

Journalism

Semester 3

Unit 1: Introduction

What is news?

DEFINITION OF NEWS

News has been defined differently by different experts. Some of the definitions are given below:

1. News is anything out of the ordinary.
2. News is the unusual picture of life.
3. News is anything that people talk about; the more it excites the greater its value.
4. News comprises all current activities which are of general human interest and the best news is that which interests most of the reader.
5. Anything that enough people want to read is news provided it does not violate the canons of good taste and the law of libel.
6. News is like a hot cake coming straight from oven.
7. News is the report of an event that is fresh, unusual and which is interesting to a greater number of people

News is a report of a current event. It is information about something that has just happened or will happen soon. News is a report about recent happenings in a newspaper, television, radio or internet. News is something that is not known earlier. From all these, we can safely **define news as a development that has happened in the past 24 hours which was not known outside and which is of wide interest to the people and that which generates curiosity among listeners.**

Origin and development of the Press in India

The beginning of the Indian Press comprised of weak efforts by a few Anglo-Indians. The first newspaper in India was the „Bengal Gazette“, also known as the Calcutta General Advertiser, which appeared on 29 January 1780. It was edited by James Augustus Hicky. The Calcutta Gazette and the Calcutta Chronicle too were small ventures with their circulation confined to the servants of the East India Company. In 1799, there were seven weeklies in Calcutta, two in Madras and two in Bombay. The first Indian attempts were two weeklies, one in English and another in Bengali, both inspired by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. By 1823, there were three weeklies in Bengali, three in Persian and one in Gujarati published by Indian. From such small beginnings the press in India developed slowly and steadily and came to exercise an important influence on Indian affairs. By 1839, Calcutta had 39 European newspapers, including 6 dailies and 9 Indian newspapers; Bombay had 10 European and 4 Indian Journals, and Ludhiana, Delhi, Agra and

Serampore each had one newspaper.⁵ The progress of Indian Journalism maintained during the forties and fifties, the most important addition being the Hindoo Patriot (1853) of Calcutta, edited by Harishchandra Mukherji, one of the greatest Indian editors of the 19th Century. Ras Goftar, a Gujarati fortnightly, was published in Bombay in 1851 under the editorship of Dadabhai Naoraji. A Gujarati tri-weekly, Akhbar-o-Soudagar by Dadabhai Kavagji was founded in 1852. Among the English papers current in 1851 may be noted, The Friend of India, Hurkaru, Englishman, Bombay Times, Madras United Services Gazette, Citizen, Agra Messenger, Moffussilite, Lahore Chronicle etc., of the Indian newspapers after the mutiny (1857-58). The Hindu of Madras (1878), the Amrut Bazar Patrika, and The Leader from Allahabad deserve to be mentioned. On September 28, 1861, the Bombay Times changed its name to The Times of India. Its editor Rober Knight in 1875 bought the journal The Friend of India founded in 1818 at Serampore. In the same year he founded The Statesman at Calcutta and eventually merged both the papers under the title The Statesman and The Friend of India.

Among other Anglo-Indian papers founded about the same time, mention may be made of the Madras Mail (1868), the Pioneer of Allahabad (1865); and The Civil and Military Gazette of Lahore (1876). The paper known since 1832 as John Bull changed its name to Englishman of Calcutta.

At the beginning of 1861, there were 11 Urdu and 6 Hindi papers, of which 5 were published at Agra, 2 at Ajmere, and 2 at Etawah. On February 20, 1868, was published the Amrut Bazar Patrika as a Bengali weekly from a village in Jessore under the editorship of Sisirkumar Ghose. The most powerful English paper in Bengal next to the Amrut Bazar Patrika was the Bengalee. From January 1, 1879, Surendranath Banerji took over its editorship. By 1876, there were about 62 papers controlled by Indians in Bombay Presidency-Marathi, Gujarati, Hindusthani and Persian; about sixty in the North-west Provinces, Oudh and Central Provinces; some twenty-eight in Bengal; about Nineteen in Madras, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Hindusthani. We may now turn our attention to the growth of Press in the Mysore State.

MAJOR PRESS LAWS IN INDIA :

Hickey started The Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser, the first newspaper in India, which was seized in 1872 because of its outspoken criticism of the Government.

Later more newspapers/journals came up—The Bengal journal, Calcutta Chronicle, Madras Courier, Bombay Herald. The Company's officers were worried that these newspapers might reach London and expose their misdeeds. Thus they saw the need for curbs on the press.

Early Regulations:

Censorship of Press Act, 1799:

Lord Wellesley enacted this, anticipating French invasion of India. It imposed almost wartime press restrictions including pre-censorship. These restrictions were relaxed under Lord Hastings, who had progressive views, and in 1818, pre-censorship was dispensed with.

Licensing Regulations, 1823:

The acting governor-general, John Adams, who had reactionary views, enacted these. According to these regulations, starting or using a press without licence was a penal offence. These restrictions were directed chiefly against Indian language newspapers or those edited by Indians. Rammohan Roy's Mirat-ul-Akbar had to stop publication.

Press Act of 1835 or Metcalfe:

Act Metcalfe governor-general—1835-36) repealed the obnoxious 1823 ordinance and earned the epithet, "liberator of the Indian press". The new Press Act (1835) required a printer/publisher to give a precise account of premises of a publication and cease functioning, if required by a similar declaration.

