometimes in describing fugitives in crime stories, race may be important.

SUICIDE: Don't say someone committed suicide until the coroner has ruled the death a suicide. As in any crime story, state the facts simply without detail. Attribute the suicide ruling to the coroner.

HANDICAPPED: Never joke about a handicap. Don't mention a handicap unless it is essential to the story.

In addition to the statement such as those above, policy statements may also cover other aspects of the job relating to ethics. The statements may involve conflict of interest, "moonlighting," political activity, and freelancing.

Personal Ethics

In the final analysis it is the individual's personal ethics that will make the difference in a situation. For major issues there will be the professional standard, but in many cases the professional or station codes may not cover the individual circumstances.

One of the essential attributes of any occupation that makes it a profession is a code of ethical conduct. It is not the occupation itself that is professional, though; it is individuals within that occupation. For an individual to be professional, he or she must be able to have an overriding sense of public responsibility that exhibits a fine tuned combination of personal and professional ethics that can respond to the daily decision with confidence that the right decision has or will be made.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Professional behavior from a sociological perspective may be defined in terms of four basic criteria:

- Expertise
- Autonomy
- Commitment
- Responsibility

Expertise is that specialized knowledge and skill that are vital requirements for a broadcaster to perform in a society. It is acquired through prolonged education, experience, and professional relationships.

Autonomy allows the broadcaster to use his or her own judgment without outside interference. It means that you can rise above the mediocrity of those around you and do what you feel is the best action in any given situation.

Commitment is the outcome of expertise in that you devote a lifetime to pursue excellence within your profession. Your goals are established, and you work to reach them without detour.

Responsibility is the result of the power conferred by the expertise and position held. You must be devoted to public service for the benefit of the greater society if that responsibility is to be complete.

The resulting virtues from professional behavior that include demonstration of highly intellectual competence, freedom from outside interference, and high ethical conduct make such professional behavior a desirable goal for many occupations including broadcasting.

If, then, you are to rise above the "ratings game," you must develop a sense of professionalism that will be exhibited whether in a small radio station in Montana or in a network position in New York. Achieving professionalism is the only means to attaining genuine job satisfaction in your career.

Assignment 16-A
Chapter 16

Name _____

Date _____

16-A

The following assignment is a class project intended to involve all members of the class in a critical evaluation of local television news programs in your area. Emphasis is on developing sensitivity to news programming techniques by deciphering news treatments that reflect the station's desire for higher ratings and by becoming aware of the probable stimulus of news consulting firms. From the list of subjects below, each student should choose one or more categories to investigate, then make an informal report of findings to the class. Because television market size varies from area to area, you may have only one station in your community to investigate, or as many as three or more stations that can be collectively investigated. If only one station is available for analysis, the class should monitor the station for as long as a week — each station taking one or more categories on successive nights so that all students are involved in the exercise.

CATEGORY I

Reporter Involvement

In class determine which students will investigate examples of reporter involvement on the TV stations in your community.

Reporter Involvement

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel ____)
2. _____ (Channel ____)
3. _____ (Channel ____)
4. _____ (Channel ____)

Name _____

Channel Monitored _____

Date Monitored _____

16-A cont'd.

CATEGORY II
Story Breakdown

Each student who signs up for this category should take note of the following elements:

1. Total number of stories in the 10 o'clock newscast of the station of choice.
2. Subject matter for each story.
3. Average length of each story (total number of stories divided by total news time available, less commercial and weather/sports).

Story Breakdown	Actual Length	Visuals Used in Story
Story # 1 (subject) _____		
# 2 _____		
# 3 _____		
# 4 _____		
# 5 _____		
# 6 _____		
# 7 _____		
# 8 _____		
# 9 _____		
#10 _____		
#11 _____		
#12 _____		
#13 _____		
#14 _____		
#15 _____		

#16		
#17		
#18		
#19		
#20		

Use bottom of page for additional stories, if necessary.

Average Length of each story _____ seconds.

For Reference: Other Students Doing This Assignment.

1. _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

CATEGORY III
Visual Content and Sources

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

In this category, observers should identify the number of videotape stories that appear in the early or late evening newscast. For each story that uses videotape, jot down the subject matter and total screen time of visuals.

Visual Content

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

CATEGORY IV
Commercial Time and Content

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

List each commercial within the newscast, including sports and weather, its running time and the sponsor. (Identifying products and sponsors will help you determine audience make-up for that particular show. You may notice, for example, that pantyhose commercials appear in the sports portion of the newscast—a tipoff that many women are watching the sports). Record and add up total time the newscaster's face is on the screen during the news, and total times that sports and weather talent appear on the screen.

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

As part of this assignment, determine percentage of commercial time versus total news time including sports and weather.

CATEGORY V
Writing Techniques

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

In this category, note all instances of the following subjects for analysis:

- treatment of names in the news (number of unknown names used in the first sentences of stories and whether visuals or name supers were used to help identify people in the news); also whether names in the second sentence of story were "cushioned" (see Chapter 1).
- number of blind lead-ins to videotape stories.
- frequency of a secondary visual used to lead in to a tape story.

Writing Techniques

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

CATEGORY VI
Verb Tenses in the News

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

Listen for the use of words such as "today," "yesterday," "tomorrow," etc. Make a log of all time references used in the newscast, noting whether each verb tense is past, present, past perfect, etc. In your report to class, use specific instances of the words and the tense used.

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

CATEGORY VII
Non-anchor Reporters

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

Determine the number of "non-anchor" reporters appearing on the air in reports from the field or reports from the studio during the 10 o'clock news show. Determine the average length of their stories, how many men, women and minority reporters appear and what subjects they report.

Non-anchor Reporters

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel _____)
2. _____ (Channel _____)
3. _____ (Channel _____)
4. _____ (Channel _____)

CATEGORY VIII
Soft News Content

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

Determine the number of non-hard news stories that appear in each newscast. List specific stories and the length of each story. Into this category fall feature stories, all "happy talk" or banter between anchor talent, etc.

Soft News Content

1. (student's name) _____ (Channel ____)
2. _____ (Channel ____)
3. _____ (Channel ____)
4. _____ (Channel ____)

CATEGORY IX
Sports and Weather

Name _____

Date _____

16-A cont'd.

Determine average length of sports and weather shows. List and time each story in sports and make a log of videotapes that appear in sports. Determine average length of any sports interviews that appear and identify interview subjects. Use the log that follows.

SPORTS	Subject	Length	Visuals	Interview	Length
Story # 1					
# 2					
# 3					
# 4					
# 5					
# 6					
# 7					
# 8					
# 9					
#10					
#11					
#12					

Average length of sports programs you watched this week on Channel _____. Average number of tapes used in # _____ sportscasts this week. Average length of weather show _____ minutes (less commercial time).

FOR REFERENCE:

Other students engaged in this observation are:

1. _____ (Channel ____)
2. _____ (Channel ____)
3. _____ (Channel ____)

Exercise Ethical Problems
Chapter 16

Name _____

Date _____

16-B

1. You are asked to cover a rape case for the radio newscast. You find out the following facts. Write your story from the facts.

Rape Victim— 19-year-old sophomore at Central Valley University . . . she's from Miami, Fla. and is majoring in music . . . she is 5'8" and weighs 130 pounds. Her name is Dorothy Green.

Rape Suspect—35-year-old Tom R. Spencer, assistant librarian at the university. He lives at 3030 Colcord and has been picked up by police for questioning.

Incident— Miss Green was studying late at the library. She left when it closed to walk back to her dorm. She was wearing shorts and a halter top when her assailant grabbed her from behind and made her go with him in the trees behind the dorm. He tore her clothes from her, raped her at gunpoint and let her go without further harm except a threat that if she tried to identify him, she would be "dead,dead,dead," She called women's crisis center immediately upon returning to her dorm at 1:20 a.m. Police picked up Spencer at his apartment about 3:15 a.m.

(Your story here)

Ethical Exercise
Chapter 16

Name _____

Date _____

16-C

1. You receive the following actuality from the policeman investigating a murder at an exclusive mansion near the city. Would you have to edit any of it? If so, what would you delete?

"I found Mrs. Davis lying in a pool of blood near the swimming pool. The machete-type knife still in her rib cage. It looked like she had been stabbed 5 or 6 times. It was the worst scene I've witnessed in my 26 years on the force."

2. How would you edit the following news story?

Mrs. Emily Jester, 64-year-old black woman, committed suicide this morning in her garage. She lived at 4332 Chestnut Rd. A neighbor heard a shotgun blast about 10:30 this morning at Mrs. Jester's and went to check. A 16-gauge shotgun was found in the room with Mrs. Jester after the neighbor, Tina Willis, called police. The coroner, Dr. Tom P. Pratt, is investigating the incident.

3. As a reporter for Station XYYZ-TV you are invited to cover the opening of a new educational service center. The center sells equipment to help children with learning difficulties. You have a mentally handicapped child, and the public relations director offers to give you a reading machine while you are at the opening covering the story. What do you do?

16-C cont'd.

4. You are a reporter with YYZ radio. You are offered a job working as a weekend weatherman at the local TV station. It won't interfere with your radio work . . . at least the hours won't conflict. What should you do?

5. You are quite interested in politics and would like to work in the Democratic primary. Your station management is avidly Republican. What should you do?

6. You are assigned to cover the Democratic candidates for governor and lieutenant governor, but you really like the Republican candidates better. Should you do your best to be objective in your coverage, or should you ask for a reassignment?

Ethical Exercise
Chapter 16

Name _____

Date _____

16-C cont'd.

7. You are covering an assignment at a solar energy research lab. After doing the story you decide that would make a good feature story for a particular magazine so that night on your own time you write an outline and query letter to the editor. Later you get a response from the editor. She says that she would like the article and she'll pay you \$200 for it. You then wonder that since you gathered the information while doing the story for your TV station, is it right to make money freelancing on this subject. What do you think?