The result of a liberal press policy was a rapid growth of newspapers.

Licensing Act, 1857:

Due to the emergency caused by the 1857 revolt, this Act imposed licensing restrictions in addition to the already existing registration procedure laid down by Metcalfe Act and the Government reserved the right to stop publication and circulation of any book, newspaper or printed matter.

Registration Act, 1867:

This replaced Metcalfe's Act of 1835 and was of a regulatory, not restrictive, nature. As per the Act, (i) every book/newspaper was required to print the name of the printer and the publisher and the place of the publication; and (ii) a copy was to be submitted to the local government within one month of the publication of a book.

Struggle By Early Nationalists To Secure Press Freedom:

Right from the early nineteenth century, defence of civil liberties, including the freedom of the press, had been high on nationalist agenda. As early as 1824, Raja Rammohan Roy had protested against a resolution restricting the freedom of the press.

The early phase of nationalist movement from around 1870 to 1918 focussed more on political propaganda and education, formation and propagation of nationalist ideology and arousing, training, mobilisation and consolidation of public opinion, than on mass agitation or active mobilisation of masses through open meetings.

For this purpose the press proved a crucial tool in the hands of the nationalists. The Indian National Congress in its early days relied solely on the press to propagate its resolutions and proceedings.

Many newspapers emerged during these years under distinguished and fearless journalists. These included Hindu and Swadesamitran under G. Subramaniya Aiyar, The Bengalee under

Surendranath Banerjea, Voice of India under Dadabhai Naoroji, Amrita Bazar Patrika under Sisir Kumar Ghosh and Motilal Ghosh, Indian Mirror under N.N. Sen, Kesari (in Marathi) and Maharatta (in English) under Balgangadhar Tilak, Sudhakar under Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and Hindustan and Advocate under G.P. Verma.

Other main newspapers included, Tribune and Akbhar-i-am in Punjab, Gujarati, Indu Prakash, Dhyani Prakash and Kal in Bombay and Som Prakash, Banganivasi and Sadharani in Bengal.

These newspapers were not established as profit-making business ventures but were seen as rendering national and public service. In fact, these newspapers had a wide reach and they stimulated a library movement.

Their impact was not limited to cities and towns; these newspapers reached the remote villages, where each news item and editorial would be read and discussed thoroughly in the 'local libraries' which would gather around a single newspaper. In this way, these libraries served the purpose of not only political education but also of political participation. In these newspapers, government acts and policies were put to critical scrutiny. They acted as an institution of opposition to the Government.

The Government on its part had enacted many strident laws, such as Section 124 A of the Indian Penal Code which provided that anyone trying to cause disaffection against the British Government in India was to be transported for life or for any term or imprisoned " upto three years.

But the nationalist-minded journalists had evolved many clever stratagems to subvert these legal hurdles. For instance, writings hostile to the Government used to be prefaced with sentiments of loyalty to the Government or critical writings of socialists or Irish nationalists from newspapers in England used to be quoted. This was a difficult task which required an intelligent mix of simplicity with subtlety.

The national movement, from its very beginning, stood for the freedom of press. The Indian newspapers became highly critical of Lord Lytton's administration especially regarding its inhuman treatment to victims of the famine of 1876-77. The Government struck back with the Vernacular Press Act, 1878.

Vernacular Press Act, 1878:

A bitter legacy of the 1857 revolt was the racial bitterness between the ruler and the ruled. After 1858, the European press always rallied behind the Government in political controversies while the vernacular press was critical of the Government. There was a strong public opinion against the imperialistic policies of Lytton, compounded by terrible famine (1876-77), on the one hand, and lavish expenditure on the imperial Delhi Durbar, on the other.

The Vernacular Press Act (VPA) was designed to 'better control' the vernacular press and effectively punish and repress seditious writing.

The provisions of the Act included the following:

1. The district magistrate was empowered to call upon the printer and publisher of any vernacular newspaper to enter into a bond with the Government undertaking not to cause disaffection against the Government or antipathy between persons of different religions, caste, race through published material; the printer and publisher could also be required to deposit security which could be forfeited if the regulation were contravened, and press equipment could be seized if the offence re-occurred.
2. The magistrate's action was final and no appeal could be made in a court of law.
3. A vernacular newspaper could get exemption from the operation of the Act by submitting proofs to a government censor.

The Act came to be nicknamed "the gagging Act". The worst features of this Act were—(i) discriminator between English and vernacular press, (ii) no right of appeal.

Under VPA, proceedings were instituted against Som Prakash, Bharat Mihir, Dacca Prakash and Samachar.

(Incidentally, the Amrita Bazar Patrika turned overnight into an English newspaper to escape the VPA.)

Later, the pre-censorship clause was repealed, and a press commissioner was appointed to supply authentic and accurate news to the press.

There was strong opposition to the Act and finally Ripon repealed it in 1882.

In 1883, Surendranath Banerjea became the first Indian journalist to be imprisoned. In an angry editorial in The Bengalee Banerjea had criticised a judge of Calcutta High Court for being insensitive to the religious sentiments of Bengalis in one of his judgements.

Balgangadhar Tilak is most frequently associated with the nationalist fight for the freedom of press. Tilak had been building up anti-imperialist sentiments among the public through Ganapati festivals (started in 1893), Shivaji festivals (started in 1896) and through his newspapers Kesari and Maharatta.

He was among the first to advocate bringing the lower middle classes, the peasants, artisans and workers into the Congress fold. In 1896, he organised an all Maharashtra campaign for boycott of foreign cloth in opposition to imposition of excise duty on cotton. In 1896-97 he initiated a no-tax campaign in Maharashtra, urging farmers to withhold the payment of revenue if their crop had failed. In 1897, plague occurred in Poona. Although Tilak supported

government measures to check plague, there was large-scale popular resentment against heartless and harsh methods such as segregation and house searches.

The popular unrest resulted 'in murder of the chairman of the Plague Committee in Poona by the Chapekar brothers. The government policies on tariff, currency and famine were also behind this popular resentment.

The Government had been looking for an opportunity to check this militant trend and hostility in the press. They decided to make Tilak a victim to set an example to the public. Tilak was arrested after the murder of Rand on the basis of the publication of a poem, 'Shivaji's Utterances', in Kesari, and of a speech which Tilak had delivered at the Shivaji festival, justifying Afzal Khan's murder by Shivaji.

Tilak's defence of Shivaji's killing of Afzal Khan was portrayed by the prosecution as an incitement to kill British officials. Tilak was held guilty and awarded rigorous imprisonment of eighteen months. Simultaneously several other editors in Bombay presidency were tried and given similar harsh sentences. There were widespread protests against these measures. Overnight Tilak became a national hero and was given the title of "Lokmanya" (respected and honoured by the people)—a new leader who preached with his deeds.

In 1898, the Government amended Section 124A and added another Section 153A which made it a criminal offence for anyone to bring into contempt the Government of India or to create hatred among different classes, that is, vis-a-vis the English in India. This also led to nation-wide protests. During Swadeshi and Boycott Movements and due to rise of militant nationalist trends, several repressive laws were passed.

The latter half of the 19th century saw a remarkable growth in the Vernacular Press of the country and newspapers played a role of catalyst in the new socio-political consciousness.

Earlier, the newspapers were being published in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Allahabad only but later the newspapers started getting published from smaller places also. Since, most of the newspapers published from smaller places, they all were in vernacular languages. In 1878, when this act was passed, the number of English Newspapers was 20 and Vernacular newspapers were 200. These vernacular newspapers made the people aware of the political affairs and now the people slowly started asking questions for their rights.

So, in the best interest of the Government, Lord Lytton passed the Vernacular Press Act in 1878.

By this act, the magistrates of the districts were empowered, without the prior permission of the Government, to call upon a printer and publisher of any kind to enter into a Bond, undertaking not to publish anything which might "rouse" feelings of disaffection against the government.

The magistrate was also authorized to deposit a security, which could be confiscated if the printer violated the Bond.

If a printer repeated the violation, his press could be seized.

Thus the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 gagged the press and result was some proceedings against some vernacular press people. There was now a popular protest against this act. The act was later repealed by Lord Ripon, who followed Lord Lytton.

Newspaper (Incitement to Offences) Act, 1908:

Aimed against Extremist nationalist activity, the Act empowered the magistrates to confiscate press property which published objectionable material likely to cause incitement to murder/ acts of violence.

Indian Press Act, 1910:

This Act revived the worst features of the VPA—local government was empowered to demand a security at registration from the printer/publisher and forfeit/deregister if it was an offending newspaper, and the printer of a newspaper was required to submit two copies of each issue to local government free of charge.

Tilak as the leader of militant nationalists was tried on charges of sedition and transported to Mandalay (Burma) for six years. This led to countrywide protests. In Bombay, textile workers and railway workshop workers took on the Army in streets and went on strike for days. Lenin hailed this as the entrance of the Indian working class on the political stage.

During And After the First World War:

Defence of India Rules was imposed for repression of political agitation and free public criticism during the First World War. In 1921, on the recommendations of a Press Committee chaired by Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Press Acts of 1908 and 1910 were repealed.

Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act, 1931:

This Act gave sweeping powers to provincial governments to suppress propaganda for Civil Disobedience Movement. It was further amplified in 1932 to include all activities calculated to undermine government authority. .

During The Second World War:

Under the Defence of India Rules, repression was imposed and amendments made in Press Emergency Act and Official Secrets Act. At one time, publication of all news related to Congress activity was declared illegal.

After Independence:

Press Enquiry Committee, 1947:

The Committee was set up to examine press laws in the light of fundamental rights formulated by the Constituent Assembly. It recommended repeal of Indian Emergency Powers Act, 1931, amendments in Press and Registration of Books Act, modifications in Sections 124-A and 156-A of IPC, among others.

Press (Objectionable Matters) Act, 1951:

The Act was passed along with amendment to Article 19 (2) of the Constitution. The Act empowered the government to demand and forfeit security for publication of “objectionable matter”. Aggrieved owners and printers were given right to demand trial by jury. It remained in force till 1956.

Press Commission under Justice Rajadhyaksha:

The commission recommended in 1954 the establishing of All India Press Council, fixing the press-page schedule system for newspapers, banning crossword puzzle competitions, evolving a strict code of advertisements by newspapers, and the desirability of preventing concentration in ownership of Indian newspapers.

Other Acts passed include Delivering of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954; Working Journalists (Conditions of Services) and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1955; Newspaper (Price and Page) Act, 1956; and Parliamentary Proceedings (Protection of Publications) Act, 1960.