8. The police have arrested Paul Robbins, a local bank president for questioning about embezzlement. They have not charged him, but are holding him the 24 hours before they have to bring charges and are still questioning him. Legally in your state you can report the story. Do you think you should before charges have actually been filed? If so, why? If not, why not?

9. You talk with Sarah Reinhart, the public information officer for the state Department of Health, as part of your beat at least twice a week. She's always open and honest. This week she tells you the director is going to crack down on the state university cafeterias with surprise investigations next week. She asks that you not report anything until they make the inspections. What should you do? When should you keep information confidential, and when should you broadcast it?

16-C cont'd.

10. How should you as a radio news director respond to a request from an advertising salesman to do a live interview from the Grand Opening of a new restaurant in town?

11. Should the person assigned to do movie reviews for your noon newscast be allowed to receive free tickets for his or her use (1-4 tickets)?

12. Should the weekly public affairs radio program be broadcast live from a major restaurant in town each week? What might be the problem(s)?

13. Should your radio station have a policy statement permitting news personnel to do commercials? Why or why not?

14. Assume that you are assigned to cover a possible land fraud story. You enter a business with your camera running and the owner chases you out. Should you use that tape on your news report this evening? Why or why not?

17

Broadcast Editorials

"Strong points of view illuminate information, give it shape and meaning, and from the clash of many strong points of view come new understandings and validations of old ones . . . no amount of balanced and bland fairness can substitute for the struggle of competing advocacies."

Nicholas von Hoffman

THE VALUE OF EDITORIALS

The goal of editorials is to help create beneficial cultural and social change. In effect, editorials help set the agenda for public debate about critical issues and ideas. While straight news broadcasts may inform audiences and result in initial awareness, they seldom result in full understanding of issues or agreement about a community's possible courses of action.

Awareness is but the first step toward understanding; more critical is the inevitable clash of ideas that must occur if points of view are to be illuminated and agreement reached about new courses of direction. Editorials give us a way to stand back and look at the meaning of news events and how they affect our lives.

It has been said there can be no growth without conflict, no cultural progress without dissent. Among television viewers there is little dispute about the value of editorials or of their ability to stimulate thinking and create new points of view. National surveys show that 70 percent of the public think stations should editorialize, and that more than three fourths of the station's managers feel they should be taking strong editorial stands. The reality, however, is that two-thirds of all stations only infrequently or never editorialize.

EDITORIAL TRENDS IN THE MID 80s¹

While the editorial has been a major feature of the daily newspaper since before the Civil War, broadcast editorials are often a minor part of broadcast programming. Less than 15 percent of the stations surveyed say they broadcast editorials daily. This figure is a sharp drop from a 1966 survey by the National Association of Broadcasters which reported that 39 percent of stations editorialized daily. Another 1966 survey, reported in *Television Magazine*, reported the figure at 33 percent. Another 17 percent of stations report editorializing at least weekly. Overall, the dissemination of broadcast editorials is common practice at about a third of television stations, significantly down from the 50 percent of stations which reported airing editorials daily or weekly in 1977.

These figures mean that two-thirds of all stations only occasionally or never editorialize, although approximately 77 percent of stations believe strong editorial stands are desirable and positively affect the station's image. Furthermore, seven out of ten general managers believe that strong editorial stands enhance a station's prestige. While strong editorial stands are seen

¹ Based on national survey of more than 300 commercial television station managers conducted by the authors, October 1986.

as a virtue, more than a third of station managers believe they do alienate advertisers. Alienation of advertisers is not a concern, however, for 55 percent of the respondents.

Station managers normally select the subject matter for editorials although a significant number of station's news directors make this decision. At approximately one third of the stations surveyed in late 1986, an editorial director and an editorial board were involved in the decision making process.

While a majority of viewer's stations say stations should editorialize, few stations receive viewer feedback about their editorials. In fact, only five percent of the stations indicate they receive frequent viewer feedback and only 12 percent of the stations broadcast more than one editorial rebuttal per month. In the past stations have cited their reluctance to editorialize because of the attendant obligation to provide airtime for opposing viewpoints, but survey results indicate this concern may be unwarranted when only one station in 25 airs more than one rebuttal per month. The requirement to provide equal time for reply arises from FCC Bluebook guidelines which call for "reasonable fairness" in matters of opinion. About one fourth of stations report, however, that the FCC's related Fairness Doctrine prevents them from editorializing more frequently. Almost eighty-five percent report they would consider elimination of the Fairness Doctrine, and more than 92 percent favor broadcast deregulation.

Stations that do not editorialize cite as their primary reason a lack of time and staff. Although lack of budget was not cited as a primary reason for failure to editorialize, it can be assumed that inadequate budgets result in a lack of staff and therefore less time to spend on editorial projects. In fact, one reason that editorial departments are under-budgeted lies in the historical roots of broadcast advocacy.

EARLY PRECEDENTS AGAINST EDITORIALIZING

Broadcast editorializing suffered a rocky beginning. In 1941 the FCC ruled in the now famous "Mayflower Decision" that a station should not advocate a viewpoint on the public airways. That decision was almost a "death blow" to freedom of the broadcaster to exert editorial leadership in a community, and the effects of the Mayflower Decision are still apparent today in the hesitancy of some broadcasters to speak out on controversial issues.

In 1949 the FCC reversed the Mayflower Decision. As former FCC commissioner Frederick Ford paraphrased the decision, though, the general consensus was that "expression of editorial opinion by broadcast licensees within reasonable limits and subject to the general requirements of fairness is not contrary to the public interest" — a lackluster invitation to editorialize.

The catch in the reversal decision was the clause, "reasonable fairness," which was expanded into what is now called the Fairness Doctrine. The doctrine is vague, and has been worked out on a case by case basis through the years. Because the Fairness Doctrine has been applied to editorials, though, some broadcasters have been reluctant to editorialize.

Broadcast Editorial Forms

Broadcast editorials fall into one of three broad categories: 1) the formal editorial, identified by the station as such; 2) presentation of news analysis or commentary by news personnel or commentators; and 3) the documentary. The National Association of Broadcasters more narrowly defined broadcast editorials, however, as "an on-the-air expression of the opinion of the station licensee, clearly identified as such, on a subject of public interest." Using this definition NAB suggested a general editorial format to be used by broadcasters that is in line with FCC recommendations. The format requires general managers to take ultimate responsibility for editorial content and policy, assisted by an editorial policy board which helps determine the topics, editorial stand, and an evaluation of the performance of the editorializer. Commonly the

board might be comprised of the general manager, news director, public service director, editorial director and staff researchers. The board is responsible for checking for accuracy and talking with people involved on all sides of an issue to gather differing viewpoints. The focus of the editorials is usually on issues rather than individuals. Personalities are mentioned only when their activities relate to important public matters.

Editorial Guidelines

Guidelines are available for stations to follow in preparing broadcast editorials. The following guidelines have been suggested by the National Association of Broadcasters.

- Broadcast editorializing, under the supervision of the licensee, must be undertaken only after the most careful preparation and diligent effort to assure that the opinion expressed is well informed and well founded.
- Each editorial should deal with an issue of public interest, local, national or international.
- The subject of the editorial should be timely and controversy should not deter the decision to editorialize.
- The editorial must be based on facts assembled by competent personnel conversant with the subject.
- Editorial length is a matter of individual judgment, although commonly editorials run about two minutes.
- In keeping with the traditions of responsible broadcasting, fairness is a principal element of a station's editorial policy. To this end, reasonable opportunity must be provided for the expression of opposing views.
- Whenever individuals or organizations are the subject of an editorial, they should be supplied with a copy of the editorial as soon as practicable.
- Whenever an editorial position is taken on a political issue or candidate, timing is of the utmost importance in pursuing the standard of fairness.
- In the designation of a spokesperson to reply to an editorial on a political candidate, the licensee should accord preference to the wishes of the opposing candidate.
- The editorial should be clearly identified as a statement of opinion of the licensee, regardless of who delivers it.
- The reputation for integrity, responsibility and fairness of the station must stand behind the editorial.
- The editorial should be clearly distinguished from the news and other program material by an appropriate identification.
- Editorials should be delivered from a script.
- A record of the editorial should be made a part of the station's files for a reasonable period, and available to interested parties.
- The use of on-the-air promotion to call attention to a particular editorial is a factor to be considered in connection with the criterion of fairness.
- Consideration should be given to the distribution of copies of the station's editorials to appropriate leaders of the community to contribute to the understanding of matters affecting community interest.

HOW TO CONSTRUCT THE EDITORIAL

Keeping in mind the NAB guidelines, the broadcaster may use the following suggestions for constructing the editorial:

- 1) *Select a topic* worthy of comment. Make sure it has a broad appeal and interprets, persuades, commends, criticizes and/or makes suggestions for change.
- 2) *Research the topic* until you have all the necessary facts. Opinions are more persuasive when based on factual evidence.
- 3) *Organize the information*. Introduce the problem; provide facts, examples, illustrations, comparisons, and/or other opinion for support and evidence; conclude with the strongest point or offer suggestions for improvement.
- 4) *Be concise*. An editorial must be brief.
- 5) *Be fair*. Make sure all sides have been considered.
- 6) *Let the audience decide* — don't preach. Simply state your case.

PACKAGING THE EDITORIAL

Typically, the general manager or news director delivers the on-air editorial. While presentation might be as simple as reading copy before a studio camera, more than half of all stations today incorporate videotape into some or all of their presentations. In fact, eighteen percent report that they always use videotape to complement editorials.

Like all other broadcast content, the best editorials are "good television." They are much more than simple newspaper editorials read into a microphone. Since television editorials are presented in a visual medium, they need to be visual. Unless the editorial is intellectually compelling and visually arresting, chances are good that it will be ignored, misunderstood or quickly forgotten.

An editorial might feature news tape, for example, which shows the sordid housing conditions allowed to exist at the hands of the slumlord alderman, or the scandalous fist fights that break out periodically between freshmen senators at the state capitol. Nationwide, there is room for greater creative enterprise in the treatment of broadcast editorial content. Will you simply choose to tell your audience about abuses in the city's ambulance service, or will you call an ambulance and ride in it to the emergency room to prove your point that service is painfully slow? Equally valid components of the editorial include interviews, natural sound, perhaps even music and excerpts from commercials and entertainment programming.

THE EDITORIAL CHALLENGE

One of the most coveted images a station can have is that of being an asset to the community it serves. Few stations in the nation reach a number one position in the ratings without that recognition. Perhaps in no other way can a station more significantly exercise responsibility to the community than through its editorial leadership. This would mean that many stations might want to editorialize more frequently, to institute more effective ways of producing editorials, and to address controversial issues more frequently.

If a station is to operate as a responsible member of the journalism community, the editorial must be elevated to a more important status despite the historical and current problems faced by stations that editorialize. To provide counsel to its audience about the various alternative decisions that society can make is one of the principal obligations of a free and responsible press.

17-A

1. Write an informational editorial using the following facts about your community's judge banning a biology text. State the station's opinion.

Judge John T. Dugan ruled in Superior Court yesterday that it is unconstitutional to use a high school biology text that promotes the biblical theory of creation and says, "There is no way to support the doctrine of evolution," the judge said.

The judge ruled that the text, "Biology in Search of Order," was clearly one-sided and violates constitutional provisions on separation of church and state.

"The prospect of biology teachers and students alike forced to answer and respond to continued demand for correct fundamentalist Christian doctrines has no place in the public schools," the judge said.

His ruling was in a case brought by the Civil Liberties Union of this state.

The judge ordered the textbook commission to remove the book from the list of state-approved textbooks.

Local school Superintendent, Ralph R. Reavis, called the case "a Scopes trial in reverse." The state director of education refused to comment on the ruling.

The book has been adopted and is being used in six other states including Texas, Arkansas, California, Tennessee, Colorado, and New Mexico.

2. Write an editorial about an issue in your local city government. Gather facts, find the range of opinion, and write the editorial.
3. Write an editorial about a national issue. Localize it by using local experts for opinion, but research the facts on all sides of the issue. Present the alternatives and your suggestions for change in your editorial.
4. Write an editorial giving the pros and cons of broadcast deregulation.
5. Write an editorial supporting the idea that television stations should editorialize, but should use the visual technology available to make the editorials more interesting and appealing.

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Appendix A

Glossary

- AP—Associated Press. One of the two major wire services in the U.S. It is a cooperative—owned by its members.
- A-Wire—Major wire of both the wire services. It carries mostly national and international news. It is written for newspapers primarily.
- Actuality—Live or taped interview or news event used in a radio newscast.
- Anchorperson—The major air personality in a TV newscast.
- Assignment Editor—Some larger radio and television stations have an assignment editor who assigns and monitors the coverage of the day's events.
- Audio—Sound.
- B-Wire—Secondary wire of AP and UPI. It is used to carry overflow from A-wire and feature material.
- BJT—Budget of wire stories that will be carried as a regular part of that newscycle (two cycles per day).
- BUN—Bulletin.
- Backtiming—Exact timing of the last two or three items of a newscast so the broadcaster will know where he is at the end of the newscast. The broadcaster may have to speed up or slow down or use some pad copy to finish exactly on time.
- Beat—A regular news assignment covered by a reporter.
- Briefs—Short stories used for filler or in a headline newscast.
- Bulletin—An important wire story often begins in this form. Short paragraph or two about the news story with additional information to be sent as soon as it becomes available.
- Chromakey—Special effects technique for TV where one picture is used with another. The most popular use in TV newscasts is like a headline with a figure or slide appearing behind the newscaster.
- Copy—News story in written form.
- Cut—A section of film or tape used in a news story.
- Dateline—The beginning of a wire service story showing the geographic location where the story originated.
- Double System Sound—Film and audio are recorded separately and merged in the editing process.
- Director—Technical person who runs the studio and control room during the newscast.
- DUE—Digital Video Effect.
- ECU—Extreme Close Up. Abbreviation used for tight shot in film or videotape.
- ENG—Electronic News Gathering. Portable videotape equipment used in news coverage. Often the videotape is beamed back to the station via microwave relay disc on the station's van. The story can be aired live or edited at the station for later broadcast.
- ESS—Electronic Slide Storage.
- Filler—Extra copy to use in case the newscaster runs short of copy in the newscast. Also called "pad" copy.

Flash—Headline of news story that is of utmost importance from the wire services. Usually the flash is less than 5 words. For example, "President Assassinated" might be a flash.

Freelancer—Person who sells film or news stories to a TV or radio station. The person is not employed by the station, but is paid for each item accepted.

Future book—A file of upcoming news events. The events are filed day by day so the assignment editor or news director may make reporter assignments for the event when it is scheduled.

Headline Newscast—A brief 30-60 second newscast giving only a one sentence summary of each news event.

Lead—Usually considered the first sentence of a news story.

Lead-in—Copy used to introduce an audio tape or sound film/VTR.

Line-up Sheet—The paper giving the list of news stories and visuals for a TV newscast or stories and actualities for a radio newscast.

Localize—Process of making an international, national, or regional story more relevant to your audience by stressing or finding a local angle to the story.

News Cycle—Each major wire service has two news cycles per day. Cycles are set to accommodate morning and evening newspapers.

News Director—The person who has administrative responsibility in the radio or TV newsroom.

Out takes—Film or tape not used in the finished, edited news story.

PSA—Public Service Announcement.

Package—Pre-edited news story on videotape, complete with all sound and visual components needed to function as a self contained news report.

Pad—Filler copy.

Parroting—A scripted lead-in to a story that sounds the same or nearly the same as the first sentence of a sound cut.

Producer—The person in charge of the news program production. This person is responsible for everything going together so he/she must work closely with both the news personnel and the technicians.

Promo—Promotional announcement for the station.

Radio Wire—The wire services have a special broadcast wire with copy written in broadcast style.

RTNDA-Radio Television News Director's Association.

Shot—Continuous run of film or videotape from the time the camera is turned on until it stops.

Sil—Silent Film.

Single System Sound—Film that has sound recorded on the film.

SNG—Satellite News Gathering.

SOF—Sound on Film.

SOT—Sound on Tape.

Spots—Commercials.

Standup—Taped or live report by a reporter who is shown in the report.

Stringer—Someone who is employed by the station but is paid by each news item accepted. It is a part-time situation and good way to break into broadcasting as a student.

Sync—Synchronization. Film and sound must be exactly together.

Take—One shot.

Tag line—Statement made by the newscaster after an audio or filmed report. Often they are used to reinforce the audience's identification of the person(s) in the report.

Talent—A person who appears on the TV or radio regularly.

Tease—Statement or film promoting an upcoming newscast, or a story coming later in the newscast.

UPI—United Press International wire service.

Update—Newest developments of a story.

VO—Voice Over. Scripted portion of a news story read over a visual.

VTR—Videotape Recorder.

Visuals—Film, videotape, slides or illustrations used in a newscast (or any of those).

Voicer—Audiotaped news report by a reporter.

Appendix B

Your First Job

WHERE YOU FIT IN

Finding that first job in radio or television may be the most difficult part of your career in broadcast journalism. Advice on finding first jobs is often sought from working journalists, all of whom have faced the same problem at some time in their lives. It's a familiar dilemma: you need experience to land a job, but you can't gain experience unless you first have a job.

The advice most journalists offer is to get experience before you leave college, in whatever broadcast-related field you can find. Work on the school newspaper or at the campus radio station, volunteer to sweep floors at the local radio and television stations, try to set up your own summer work-study internship at a station of your choosing, but get experience.

Often, small commercial stations without union restrictions offer the most rounded experience. At such stations, given enough time, you may be able to sample most of the jobs that are available, from writing and reporting to on-air delivery. With such experience, you can determine which jobs are best suited to your interests and abilities.

Besides acquiring a well-rounded liberal arts education, which is essential for the broadcast journalist, you should immerse yourself in courses that offer hands-on experience in the practical and creative aspects of radio and television production, cinematography, film editing and writing for broadcast. You may encounter the occasional station that doesn't require the college degree as a condition for full-time employment, but it will be the exception. Other stations, particularly those on low budgets in small towns, may hire from the ranks of the so-called mail-order "schools of broadcasting," which may be fine for those pursuing disc-jockey careers, but which, in our view, fail to offer adequate preparation for a career in journalism.

GAINING EXPERIENCE AS A STRINGER

Many people gain valuable experience working as *stringers* for radio and television stations. The stringer is a freelance journalist who covers stories either on speculation or on assignment from the station. If you live within the coverage area of a station, you may be able to sell the station occasional stories and films about news events in your area. If you originate a story on speculation, you will not be paid unless the story is aired. Stories which you are assigned to cover, whether aired or not, generally earn you a minimum fee. A routine 30-second story for radio may command as little as \$5 or less. Stories for television, when accompanied by visuals, may earn you from \$15 or \$25 or more. Obviously, you will not become rich as a stringer, but you will gain valuable experience not to mention the possibility of important contacts if those in the newsroom like your work.

COMPETITION

The more than 900 television stations in the United States offer limited employment opportunities. The same is true at the nation's nearly 7,000 radio stations, but somewhere is a station that can put you to work if you show up at the right time with the right skills. Not uncommonly, large market stations each year receive several hundred applications for the few positions that come open. Such stations enjoy the luxury of choosing from among the best qualified applicants—those with prior experience who don't require extensive training. Even when trainee positions are available, applicants are chosen on the basis of previously demonstrated skill and aptitude (talent), qualities that seldom are identifiable without prior job experience. Few stations can afford to commit staff time and financial resources training the beginner, so your best approach is to get broadcast experience, of whatever kind, whenever possible, BEFORE you apply for your first big job.

Typically, jobs in broadcast journalism are similar from station to station, although job titles and classifications are not always the same. As you begin to apply the jobs, you should zero in on those that most nearly complement your interests and talents.