A brief history of India’s struggle for freedom from the British colonial rule

When one surveys the history of countries in the world today which have succeeded in freeing themselves from the clutches of colonial powers, the struggle for freedom in India – non-violent and peaceful as it was – surely represents a unique example.

It’s a shining example of people from different castes, creeds, races, communities and faiths coming together in an uprisal against exploitation and discrimination. What is indeed remarkable about the movement is the fact that it is a saga of sacrifices, unending patience and remarkable unity among groups otherwise divided on political, regional and ethnic grounds.

In what follows we shall briefly be looking at the landmark events of this remarkable chapter in the history of the world.

The story begins to unravel itself with what is known as the “Sepoy Mutiny” in 1857 which lasted over two years. It started with the rebellion by the soldiers of the East India Company's Army in India, in protest against the belief that the cartridges of the bullets, used by them for their rifles, contained beef causing revulsion to the soldiers most of whom were Hindus.

The Indian National Congress (INC) was founded in 1885. Its founders included Allan Octavian Hume, a member of the Theosophical Society, Dadabhai Naoroji and Dinshaw Wacha. In the

late nineteenth and early to mid-twentieth centuries, INC played a significant role in the Indian independence movement, with millions of members and coming together in fight against in the British colonial rule.

The next important event was the Partition of Bengal announced in July 1905, by the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon. It was given effect to on 16 October 1905. The predominantly Muslim areas in east India, and the largely Hindu western areas, were separated. The Hindus were angered by what was known as the "divide and rule" policy.

Thereupon on the Hindus and Muslims formed separate organizations and Bengal was reunited in 1911.

The next important milestone in the history of the struggle for freedom was the establishment of the All-India Muslim League during the early years of the 20th century. It argued for a separate Muslim-majority nation. Finally, in 1947, British India was partitioned.

INC was divided into two groups mainly by extremists and moderates. The "three Ps" minor became the slogan for the moderates. In a meeting held at Nagpur, while the extremists wanted Lala Lajpat Rai or Balgangadhar Tilak as the President, the moderates wanted Dr. Ghosh to be President. Gokhale changed the meeting place from Nagpur to Surat fearing that otherwise Tilak would get elected.

The Lucknow Pact was an agreement between INC and the Muslim League (ML). Muhammad Ali Jinnah, then a member of INC, as well as leader of ML. The pact resulted in pressure being brought upon the British government for adopting a liberal approach, giving Indians more authority and for safeguarding the Muslim demands. The Nightingale of India, Sarojini Naidu, gave him the title of "the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity".

The Lucknow Pact also was another agreement which brought about cordial relations between the two prominent groups of the Indian National Congress – the "hot faction" or "garam dal" led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and the moderates or the "soft faction", or the "naram dal" led by Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

"Father of the Nation" Mahatma Gandhi, was easily the most important of the leading of the movement. He led from front the pacifist role of the movement and won the admiration and respect of the western world, especially countries which were under the clutches of the imperialism. Gandhi had earlier spearheaded movements demanding civil rights in many countries, especially the USA and South Africa. He and Leo Tolstoy wrote to each other regularly – a correspondence which led to the non-violence movement for Indian independence.

In Champaran village, farmers were forced to grow cash crops and pay heavy taxes, even in the face of a severe famine. Under Gandhi's leadership the farmers made a non-violent protest for

their rights, which were consequently restored. He also played a key role in securing Muslim support for INC – by upholding the right of Islamic Caliphs in Turkey.

Following the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, and other similar events, Gandhi led a series of protests. His determination grew resulting in the mobilisation of a large following. He then called for a nation-wide non-cooperation movement and for the boycott of all British goods and services.

Following the world-wide “Great Depression,” in 1930, the British government hiked up taxes in India. The British people were able to withstand the impact as Indians paid unfair taxes on items like salt. There followed what is known as the “Salt March” or “the Dandi Satyagraha”. The march extended from Sabarmati to Dandi. Gandhi cooked salt and was arrested, igniting the passions of Indians and leading to a nation-wide agitation.

This attracted the attention of the whole world, with the atrocities perpetrated by the British government being witnessed by the whole world. Nearly sixty thousand people were imprisoned and, as result, the government withdrew the levy.

Three rounds of what were called “Round Table Conferences” then ensued in which the demand for self-rule was placed.

In the Second World War which broke out in 1939, the British government unilaterally included the Indian Army, enraging the nationalists. Gandhi and the whole of India opposed the move, pointing out that it was hypocritical and wrong for the Indian Army to join a fight in favour of a democratic struggle when such freedom was unavailable citizens of India.

What is popularly known as the “Quit India” movement followed, marked by massive boycotts and civil disobedience. Citizens for arrested in the protests which seriously disrupted British trade, especially around the Indian Ocean.

These developments culminated in the call for independence and, finally, led to the grant of independence in 1947.

Press and Emergency:

Marshal law may be defined as the brutal assault by the State on its citizenry, where the power to govern is held by a military junta or a coterie of military and business interests. All democratic institutions are either crushed or deformed in the interest of the regime to quell oppositional voices. Such martial law regimes, in contemporary geopolitical context, have the support of (active or benign) one or the other Super Power. The US and USSR both supported Mrs. Gandhi. The "Emergency" in India, although fitting the above definition in general had its own twists and turns.