THE RESUME

When you apply for any job, you must sell yourself to the prospective employer. The resume helps you sell yourself by summarizing your life history into a presentation that takes only a few minutes to read. Most resumes work best when you present them in person and ask for a job. If you cannot apply in person, send out as many resumes and letters of application as possible. The person who mails out 200 resumes may get 25 "thanks-but-no-thanks" replies, one or two indications of interest, one or two interviews and perhaps even one or two job offers. An even more efficient method is to identify stations with job openings, prepare your resume and visit such stations with resume in hand.

Your resume should be brief, concise, neatly typed, free of spelling errors and erasures, well organized, and it should include all relevant work experience, including summer jobs. No matter what the work experience, it shows you can hold down a job. If you have no experience, then promote your education. List any special courses that may qualify you for a given position, your major, and any academic honors you have received. Also mention extra-curricular activities and campus offices you have held. Almost any activity that speaks to your general character, work aptitude and scholastic ability should be listed in the resume.

Visit your library for examples of resume formats. For your reference we have included a sample resume below which follows the generally accepted format for listing, in the following order, your name, address and telephone number, job objective, employment history, education, pertinent special information, and a brief summarization of personal characteristics and hobbies.

Personal Resume

Susan S. Smith
0000 Bonita Ave.
San Diego, CA 00000
(312) 000-0000

JOB OBJECTIVE

Employment as a broadcast news writer and reporter.

EMPLOYMENT

- 1986-88 KSCU-FM, Fort Collins, Colorado
News Director: responsible for overall news operation. Supervised a staff of seven full-time employees. Duties included administration, writing, reporting and on-air broadcasts.
- 1985-1986 WKBW-TV, Buffalo, N.Y.
Copy manager: writing advertising copy for clients not using an advertising agency. Supervised production and taping of spots, including selection of appropriate talent, background music and sound effects.
- 1982 WDOE Radio, Dunkirk, N.Y. (Lake Shore Broadcasting)
Copy editor: courier for early evening news. This position was part-time summer employment following freshman year of college.

EDUCATION

- 1981-1985 Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts
School of Communication
B.S. in Telecommunication
HONORS: Dean's List two (2) semesters
- 1978-1981 Oakfield High School, Oakfield, California
HONORS: Graduated with a California State Regent's Diploma

GENERAL

Traveled extensively in Europe after graduation from college. Broadened my knowledge of various cultures and methods of communication in France, Switzerland, Germany and England.

PERSONAL

Born
Health
Hobbies

23 November 1960
Excellent. Height: 5'6" Weight: 125 lbs.
Reading, photography, skiing, swimming, hiking

REFERENCES

References are available upon request.

Appendix C

CODE OF BROADCAST NEWS ETHICS RADIO TELEVISION NEWS DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

The members of the Radio Television News Directors Association agree that their prime responsibility as newsmen — and that of the broadcasting industry as the collective sponsor of news broadcasting — is to provide to the public they serve a news service as accurate, full and prompt as human integrity and devotion can devise. To that end, they declare their acceptance of the standards of practice here set forth, and their solemn intent to honor them to the limits of their ability.

Article One. The primary purpose of broadcast newsmen — to inform the public of events of importance and appropriate interest in a manner that is accurate and comprehensive — shall override all other purposes.

Article Two. Broadcast news presentations shall be designed not only to offer timely and accurate information, but also to present it in the light of relevant circumstances that give it meaning and perspective. This standard means that news reports, when clarity demands it, will be laid against pertinent factual background; that factors such as race, creed, nationality or prior status will be reported only when they are relevant; that comment or subjective content will be properly identified; and that errors in fact will be promptly acknowledged and corrected.

Article Three. Broadcast newsmen shall seek to select material for newscast solely on their evaluation of its merits as news. This standard means that news will be selected on the criteria of significance, community and regional relevance, appropriate human interest, service to defined audiences. It excludes sensationalism or misleading emphasis in any form; subservience to external or “interested” efforts to influence news selection and presentation, whether from within the broadcasting industry or from without. It requires that such terms as “bulletin” and “flash” be used only when the character of the news justifies them; that bombastic or misleading descriptions of newsroom facilities and personnel be rejected, along with undue use of sound and visual effects; and that promotional or publicity material be sharply scrutinized before use and identified by source or otherwise when broadcast.

Article Four. Broadcast newsmen shall at all times display human respect for the dignity, privacy and the well-being of persons with whom the news deals.

Article Five. Broadcast newsmen shall govern their personal lives and such nonprofessional associations as may impinge on their professional activities in a manner that will protect them from conflict of interest, real or apparent.

Article Six. Broadcast newsmen shall seek actively to present all news the knowledge of which will serve the public interest, no matter what selfish, uninformed or corrupt efforts attempt to color it, withhold it or prevent its presentation. They shall make constant effort to open doors closed to the reporting of public proceedings with tools appropriate to broadcasting (including cameras and recorders), consistent with the public interest. They acknowledge the newsman’s ethic of protection of confidential information and sources, and urge unswerving observation of it except in instances in which it would clearly and unmistakably defy the public interest.

Article Seven. Broadcast newsmen recognize the responsibility borne by broadcasting for informed analysis, comment and editorial opinion on public events and issues. They accept the obligation of broadcasters, for the presentation of such matters by individuals whose competence, experience and judgment qualify them for it.

Article Eight. In court, broadcast newsmen shall conduct themselves with dignity, whether the court is in or out of session. They shall keep broadcast equipment as unobtrusive and silent as possible. Where court facilities are inadequate, pool broadcasts should be arranged.

Article Nine. In reporting matters that are or may be litigated, the newsman shall avoid practices which would tend to interfere with the right of an individual to a fair trial.

Article Ten. Broadcast newsmen shall actively censure and seek to prevent violations of these standards, and shall actively encourage their observance by all newsmen, whether of the Radio Television News Directors Association or not.

Appendix D

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BROADCASTERS RADIO CODE

Program Standards: News

Radio is unique in its capacity to reach the largest number of people first with reports on current events. This competitive advantage bespeaks caution—being first is not as important as being accurate. The Radio Code standards relating to the treatment of news and public events are, because of constitutional considerations, intended to be exhortatory. The standards set forth hereunder encourage high standards of professionalism in broadcast journalism. They are not to be interpreted as turning over to others the broadcaster's responsibility as to judgments necessary in news and public events programming.

1. **News Sources.** Those responsible for news on radio should exercise constant professional care in the selection of sources—on the premise that the integrity of the news and the consequent good reputation of radio as a dominant well-balanced news medium depend largely upon the reliability of such sources.
2. **News Reporting.** News reporting should be factual, fair and without bias. Good taste should prevail in the selection and handling of news. Morbid, sensational, or alarming details not essential to factual reporting should be avoided. News should be broadcast in such a manner as to avoid creation of panic and unnecessary alarm. Broadcasters should be diligent in their supervision of content, format, and presentation of news broadcasts. Equal diligence should be exercised in selection of editors and reporters who direct news gathering and dissemination, since the station's performance in this vital informational field depends largely upon them.
3. **Commentaries and Analyses.** Special obligations devolve upon those who analyze and/or comment upon news developments, and management should be satisfied completely that the task is to be performed in the best interest of the listening public. Programs of news analysis and commentary should be clearly identified as such, distinguishing them from straight news reporting.
4. **Editorializing.** Broadcasts in which stations express their own opinions about issues of general public interest should be clearly identified as editorials.
5. **Coverage of News and Public Events.** In the coverage of news and public events broadcasters should exercise their judgments consonant with the accepted standards of ethical journalism and should provide accurate, informed and adequate coverage.
6. **Placement of Advertising.** Broadcasters should exercise particular discrimination in the acceptance, placement and presentation of advertising in news programs so that such advertising is clearly distinguishable from the news content.

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL
THE BROADCAST NEWS PROCESS

THIRD EDITION

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DAN LATTIMORE
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

MP

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INTRODUCTION

We have prepared this Instructor's Manual to explain our objectives for assignments in *The Broadcast News Process*. We've also sought to identify opportunities for in-class discussions and other projects to involve class members.

The assignments and exercises have undergone "trial by fire" in the classroom, and we know they work. We've kept all information as timeless as possible, and tried to use as wide a range of geographic locations to keep the stories and exercises as interesting as possible. In cases where references to "Central Valley" appear, you might want to encourage students to substitute the name of your own city or community.

Facts in most of the exercises and assignments come from real life. Names, ages and addresses have been changed where necessary to protect principals in the news. We also have included many assignments for students to pursue in their own community.

We hope you find the Instructor's Manual useful, and that it will help to expand the student's awareness of the broadcast news process.

Frederick Shook
Dan Lattimore

Colorado State University
Fort Collins, Colorado 80523

CHAPTER NUMBER ONE

The exercises in this chapter are designed to implement the information contained in Chapter One. This is a key chapter in the book because it introduces the student to broadcast style and philosophy. Writing is fundamental to broadcast journalism and we recommend that you spend as much time as possible on the exercises and assignments in this chapter.

Exercise 1-A, pp. 27, 28.

- #1. Some of your students may approach this assignment as if they are editing newspaper copy. You may discover they want to use transposition marks and other classic newspaper copy editing symbols. The purpose of the exercise, however, is to break them of such habits so that their broadcast copy does not have to be deciphered during on-air presentation.
- #2. You may wish to explain active and passive voice to your students before assigning this exercise.

If the subject of the verb receives the action, the verb is in the *passive voice*:

eg. The burglar was shot three times by police.

If the subject of a verb is the doer of the action, then the verb is in the *active voice*:

eg. Police shot the burglar three times.

While active voice generally is more lively, specific and concise, passive voice is useful to place emphasis on the object of the action. Notice in the passive voice example that emphasis is placed on the burglar (the object of the action), while in the active voice example, emphasis is placed on the police (the doer of the action).

Exercise 1-B, pg. 29.

The four exercises on this page are keyed to the broadcast style guide on pp. 4-5 of the text. Notice in exercises 1 and 2 that ages are treated differently for broadcast than print and that unknown names in the news are delayed until the audience is prepared to hear them.

Exercise 3 is an exercise in simplifying complex information for the *ear*, while exercise 4 emphasizes ways to communicate many facts and figures in a way the audience can easily understand.

Style Exercise

Name _____

Date _____

1-A

- 1. Using a pen or pencil, correct the following copy as it should appear on a radio-TV script.

Five ~~men~~^{men} are reported missing ~~in~~ in an avalanche ~~he~~ near ~~Aspen, Colorado~~^{Aspen, Colorado}.

* * * * *

Johnson said it would be ~~the~~^{the} first time in five years such an election ~~has~~^{has} been called.

* * * * *

Union workers ~~say~~^{say} they'll strike if further ~~job~~^{job} cuts are announced.

* * * * *

At issue are recent tax ~~cuts~~^{cuts} for property owners outside city limits.

* * * * *

Daylight ~~Savings~~^{savings} time has finally arrived — ~~noon~~^{none} too soon for schools.

* * * * *

Local savings and loan firms ~~currently~~^{currently} pay ~~5 1/2~~^{five and one-quarter} per cent interest on passbook accounts.

* * * * *

- 2. Rewrite to eliminate passive voice and wordiness.

EXAMPLE

The office was struck by a falling tree.

A falling tree struck the office.

More than 15 million people are affected by the new tax laws.

The new tax laws affect more than 15 million people.

Thousand of migratory workers are hired by growers each year.

Each year growers hire thousand of migratory workers.

Restrictions on sex and violence in prime time television were thrown out by a federal judge.

A federal judge has thrown out restrictions on sex and violence in prime time television.

Part of the reason for society's attitude toward alcoholism was verified last year by university scientists.

University scientists last year verified part of the reason for society's attitude toward alcoholism.

Unless voters come up with an answer, the school will stay closed.

Schools will remain closed unless voters come up with an answer.

New budgets for the public schools were turned down four times in a row by area voters.

For the fourth straight time, area voters have turned down new budgets for the public schools.

Officials say most damage was caused by flooding along two minor tributaries.

Officials say flooding along two minor tributaries caused most of the damage.

More than 22 million cattle were believed ready for slaughter this month, according to information made public by the National Beef Association today.

The National Beef Association reports more than 22 million cattle are ready for slaughter.

Sidewalks, landscaping, five-foot bike lanes separated by a one and one half raised median, parking and two lanes of traffic are recommended for Peterson Avenue improvements.

Improvements recommended for Peterson Avenue include sidewalks and landscaping, bike lanes, parking and two lanes of traffic.

The flu is thought by officials at the Disease Control Center to be of the Type-A variety, and they believe up to 10 million Americans could be struck this year by the disease.

Officials at the Disease Control Center say the flu appears to be of the Type-A variety. They believe it could strike up to 10 million Americans this year.

Writing Exercises
Chapter 1

Name _____

Date _____

1-B

1. Rewrite the following story to make it conform to broadcast style:

Jonathon Jones, 39, shot and killed his wife Joan, 40, while alone with her in their house today. Police arrested Jones on second degree murder charges.

Police have arrested a local man in connection with the shooting of his wife. The suspect is identified as 39-year-old Jonathon Jones. He is charged with second degree murder in the death of his 40-year-old wife Joan.

2. Rewrite the following sentence in a way that will alert your audience to pay attention for the names. Include men's ages, according to broadcast style, as part of the sentence.

The victims are identified as Joseph Jones, 43, and Samuel Smith, 27, both of Lenexa.

Both victims are from Lenexa. They're identified as 43-year-old Joseph Jones and 27-year-old Samuel Smith.

(OR)

The men, both from Lenexa, are identified as 43-year-old Joseph Jones and 27-year-old Samuel Smith.

3. Rewrite the following story into a presentation suitable for broadcast. Pay attention for the need for attribution.

Water quality in the city will be degraded if local industry is allowed to dump waste water, untreated, into nearby rivers. A group of concerned citizens, at a public hearing on water quality made that assertion last night at a County Land Use Commission hearing.

A citizen's group is out to keep local industry from dumping untreated waste water in nearby rivers. The group says the practice would degrade city water supplies. It made the charge before the County Land Use Commission at a public hearing on water quality.

4. Rewrite the following sentence in broadcast style to make it understandable for a broadcast audience.

Persons seeking information can call 491-6484 Monday through Saturday, eight a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and noon to 10:30 p.m. on Sunday.

For more information, call 491-6484. That number again is 491-6484. (OPTIONAL) Lines are open Monday through Saturday from eight in the morning until 10:30 at night . . . and on Sunday from noon until 10:30 at night.

Exercise #1-C, pp. 31-33

1. UNIQUE
2. GO
3. ALL RIGHT
4. WHO'S
5. FLAUNTED
6. FUNERAL
7. HEAD
8. BECAUSE
9. THAT
10. BEGAN
11. IT'S
12. LEAVE
13. LESS
14. LIKE
15. EFFECT
16. EXCEPT
17. AFTERWARD
18. HEALTHFUL
19. IMPLIES
20. BEFORE
21. DIFFERENT FROM
22. DROWNED
23. BECAUSE OF
24. COUPLE OF
25. DESTROY
26. DIE OF
27. OPINION
28. VERBAL
29. MORE THAN
30. DESTROY ENVIRONMENTAL
31. EITHER FILMS OR MAGAZINES
32. FLIERS
33. FURTHER
34. FIRST
35. AVERSE
36. BLOCK
37. BESIDE
38. COMPRISING
39. CONSENSUS
40. COUNSEL
41. PEDAL
42. PRINCIPLE
43. RETICENCE
44. TOTAL
45. AGREEING
46. ELUDED
47. AMONG
48. MARSHALL
49. MEAN
50. FIRST AMOUNT
51. DATE MEDIUM

Grammar Exercises
Chapter One

Name _____

Date _____

1-D

Directions: Edit the following to conform with Associated Press Radio/TV style. Correct all errors.

- ① These advantages, ~~in addition to the clear presentation and simple style~~, make ^I this a stylebook you will want for your newsroom.
~~This station has~~
2. ~~The finest cameras and most skilled cinematographers are used by this station.~~
3. When the letter you sent to the Business Office was not forwarded, there was naturally some confusion between their accounting division and Y. ^{me}
4. Neither of these possibilities ~~were~~ ^{was} explained in your query to the station manager.
5. We were pleased to learn that the crowd at your tour were so enthusiastic about the new control room.
6. If anyone else ~~was in~~ ^{were on} his beat, ~~they~~ ^{he} would do the same thing.
7. The Videotape editor, ^{who} had sent three orders and two requests for extra cassettes ~~were~~ ^{was} visited by our representative.
8. ~~Beginning~~ ^{After} her report Monday, she found she would not be through ^{with it} until the following week.
9. The reporter of the story, ^{and} not the three accountants who supplied the facts and cost estimates believe the charge is necessary.
10. This ^{successful} crusade was conducted to reduce the number of fatal highway accidents, ~~at the end of the year which was successful.~~
11. Believing ⁱ the man was innocent, ~~the case was dismissed by the judge.~~ ^{judge dismissed the case.}
12. ~~Employing such communication media as newspapers, radio and television,~~ ^{party's} the campaign platform of the party was presented ^{through radio and television.}
13. I don't believe anyone besides the reporter checks the copy as carefully as ~~himself~~ ^{he does.}
14. The newsroom staff ~~were~~ ^{was} planning to attend local Community Chest Luncheon at ~~which~~ ^{where} the results of our newspaper's giving ~~was~~ ^{were} to be announced.
15. Everybody on our radio station ~~want~~ ^{wants} to express ~~their~~ ^{his} appreciation to you for your thoughtfulness.

CHAPTER NUMBER TWO

Exercise #2-A, pp. 49-53

We propose that students approach the stories in Exercise #2-A in a manner similar to the example that follows. Notice the summary lead which attempts to isolate the essence of the story and generate listener interest. Each exercise in this section calls for simple leads and treatment of only the most essential information, as indicated in the following example.

- #1. Controversy is growing over the proposed Scenic Knolls development just north of Central Valley. Now the Regional Council of Governments has entered the fray. It hopes to stop the North Central Valley Sanitation District from serving the development. A state commission has already approved the service . . . but the regional council wants it to reconsider.

Writing Exercises
Chapter 2

Name _____

Date _____

2-B

1. Rewrite the following story for broadcast.

The State Patrol has reported the death of an elderly woman whose death lifted the state's traffic death toll for the year to 189. The victim, 78-year-old Othello Smith, was killed when a vehicle rammed through the wall of her house at 201 South Broadway. Police said the vehicle, driven by Jonathon Jones, 23, went out of control and smashed into a living room coming to rest on the couch where Mrs. Smith was asleep. Jones was treated for apparently minor injuries at the local hospital.

(WRITE YOUR STORY HERE)

Many students will tend to treat this story as a routine news story. They may lead, for instance, with the fact that the death of an elderly woman has lifted the state's traffic death toll to 189. The story is unique enough, in our opinion, that students should be expected to emphasize in the lead that the woman was killed in a traffic accident *while asleep in her bed.*

2. Write a broadcast story from the following telephone conversation with a police detective in a metropolitan area. Not all information need be included.

"The white male came in the Sunset Bank at 2000 Main Street about one p.m. today and stuck a nickel-plated revolver in the face of a teller, Ms. Susie Smith. He shoved a paper bag at her and she put about \$2,500 in it and he hurried out. Ralph Jones, another teller, followed the guy but lost him on the street. The robber was wearing a stocking cap, dark glasses and was about five feet, three inches tall and weighed around 110 pounds. He fits the description of the same guy who robbed the place last September and got about \$5,000. Nobody was hurt but the employees were scared as hell."