June 26,1975 marked the beginning of the National Emergency in India, which lasted about 19 months. Signaling the end of democracy, it was the culmination of events of the nearly decade-

long rule of Mrs. Gandhi. It suffices to note the key features of the Emergency to mark the similarities and differences between Martial law regimes and the Emergency regime. Mrs. Gandhi, fearing that the social upheavals (noted later) might engulf the nation and set India on a new historical course, requested President of India to sign an order declaring that a state of emergency existed in country and suspended the rights of citizens under Articles 14,21, and 22 of the situation.' A reign of terror was unleashed which included mass arrests of the opposition, prominent leaders and rank and file members, trade union leaders and ordinary members, social reformers, and volunteer activists. The five apparatus spread wide to encompass the left and the right political opposition Mrs. Gandhi's rule. Even senior army commanders and alternative inner party leaders were placed under house arrest. The Armed forces were not utilized by the Emergency Minister. Instead, the large para military forces were deployed.* Prior censorship and censorship were imposed immediately on all the news media with the simultaneous shut down of all the newspaper presses in New Delhi by cutting off their electricity.

Some journalists such as Kushwant Singh, editor of The Illustrated Weekly of India, and R.K.Karanjia, editor of Blitz, supported the insecure government assuming extra-ordinary powers to save itself. However, most of the leading journalists in the country did not support the regime. Consequently, censorship prevailed until about the middle of 1977. Some journalists went underground to avoid arrest and detention. Others defied The Emergency by quoting national heroes. The official paranoia reached such ridiculous heights during the Emergency that even quotations from Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru (first Prime Minister and Mrs. Gandhi's father), and Rabindranath Tagore, a nobel laureate were banned from publications. Calling them "motivated quotations", the authorities decided to censor Tagore's poetry from All India Radio, passages from Nehru's Autobiography, or passages from the Mahatma's editorial pieces once published in Harijan or Young India (Mitra, 1979: 139- 140). Banning Tagore and the Mahatma from the mass media with the claim of protecting the heritage of India and the nation's unity simply exposed the bankruptcy of the Emergency rule.

Accreditations were withdrawn from a total of 51 "offending foreign and national journalists" (The Dass Committee Report, 1977, Appendix 14: 61-62). Foreign journalists were punished by another means--expelling them from the country or denying entry visas. Seven foreign journalists were expelled and 29 foreign correspondents were denied entry visas by the Government of India.

The global news agencies operating in India had already been reorganized as national co-operatives with ownership in the hands of Indian newspaper publishers. Reuters had become Press Trust of India and the United News of India had links with the Associated Press. Additionally, Hindustan Samachar and Samachar Bharati provided service in Hindi and other Indian languages (Government of India, Report of the Committee on News Agencies, 1977: 21-25). All those news agencies were restructured by the Emergency Regime into a public sector corporation called, Samachar, which formally began its operations on February 1, 1976. Its board and chair were handpicked by Minister Shukla and they were given wide powers to

ensure the agency functioned to protect the interests of the Gandhi regime. The agency was instructed to screen its employees with the help of the police and eliminate "anti-social and anti-national elements." This was clearly an attempt to "clean out" the national/regional language news agencies of persons considered unfriendly to Mrs. Gandhi's dictatorship.

All news material going out of Samachar to Indian and other publishers as well as material that was being received by Samachar from outside of India was subjected to censorship.

A total of 18 newspapers/periodicals were banned. This strategy of punishing those publications "unfriendly" to the Regime and rewarding the others was systematically carried out by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

By 1977, when Parliamentary elections were announced by Mrs. Gandhi, the news agency, the radio and television networks -- all controlled by the Central government -- were, according to Ashok Mitra, "openly, unabashedly, defiantly used in support of one particular party"

Violence in society by Kerby Anderson

It's a scary world today!

Growing up used to be less traumatic just a few decades ago. Children back then worried about such things as a flat tire on their Schwinn's and hoped that their teacher wouldn't give too much homework.

How life has changed. A 1994 poll found more than half the children questioned said they were afraid of violent crime against them or a family member. Are these kids just paranoid, or is there a real problem?

Well, it turns out this is not some irrational fear based upon a false perception of danger. Life has indeed become more violent and more dangerous for children. Consider the following statistics: One in six youths between the ages of 10 and 17 has seen or knows someone who has been shot. The estimated number of child abuse victims increased 40 percent between 1985 and 1991. Children under 18 were 244 percent more likely to be killed by guns in 1993 than they were in 1986. Violent crime has increased by more than 560 percent since 1960.

The innocence of childhood has been replaced by the very real threat of violence. Kids in school try to avoid fights in the hall, walk home in fear, and sometimes sleep in bathtubs in order to protect themselves from stray bullets fired during drive-by shootings.

Even families living in so-called "safe" neighborhoods are concerned. They may feel safe today, but there is always a reminder that violence can intrude at any moment. Polly Klaas and her family no doubt felt safe in Petaluma, California. But on October 1, 1993, she was abducted from her suburban home during a sleepover with two friends. If she can be abducted and murdered, so can nearly any other child.

A child's exposure to violence is pervasive. Children see violence in their schools, their neighborhoods, and their homes. The daily news is rife with reports of child molestations and abductions. War in foreign lands along with daily reports of murder, rape, and robberies also heighten a child's perception of potential violence.

Television in the home is the greatest source of visual violence for children. The average child watches 8,000 televised murders and 100,000 acts of violence before finishing elementary school. That number more than doubles by the time he or she reaches age 18.