(WRITE YOUR STORY HERE)

You may wish to be on the alert for the following problems in this story:

Police lingo: white male; nickel plated revolver, etc.

Cliches: the story is full of standard hold-up story cliches.

The story also has some unique features which students can emphasize in the lead:

***the diminutive size of the bandit (5'3", 110 pounds)**

***The intriguing possibility that this is the second time in about a year that the same robber has held up the same bank.**

Exercise #2-C, pp. 59-65

The writing exercises in #2-C, pp. 59-65 contain many challenges for the beginning broadcast news writer. Each set of facts provides opportunities to practice correct broadcast style while learning to identify the essence of the story. We have included many facts and figures; attribution problems; names, ages, and titles; time references and other style problems that are essential to master.

ASSIGNMENTS, pp. 67-68

#1-4 Assignments #1-4, pg. 67, give additional practice in learning to write in broadcast style. The assignments will help the student identify the essential differences between writing for print and writing for broadcast. Some students will require hours to complete these assignments.

#5 This assignment gives practice in understanding the concept of localizing news.

#6 This assignment provides additional practice in the use of attribution, which is explained in detail in Chapter Two. The assignment also provides practice in how to handle titles and other identification of names in the news, and provides insight into the type of statements that require attribution.

#7 This assignment can be useful in helping students understand the essential difference between writing for the eye versus writing for the ear.

#8-16 These assignments are intended to help students develop an understanding of broadcast style and news judgment, and an awareness of how professional broadcast journalists treat and present the news.

CHAPTER NUMBER THREE

Assignments #3-A, pp. 77-79

#1 This assignment helps students become aware of the differences in news treatment for print, radio and television. We suggest that you ask students to mark the number of hard and soft, or feature, stories they have logged and discuss and consider how much hard news they're normally given in radio and television newscasts, and in the newspaper. This is also a good time to introduce the idea of news consultants and the entertainment values inherent in radio and television — and how these values may influence news judgment at broadcast news stations. Finally, the assignment asks new judgment on the student's part. Perhaps the student unknowingly chose a majority of soft/entertainment/feature news or a preponderance of hard news. Why? Another good question for discussion is whether Americans who get most of their news from radio and television are actually well-informed. Don't they also need to read newspapers and magazines if they wish to be truly well-informed?

Assignments, pg. 81

#2 Give students this assignment after you have discussed the difference between hard news, soft news and features. It will lead the student naturally to reflect on the differences between significant (essential) news and news that is merely interesting. (Significant news can be interesting and entertaining, but entertaining news may not have much real substance.)

#3 This assignment forces the student to compare news treatment on various radio stations, and to become familiar with the normal components of radio newscasts. Findings can be discussed in class.

#4 pp. 81-82 Again, as part of class discussion, you can ask students to rank the stories, in order of (1) most interest and (2) most significance. The class may reach agreement on which story is truly the most significant but there will be legitimate differences of opinion that demonstrate how fickle and complex news judgment can be. This is a good time to challenge the students about which story would lead the television newscast if they had videotape to accompany each story, and which story would be used to lead the television newscast if they had no tape.

#5 One or two students in the class may wish to obtain permission from local police, fire or sheriff's officials to accompany them on their daily rounds, write a news story and report back to the class on their experiences.

#6 This assignment helps the student identify differences between the print and broadcast media, and hence to understand why the differences exist.

#7 This assignment provides students with additional opportunities to become familiar with radio newscast components.

Assignment #3-B, pg. 83

#1 This comparison is a useful in-class assignment to help students become aware of news judgment and how their own knowledge and interest of events may affect which stories they would air in an actual newscast. Through discussion the assignment can help them become aware that audiences need information to make decisions and to become aware of significant events in a community, and that audiences are interested in human interest stories and, in fact, may demand such stories.

Assignment #3-C, pp. 85-87

#1 Assignment #3-C gives students an opportunity to conduct a cursory analysis of broadcast news content. We recommend that the information gathered be graphed for easy comparison in a classroom discussion.

Assignment #3-D, pp. 89-99

We have provided 12 sets of facts from which students can write broadcast news stories. Many of the stories are somewhat routine so that students must reflect on the essential nature of stories before writing them. This exercise is included to provide basic broadcast news writing experience.

Assignment #3-E, pp. 101-109

In this assignment, you can ask students to prepare their first radio newscast from the 10 sets of facts that are presented. You may wish to have them choose the five stories they will use in the newscast, write each story and choose the order of presentation. You may also want then to write a short explanation justifying their choice of story order.

CHAPTER NUMBER FOUR

Assignment #4-A, pg. 119

#1-4 These assignments provide a starting point for generating ideas for feature stories that can be covered within your community. It will help students conceptualize the difference between feature writing and hard news coverage, and can help lead them toward more creative writing.

Assignment #4-B, pg. 121

#1 Students can have fun with this story. It contains natural alliteration — the successive series of P's that explode from the lips when "Chief Pig of Paducah" is articulated aloud. The story contains natural feature material and students should be encouraged to develop it to its full potential.

Assignment #4-C, pp. 123-127

We have provided information here to write six feature stories that deal with a wide range of human interest events. Listed below are possible angles students might wish to pursue in preparing the six stories.

#1 Boy Up Tree, p. 123.

- + The frustrations of baby sitting a five year old boy.
- + Treatment from the fire departments viewpoint, with a twist on the old cat up the tree variation.
- + The chain of events set off by a boy's curiosity.

#2 Stray Pig Story, P. 125.

- + Police converge on suburban neighborhood for old-fashioned roundup — of a pig.
- + The long-running debate about a pig's natural intelligence.
- + The unusual nature of the ticket given the pig's owner, E. R. Rucker.
- + An impromptu greased-pig contest.

#3 Gasoline Fire, p. 125.

- + A gasoline fill-up that cost \$21,000.
- + If anything can go wrong it will (Murphy's Law).

#4 Diamond Mine, p. 126.

- + The only diamond mine open to the public — where finders are keepers.
- + A new tourist draw to Arkansas.
- + A place where diamond hunters have been seeking their fortunes for more than 70 years.

#5 Single Home Buyers, p. 127.

- + The lure of tax breaks and home equity are changing the swinging singles scene.
- + Today's singles would apparently rather invest than swing.

#6 Eviction, p. 127.

The worst cliché of this entire story is "There is no Joy in Joyland," yet many students may use it to begin the story. They might choose to emphasize instead, the conflict between city and county that led to the eviction of 200 persons (41 families) or the notion that an established way of life (an entire community) is being threatened by inadequate sewer lines.

CHAPTER NUMBER FIVE

Assignment #5-A, pp. 141-144

#1-4 For these assignments, students can follow the script format for videotape on page 133 of the text. One of the most important challenges of #1 and #4 (Threshing Bee and the Shooting story) is to key script to previously edited visuals. The script, when read against a stop watch, should key with the scenes that are described in the assignment. Worksheets are provided for this assignment, beginning on page 145.

CHAPTER NUMBER SIX

Assignment #6-A, pg. 163

#1 Resume preparation is a useful exercise whether the student is applying for a part-time summer job, an internship or a full time position in the broadcast news profession. Appendix B in the text contains a sample resume and useful supporting information, or you may wish to have students follow a resume format that you provide. The assignment is useful, we have found, in helping students prepare mentally for finding that important first job.

#2 Students should know how to put together a good radio audition tape. This assignment will be invaluable to them if they are asked to assemble an audition tape from scratch when they first apply for jobs in radio (especially if they must assemble an audition tape at the station as part of their application).

#3 If you have facilities to produce TV audition tapes, this exercise can help students develop confidence in their "on-air" capabilities. You may wish to prepare students for TV auditions with a brief discussion about make-up, eye contact, proper dress and voice delivery. Your college drama or theater department may provide a good source of guest speakers on the subject of make-up.

#4 Most broadcast journalists are willing to share with your students how they found their first job in broadcasting. You may wish to invite a broadcaster to speak in class about the best ways to find a job in broadcasting.

#5 The beat assignment is a useful experience but students can quickly wear out their welcome if they intrude unnecessarily, are discourteous, or improperly prepared. We advise that you coordinate beat assignments with other professors or departments on your campus so that students from various courses don't descend all at once on a particular beat source. As the professor in charge, you may also wish to secure advance permission for students to visit the various beat sources.

#6 Since most radio newsrooms are not large enough to accommodate an entire class, we suggest you send one or two students from the class and let them prepare a report to share with the rest of the class. You may also wish to invite a working broadcast journalist to give a guest lecture in class.

#7 Most television stations willingly conduct tours of newsroom facilities, but you will first need to secure permission. Unless you know someone personally at the station, we suggest that you ask the telephone switchboard operator for the name of the person who can give permission for the tour. At some stations, permission can be given by the television news director; at others, you may have to go through the director of promotions or the program director, etc.

Additional Suggestions

Show "The Process of TV News", a 15 minute color film about behind the scenes news operations at a local metropolitan TV station. The film is available in 5 languages. You may rent it or purchase it by writing or calling the Office of Instructional Services, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, 80523. (303—491-5416).

CHAPTER NUMBER SEVEN

Exercise #7-A, pg. 177

#1-4 This series of assignments provides essential practice in the art of interviewing — an essential component of broadcast journalism. The more in-depth research and more interviewing practice the student has, the more competent his or her interviewing skills will become. You may wish to stress the instructions in #2 — to arrive on time, with a tape recorder that works, and with which the student is familiar. We believe the student also should make a short test recording, on location, in advance of the interview, to be certain that sound levels are properly set and that the equipment is working as it should.

CHAPTER NUMBER EIGHT

Assignment #8-A, pg. 187

#1 Actualities are an important component of broadcast news, and the more practice the student has in assembling actualities, the better. This assignment requires the student to attend an actual news event and prepare an actuality, lead-in and tag that are suitable for broadcast.

#2 This assignment helps the student develop expertise in writing lead-ins for actualities. You may wish to use the rule of thumb "two lines in, twenty seconds for the actuality, and one line out," if your students are preparing leads for radio, or you may wish to assign a less arbitrary format. Although the formula above is merely a guideline, it does force the student to consider brevity as a component of radio newscasts.

#3 This assignment can help students develop awareness of how professional journalists treat lead-ins to actualities. Such awareness should be reflected in the students' subsequent work.

#4-5 We have included this assignment as a way to help the student further develop routine reporting skills, using tools of the trade (tape recorder, paper and pencil). The assignment requires discipline and will be hard to monitor unless you make it part of a laboratory assignment.

Exercise #8-B, 189-191

You may wish to use this interview as an in-class exercise. We provide the transcript of an actual interview which can be used both as a writing exercise (lead-in and tag), and as an interview editing exercise. You may wish to have students write a *lead-in, bridge and tag*, and mark the sections of the interview they would air. Proper script format is shown in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER NUMBER NINE

Assignment #9-A, pg. 211

#1, 2 These are similar to suggestions in Chapter 6.

#3 Live broadcasts around the county have resulted in unpredictable results in the years that ENG has been around. For in-class discussion, we include here some unpredictable, but representative, happenings.

a) A social rights speaker is beamed on the head with a lemon pie as he exhorts the audience to be more socially aware — and tolerant. He pauses briefly, rubs his head, then resumes his talk as melted whipped cream and pie filling slide down his face. His remarks: “let him (the assailant) go. If it doesn’t bother you, it won’t bother me. Last week I got bopped over the head with a water pitcher, and if you don’t think that was something . . .”

b) A television newsman speaks too loudly as he delivers a live, on-camera report from city council chambers. The bailiff approaches him, tells him to quiet down, and ultimately leads the reporter off camera — while the reporter is still on the air.

c) A young reporter asks a motorcycle gang leader, who is attending the funeral of a slain gang member, what he plans to do next. “Kill the m----- f----- that done this,” is the reply.

Exercise #9-B, pg. 213

#1-5 The stories provided here can be used to help initiate a discussion about news judgment, the nature of live ENG coverage, and the limitations of covering stories from the field within regularly scheduled newscasts. (Since ENG crews must have time to reach breaking news events, and set up live transmission equipment, the station in this case may have to opt for covering the predictable news events that are scheduled during newscast airtime.) This, in turn, can lead to a discussion of how special interest groups can use the nature of ENG to help guarantee coverage of special interest news.

CHAPTER NUMBER ELEVEN

Assignment #11-A, pg. 245

Assignments #1-6 can be written in narrative form and discussed in class. The purpose of these assignments is to help the student begin to think about all components of field reporting:

- Visual elements
- Script requirements
- Need for research
- Interviews/actualities (don't forget fairness and balance)
- Wild sound
- Deadlines
- Permission to photograph the event (see #4)
- Legal and ethical considerations (some states prohibit identification of juvenile felons should police identify the suspect in story #5).
- Story placement in the newscast.

CHAPTER NUMBER TWELVE

Rather than hand-correct student work for this assignment, we suggest that you make an overhead transparency of the stories that follow and go over them in class after students have edited the stories.

Wire Copy Editing #12-A, pp. 255-259

OIL IS ONCE AGAIN FLOWING THROUGH THE TRANS-ALASKA PIPELINE. REPAIR CREWS PLUGGED A LEAK CAUSED WHEN A TRUCK RAMMED THE PIPELINE. THE PIPELINE EARLIER HAD BEEN SHUT DOWN FOR TEN DAYS FOLLOWING AN EXPLOSION AT A PUMP STATION . . . AND THE TRUCK ACCIDENT OCCURRED ONLY 24 HOURS AFTER THE SYSTEM HAD BEEN REOPENED.

THE LABOR DEPARTMENT SAYS THOUSANDS OF PERSONS WILL NO LONGER RECEIVE UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS. LABOR SECRETARY RAY MARSHALL SAYS THE CUTOFF WILL AFFECT PERSONS WHO HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED 26 WEEKS OF REGULAR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION. HE ESTIMATES THE MOVE WILL AFFECT 218 THOUSAND PERSONS IN THE 37 STATES.

WHEN HONDO, TEXAS, APPLIED FOR FEDERAL FUNDS TO BUILD A CIVIC CENTER, IT WAS TURNED DOWN BECAUSE ITS JOBLESS RATE IS TOO LOW, SO TOWN OFFICIALS ASKED WELFARE-COLLECTING LOAFERS TO TAKE UP RESIDENCE IN HONDO. THE MAYOR SAYS SO FAR HE'S RECEIVED MORE THAN 600 RESPONSES, INCLUDING ONE FROM A GERMAN MAN WHO SAYS HE'LL CONSIDER HELPING OUT . . . IF HONDO WILL PAY HIS FARE TO THE U.S.!

THE SENATE WILL DECIDE THIS WEEK WHETHER TAX MONEY SHOULD BE USED TO HELP FINANCE SENATE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS. UNDER THE NEW BILL, CANDIDATES COULD ACCEPT PUBLIC CAMPAIGN FUNDS OR RAISE THEIR OWN. IF THEY TOOK PUBLIC MONEY, THEIR SPENDING WOULD BE LIMITED BY A FORMULA BASED ON THE STATE'S POPULATION. REPUBLICANS CALL THE MEASURE A WASTE OF MONEY, AND THEY THREATEN TO FILIBUSTER.

(Note: The wire story is incomplete since it contains no reference to House or presidential reaction. Consequently, you may wish to advise your students that additional research is advisable.)

BRITISH AIRWAYS ANNOUNCED TODAY IT WILL SEEK GOVERNMENT APPROVAL TO CUT ITS ROUND-TRIP FARE BETWEEN NEW YORK AND LONDON BY 17 PERCENT BEGINNING SEPTEMBER FIRST. PAN AM AND TRANS WORLD AIRLINES HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED PLANS TO LOWER THEIR PRICES.

Developing Story #12-B, pg. 261-262

A possible treatment to this story is provided below. Many facts can be emphasized in the lead to this story, and this version is only one example. Caution students before they complete this assignment that only one story is required.

Police are questioning a bartender in the murder of 22-year-old Central Valley coed. The women's body was found early this morning by a construction crew near Lake Arlington. Police say she was sexually assaulted, then shot to death about two o'clock this morning. The victim is identified as Laura Alexander, a senior dietetics major at the university. Police say she was seen leaving a sorority dance about midnight with the suspect, but at news time fo formal charges have been filed.

Note: The bartender is not identified since he is only being questioned in the murder and no formal charges have been filed. No information on the suspect's background should be included since it could lead to unwarranted conclusions that could affect the outcome of a trial if the suspect is charged.

Public Relations Releases #12-C p. 269

The most difficult aspect of this assignment will be for students to identify the essence of the news release and to localize it. The news release should be crisp and succinct and should not merely patronize special interests.

Assignment 12-D, p. 265

This assignment provides an opportunity to discuss trends in the use of personalities versus qualified meterologists to present the weather, and the emphasis on electronic graphics to give weather programs more visual appeal. You may wish to discuss the content of weather programs and whether they deliver what the audience really needs (and wants) to know about tomorrow's weather. It also may be appropriate at this time to invite a weather person to give a guest lecture.

Assignment 12-E, p. 267

We suggest you do have students complete this assignment in class from information provided to them by the instructor.

CHAPTER NUMBER THIRTEEN

Exercise #13-A, pp. 295-299

Stories for this assignment are rewritten below to provide a guide to proper editing and emphasis of story content. Several valid approaches would be possible.

Tonight's City Council agenda includes a request to legalize marijuana. The request will be made by the Citizen's Association to Legalize Marijuana. Local chapter leader Bill Sperry says his group wants council to remove penalties for private possession of one ounce of marijuana or less. Sperry said a survey two years ago showed that about ten thousand CVU students regularly use marijuana. He says a recent nationwide poll shows that 70 percent of all college students regularly smoke marijuana.

The Democratically-controlled House this morning approved the governor's tax program. It now goes to the Republican-controlled Senate where major parts of the bill may be killed. Among provisions apparently not threatened are higher income tax exemptions and tax breaks for the elderly.

The military will soon start testing nearly six-thousand barrels of oil, gas and aviation fuel produced from Colorado and Wyoming oil shale. Refinery officials say large government contracts may result if the tests are successful.

A broken drawbar may have caused the derailment of one car of a Union Pacific train about three miles north of Central Valley this morning. There were no reported injuries of property damage. The train was carrying a load of coal.

The State Health Department has announced plans to reduce an epidemic of measles and mumps in public schools. The state will provide free shots for all children who were not inoculated before school started. Health officials say students who refuse the shots will be suspended.

Hundreds of homes were affected tonight when a major water main broke at the corner of Cedar and Raritan Streets. The area extends, north to south, from Virginia to Third Avenue . . . and east and west from Zuni to Franklin. Officials say it may be morning before full water pressure is restored.

Two main issues at this week's Hospital Board meeting will be the rising cost of malpractice insurance and possible remodeling of the Family Practice Center. The board says it wants to consider alternatives to the hospital's current insurance program . . . one that could involve a tax increase . . . and it wants to discuss remodeling the Family Practice Center, even though the building is on a temporary lease.

A local resident has begun a one-man campaign to modify the city's leash law. The present ordinance requires that dogs either be on a leash or in some kind of enclosure. The petition now being circulated by Alexander Gaebler would expand the ordinance to include verbal or hand control of dogs within a reasonable distance of the owner. While Gaebler says he favors a leash law, he wants it to be flexible enough to accommodate responsible dog owners.

Dancers raised more than 15-thousand dollars at this weekend's Dance for Those Who Can't Marathon at Central Valley University. Chi Omega Sorority sponsored the event, and will contribute all money to the Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon in Las Vegas.

The National Transportation Safety Board has called for an emergency program to replace steel wheels on railroad cars that carry hazardous materials. The request follows several recent train derailments and would involve replacement of 300-thousand wheels made of high carbon steel. Officials say replacement will take from one to one and a half years and will cost private railroads more than 85-million dollars.