And the latest scourge is MTV. Teenagers listen to more than 10,000 hours of rock music, and this impact is intensified as they spend countless hours in front of MTV watching violent and sensual images that go far beyond the images shown on commercial television.

It's a scary world, and children are exposed to more violence than any generation in recent memory. An article in *Newsweek* magazine concluded: "It gets dark early in the Midwest this time of year. Long before many parents are home from work, the shadows creep up the walls and gather in the corners, while on the carpet a little figure sprawls in the glow emanating from an anchorman's tan. There's been a murder in the Loop, a fire in a nightclub, an indictment of another priest. Red and white lights swirl in urgent pinwheels as the ambulances howl down the dark streets. And one more crime that never gets reported, because there's no one to arrest. Who killed childhood? We all did."

"As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."

Violence has always been a part of the human condition because of our sin nature (Rom. 3:23). But modern families are exposed to even more violence than previous generations because of the media. Any night of the week, the average viewer can see levels of violence approaching and even exceeding the Roman Gladiator games.

Does this have an effect? Certainly it does. The Bible teaches that "as a man thinks in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). What we view and what we think about affects our actions.

Defenders of television programs say that isn't true. They contend that televised imagery doesn't make people violent nor does it make people callous to suffering. But if televised imagery doesn't affect human behavior, then the TV networks should refund billions of advertising dollars to TV sponsors.

In essence, TV executives are talking out of both sides of their mouths. On the one hand, they try to convince advertisers that a 30-second commercial can influence consumer behavior. On the other hand, they deny that a one-hour program wrapped around the commercials can influence social behavior.

So, how violent is the media? And what impact does media have on members of our family? First, we will look at violence in the movies, and then we'll take up the issue of violence on television.

Ezra Pound once said that artists are "the antennae of the race." If that is so, then we are a very sick society judging by the latest fare of violence in the movies. The body count is staggering: 32 people are killed in "RoboCop," while 81 are killed in the sequel; 264 are killed in "Die Hard 2," and the film "Silence of the Lambs" deals with a psychopath who murders women and skins them.

Who would have imagined just a few years ago that the top grossing films would be replete with blood, gore, and violence? No wonder some film critics now say that the most violent place on earth is the Hollywood set.

Violence has always been a part of movie-making, but until recently, really violent movies were only seen by the fringe of mass culture. Violence now has gone mainstream. Bloody films are being watched by more than just punk rockers. Family station wagons and vans pull up to movie theaters showing R-rated slasher films. And middle America watches these same programs a few months later on cable TV or on video. Many of the movies seen at home wouldn't have been shown in theaters 10-20 years ago.

Movie violence these days is louder, bloodier, and more anatomically precise than ever before. When a bad guy was shot in a black-and-white Western, the most we saw was a puff of smoke and a few drops of fake blood. Now the sights, sounds, and special effects often jar us more than the real thing. Slow motion, pyrotechnics, and a penchant for leaving nothing to the imagination all conspire to make movies and TV shows more gruesome than ever.

Children especially confront an increasingly violent world with few limits. As concerned parents and citizens we must do what we can to reduce the level of violence in our society through the wise use of discernment and public policy. We need to set limits both in our homes and in the community.

Does Media Violence Really Influence Human Behavior?

Children's greatest exposure to violence comes from television. TV shows, movies edited for television, and video games expose young children to a level of violence unimaginable just a few years ago. The average child watches 8,000 televised murders and 100,000 acts of violence before finishing elementary school. That number more than doubles by the time he or she reaches age 18.

The violent content of TV includes more than just the 22 minute programs sent down by the networks. At a very young age, children are seeing a level of violence and mayhem that in the past may have only been witnessed by a few police officers and military personnel. TV brings hitting, kicking, stabbings, shootings, and dismemberment right into homes on a daily basis.

The impact on behavior is predictable. Two prominent Surgeon General reports in the last two decades link violence on television and aggressive behavior in children and teenagers. In addition, the National Institute of Mental Health issued a 94-page report entitled, "Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties." They found "overwhelming" scientific evidence that "excessive" violence on television spills over into the playground and the streets. In one five-year study of 732 children, "several kinds of aggression--conflicts with parents, fighting and delinquency--were all positively correlated with the total amount of television viewing."

Long-term studies are even more disturbing. University of Illinois psychologist Leonard Eron studied children at age eight and then again at eighteen. He found that television habits established at the age of eight influenced aggressive behavior through childhood and adolescent years. The more violent the programs preferred by boys in the third grade, the more aggressive their behavior, both at that time and ten years later. He therefore concluded that "the effect of television violence on aggression is cumulative."

Twenty years later Eron and Rowell Huesmann found the pattern continued. He and his researchers found that children who watched significant amounts of TV violence at the age of 8 were consistently more likely to commit violent crimes or engage in child or spouse abuse at 30.

They concluded "that heavy exposure to televised violence is one of the causes of aggressive behavior, crime and violence in society. Television violence affects youngsters of all ages, of both genders, at all socioeconomic levels and all levels of intelligence."

Since their report in the 1980s, MTV has come on the scene with even more troubling images. Adolescents already listen to an estimated 10,500 hours of rock music between the 7th and 12th grades. Now they also spend countless hours in front of MTV seeing the visual images of rock songs that depict violence, rebellion, sadomasochism, the occult, drug abuse, and promiscuity. MTV reaches 57 million cable households, and its video images are even more lurid than the ones shown on regular TV. Music videos filled with sex, rape, murder, and other images of mayhem assault the senses. And MTV cartoons like Beavis and "the other guy" assault the sensibilities while enticing young people to start fires and commit other acts of violence. Critics count 18 acts of violence in each hour of MTV videos.