The United States and Germany today announced joint efforts to protect the U.S. dollar on international markets. The plan involves buying up dollars from foreign exchange markets when U.S. currency drops in value. Germany also will make available an additional two-point-seven billion dollars in German marks to buy dollars when necessary.

CHAPTER NUMBER FOURTEEN

Assignment 14-A, pp. 313-315

Using the format sheet on page 279 students can use the information in this assignment to format a complete one-half hour newscast. In this assignment students should distribute visuals uniformly throughout the newscast and should lead with the most important news story (local, national or international) available to them at news time. When grading this assignment you may wish to spot check accuracy of math and running times for stories. Although this is a complicated assignment requiring considerable thought and effort, we feel it is an essential activity to help students understand the producer's role and to provide perspective on how the television newscast takes form.

CHAPTER NUMBER FIFTEEN

Exercise #15-A, pp. 345-348

This exercise encourages students to apply the legal guidelines discussed in this chapter. It is a good idea to discuss the answers in class emphasizing the law, rule or guideline that applies.

#1 You're not required to give *equal* time if interview is for legitimate news interest; however, if there weren't too many candidates, it would be good to interview the other candidate about the mayor's budget request.

#2 Give them equal time to respond during the 10 p.m. newscast.

#3 You must notify the city manager about the editorial as well as the time, place and date it aired. You also must furnish him a script, tape or summary of the attack and offer an opportunity for reasonable reply. Notification must be made within 7 days of the broadcast. This is the 1967 "personal attack" rule of the FCC.

#4 *Nothing*. Under section 315 of the Communications Act, the broadcaster has no power of censorship over the material.

#5 Not required to do anything. You may want to interview the attorney to give balanced coverage, however.

#6 Say, "Sorry we can't stage news like that."

#7 Go ahead and use it. You have the defense of truth *if you can prove it*. You would need to be sure other witnesses would be willing to testify.

#8 Yes, he would have a case. In the next news broadcast you should make the correction with the story placed, and about as long, as the original story.

#9 Not really. You have the protection of *qualified privilege* if you can show that you reported fairly and substantially accurately the report or action of an official government body.

#10 No. He entered the public sector and your video of the Queen of England is a legitimate news story. It's his tough luck for going out into public.

#11 Sorry, the editor was right. The FCC and federal criminal code prohibit obscenity.

#12 Yes, you would, and probably should, copyright it. It would protect someone from videotaping it and using it as his own for your lifetime plus 50 years.

#13 Yes, she may have a case under the provisions for false Light Privacy.

CHAPTER NUMBER SIXTEEN

Assignment #16-A, pp. 355-371

This assignment allows students to investigate local TV news shows to find certain strengths and weaknesses. You may wish to have them discuss their findings in class. Have students read the codes in the appendices of the text before doing these assignments.

Assignment #16-B, pg. 373

This is a difficult news story to write. Many of the facts given should be deleted. Leave out the girl's name and most of the details. Also, don't use the suspect's name until he's been charged with the crime.

Information to include:

19-year-old Central Valley University sophomore raped at gunpoint.

The coed was returning to her dorm from the library after it closed.

Police have arrested a suspect for questioning.

+ Leave out the girl's name and most of the details.

+ Don't use the suspect's name until he's been charged with the crime.

Exercise #16-C, pp. 375-378

This series of ethical problems would be good to have the students discuss after they've answered them.

#1 Consider editing out the words "... lying in a pool of blood ..." and "The machete-type knife still in her rib cage ..." See Appendix D, #2, p. 399; Appendix C, Article #4; p. 397.

#2 Edit out the word "black" in the reference 'black woman'; change the words "committed suicide" to "was found dead" since the coroner has not yet established cause of death. Style note: "4332 Chestnut Rd. becomes 4332 Chestnut Road." If you use the coroner's name, Dr. Tom P. Pratt, remember to edit out Dr. Pratt's middle initial "P".

#3 Refuse the free reading machine. Buy it if you need it.

#4 Before you accept the job as weekend weather person at the local TV station, check first with your news director.

#5 Before you work in the Democratic primary, first check station policy.

#6 Before you cover the Democratic candidates, although you favor the Republicans, first determine if a reassignment is possible. Otherwise, strive to be fair in your reporting. A Democratic supporter might do no less biased job of covering Democratic candidates than you.

#7 Before you publish your magazine feature story which you researched on station time, but hope to sell for personal profit, check first with your supervisor at the TV station.

#8 Although it's legal to identify the local bank president who is being held for questioning about embezzlement, it's risky to identify him until he has been charged. The ideal conduct would seem to dictate that you never do anything to damage the innocent.

#9 If you prematurely break the surprise cafeteria inspection story based upon your talk with the public health official, you will have betrayed her confidence and tipped off the cafeterias to "clean up their act." You may also lose Reinhart as a source for future stories. Generally, withhold information that would hurt innocent people, would obstruct justice, or would invade privacy.

#10 Refuse the request; it is essentially free advertising and not a good location for a public affairs interview anyway.

#11 Refuse tickets unless they are given to all journalists in town.

#12 Same as #10 = free advertising + lousy setting for public affairs shows.

#13 Yes. Doing commercials may jeopardize the journalist's integrity. You are either a journalist, or a sales person. You can't be both.

#14 You can use the tape up to the point that you were directed to leave the business. You might consider using the tape if it contributes essential new information, which would be doubtful in this case.

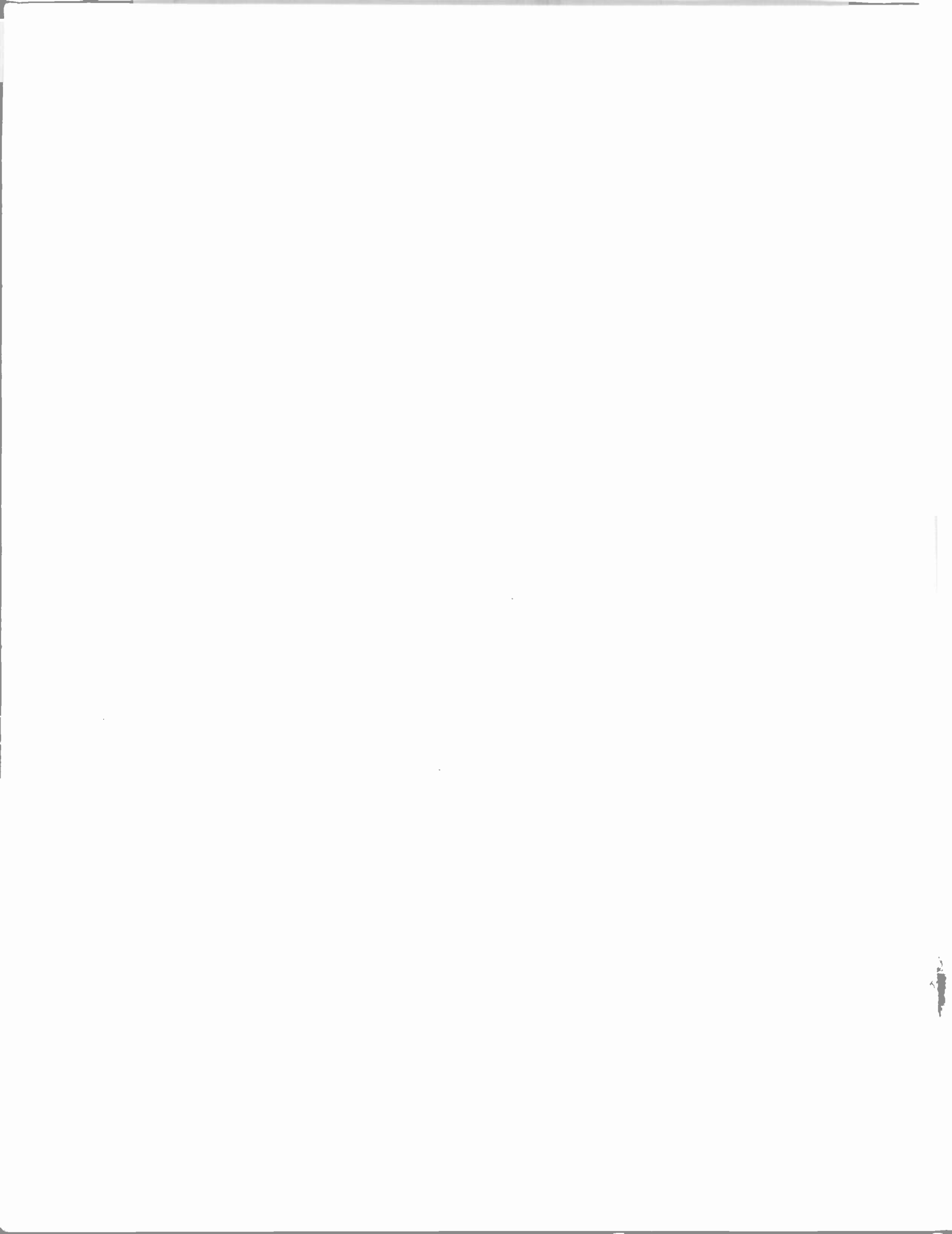
CHAPTER NUMBER SEVENTEEN

Exercise #17-A, pg. 385

Many instructors may slight this chapter either because they won't have time or won't think it is part of the news department's responsibility. According to the latest research, however, either the news director or an editorial writer prepares the editorial although the station manager usually presents them. Perhaps greater understanding of the editorial function will lead to a wider use of the broadcast editorial.

The following questions might be used for discussion after students have read chapter 17.

1. Approximately what percentage of TV stations editorialize at all? daily?
2. What are the major reasons cited for not editorializing?
3. What changes do station personnel recommend to increase broadcast editorializing?
4. What person(s) usually prepare editorials?
5. Who is usually the spokesman?
6. Who determines editorial content?



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