Violent images on television and in the movies do contribute to greater violence in society. Sociological studies along with common sense dictate that we do something to reduce the violence in the media before it further damages society.

Television Promotes Not Only Violence But Fear As Well.

Children see thousands of TV murders every year. And the impact on behavior is predictable. Various reports by the Surgeon General in the last two decades link violence on television and aggressive behavior in children and teenagers. In addition, the National Institute of Mental Health issued a 94-page report entitled, "Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific

Progress and Implications for the Eighties." They found "overwhelming" scientific evidence that "excessive" violence on television spills over into the playground and the streets. In one five-year study of 732 children, "several kinds of aggression (such as conflicts with parents, fighting and delinquency) were all positively correlated with the total amount of television viewing."

Confronted with such statistics, many parents respond that their children aren't allowed to watch violent programs. Such action is commendable, but some of the greatest dangers of television are more subtle and insidious. It now appears that simply watching television for long periods can manipulate your view of the world-- whether the content is particularly violent or not.

George Gerbner and Larry Gross working at the Annenberg School of Communications in the 1970s found that heavy TV viewers live in a scary world. "We have found that people who watch a lot of TV see the real world as more dangerous and frightening than those who watch very little. Heavy viewers are less trustful of their fellow citizens, and more fearful of the real world."

So heavy viewers were less trustful and more fearful than the average citizen. But what constitutes a heavy viewer. Gerber and Gross defined heavy viewers as those adults who watch an average of four or more hours of television a day. Approximately one-third of all American adults fit that category.

They found that violence on prime-time TV exaggerated heavy viewers' fears about the threat of danger in the real world. Heavy viewers, for example, were less likely to trust someone than light viewers. Heavy viewers also tended to overestimate their likelihood of being involved in a violent crime.

And if this is true of adults, imagine how much TV violence affects children's perception of the world. Gerbner and Gross say, "Imagine spending six hours a day at the local movie house when you were 12 years old. No parent would have permitted it. Yet, in our sample of children, nearly half the 12-year-olds watch an average of six or more hours of television per day." This would mean that a large portion of young people fit into the category of heavy viewers. Their view of the world must be profoundly shaped by TV. Gerbner and Gross therefore conclude: "If adults can be so accepting of the reality of television, imagine its effect on children. By the time the average American child reaches public school, he has already spent several years in an electronic nursery school."

Television violence affects both adults and children in subtle ways. While we may not personally feel or observe the effects of TV violence, we should not ignore the growing body of data that suggests that televised imagery does affect our perception and behavior.

Obviously something must be done. Parents, programmers, and general citizens must take responsible actions to prevent the increasing violence in our society. Violent homes, violence on television, violence in the movies, violence in the schools all contribute to the increasingly

violent society we live in. We have a responsibility to make a difference and apply the appropriate principles in order to help stem the tide of violence in our society.

Some Suggestions for Dealing with Violence in the Media

Here are a number of specific suggestions for dealing with violence.

1. Learn about the impact of violence in our society. Share this material with your pastor, elders, deacons, and church members. Help them understand how important this issue is to them and their community.
2. Create a safe environment. Families live in the midst of violence. We must make our homes safe for our families. A child should feel that his or her world is safe. Providing care and protection are obvious first steps. But parents must also establish limits, provide emotional security, and teach values and virtue in the home.
3. Parents should limit the amount of media exposure in their homes. The average young person sees entirely too much violence on TV and at the movies. Set limits to what a child watches, and evaluate both the quantity and quality of their media input (Rom. 12:2). Focus on what is pure, beautiful, true, right, honorable, excellent, and praiseworthy (Phil. 4:8).
4. Watch TV with children. Obviously we should limit the amount of TV our children watch. But when they watch television, we should try to watch it with them. We can encourage discussion with children during the programs. The plots and actions of the programs provides a natural context for discussion and teach important principles about relationships and violence. The discussion could focus on how cartoon characters or TV actors could solve their problems without resorting to violence. TV often ignores the consequences of violence. What are the consequences in real life?
5. Develop children's faith and trust in God. Children at an early age instinctively trust their parents. As the children grow, parents should work to develop their child's trust in God. God is sovereign and omnipotent. Children should learn to trust Him in their lives and depend upon Him to watch over them and keep them safe.
6. Discuss the reasons for pain and suffering in the world. We live in the fallen world (Gen. 3), and even those who follow God will encounter pain, suffering, and violence. Bad things do happen to good people.
7. Teach vigilance without hysteria. By talking about the dangers in society, some parents have instilled fear--even terror-- in their children. We need to balance our discussions with them and not make them hysterical. Kids have been known to become hysterical if a car comes down their street or if someone looks at them.

8. Work to establish broadcaster guidelines. No TV or movie producer wants to unilaterally disarm all the actors on their screens out of fear that viewers will watch other programs and movies. Yet many of these same TV and movie producers would like to tone down the violence, but they don't want to be the first to do so. National standards would be able to achieve what individuals would not do by themselves in a competitive market.

Violence is the scourge of our society, but we can make a difference. We must educate ourselves about its influence and impact on our lives. Please feel free to write or call Probe Ministries for more information on this topic. And then take time to apply the principles developed here to make a difference in your home and community. You can help stem the tide of violence in our society.

Unit 2: Agencies, Electronic Journalism, Ethics:

News agencies, Press syndicate, Electronic journalism, Ethics in journalism

Indian News Agencies



Press Trust of India (PTI)

PTI is India's premier news agency, headquartered in New Delhi and is a nonprofit cooperative of more than 500 Indian newspapers. It employs more than 400 journalists and 500 stringers to cover almost every district and small town in India. Collectively, they put out more than 2,000 stories and 200 photographs a day. Its Hindi service is called Bhasha.

PTI correspondents are based in all important news centers around the world. It also has tie-up with several foreign news agencies. Currently, PTI commands 90% of new agency market share in India.

PTI was registered in 1947 and started functioning in 1949. PTI is run by a Board of Directors with the Chairmanship going by rotation at the Annual General Meeting. The day-to-day administration and management of PTI is headed by the CEO, who is also the Editor-in-Chief. Its board of directors includes owner/editor of most of the leading publications in India like, Vineet Jain, Aveek Sarkar, Viveck Goenka, N Ravi etc.



United News of India

United News of India (UNI)

UNI started its commercial operations on March 21, 1961. It has News Bureaus in all state capitals and other major cities. The agency also has representatives in key world capitals.

UNI was the first to start a multi-language news service UNIVARTA on May 1, 1982 that provides news services to Hindi newspapers.

UNI remains the first and only news agency in the world to supply news in Urdu since June 5, 1992.

The agency's subscribers include newspapers published in 14 languages, AIR, Doordarshan, the Central and State governments, corporate and commercial houses besides electronic and web based media



Indo-Asian News Service (IANS)

IANS was established in 1986, initially to serve as an information bridge between India and its diaspora in North America. Today it is a full-fledged, 24X7 agency based in Delhi-NCR (Noida), putting out the real-time news from India, South Asia and news of this region around the world.

IANS is divided into six strategic business units: IANS English, IANS Hindi, IANS Publishing, IANS Business Consultancy, IANS Solutions, and IANS Mobile.

Its client list includes a range of print publications, television news channels, websites, ethnic publications abroad, government ministries, foreign missions, private sector players, and multilateral institutions.

Tarun Basuis the Chief Editor and Director of the IANS.



Asian News International (ANI)

ANI is South Asia 's leading multimedia news agency with over 100 bureaus in India , South Asia and across the globe.

ANI has established itself as a 'complete content house' providing text, video and picture content for TV, print, mobile and online media.

ANI also provide a range of facilities for foreign and domestic channels to package their reports in India and uplink via satellite. These include provision of professional crews, editing and post production facilities, access to archives, uplinking facilities, coordinators, producers and correspondents, as per requirement.

ANI services includes loosely edited news feeds and customized programmes for television channels, audio bytes for radio stations, live web casting and streamed multimedia / text content for websites and mobile carriers, and news wire services for newspapers, magazines and websites.



Hindustan Samachar

The Hindusthan Samachar was formed on 1st Dec. 1948, and provide news in 14 Indian languages. It's subscribers includes AIR, Doordarshan, various State Governments, Nepal Radio and a number of regional papers.

Presently the service is being provided in Hindi, Marathi, Gujrati, Nepali, Oriya, Asamiya, Kannad, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Sindhi, Sanskrit, Punjabi and Bangla. The service is fully based on the web internet technology. The subscriber can either download the next or convert it into E-mail format.

In India this agency has offices in all the states. The news circulated in all the Indian languages by Hindusthan Samachar could be checked on the Website www.hindusthansamachar.com

Newspaper syndicate

Newspaper syndicate, also called Press Syndicate, or Feature Syndicate, agency that sells to newspapers and other media special writing and artwork, often written by a noted journalist or eminent authority or drawn by a well-known cartoonist, that cannot be classified as spot coverage of the news. Its fundamental service is to spread the cost of expensive features among as many newspapers (subscribers) as possible. Press syndicates sell the exclusive rights to a feature to one subscriber in each territory, in contrast to the wire news services, which offer their reports to all papers in a given area. Some syndicates specialize in such entertainment features as comic strips, cartoons, columns of oddities or humour, and serialized novels. Typical syndicated features are columns of advice on child rearing, health, running a household, gardening, and such games as bridge.

Syndicates came into being in the United States at the end of the Civil War. Individual features, however, had been syndicated as early as 1768 in the *Journal of Occurrences*, which was circulated by a group of "Boston patriots." The syndicate filled a need among rural or small-town weekly and daily papers for material that would help them compete with big-city papers. Three syndicates were in operation in 1865, supplying miscellaneous feature news items and short stories. In 1870 Tillotson & Son, publishers in Bolton, Eng., began to supply some British papers with serialized fiction. By 1881 Henry Villard, a reporter for the Associated Press (AP), had founded his own syndicate in Washington, D.C., and was soon sending material to the Cincinnati *Commercial*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *New York Herald*. About 1884, Charles A. Dana of the *New York Sun* formed a syndicate to sell short stories by Bret Harte and Henry James. Samuel S. McClure launched a similar venture in the same year. He first offered fiction and secured the rights to several stories by Rudyard Kipling. He also helped to introduce the stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and others into the United States. The features offered at that time were mostly literary material and pictures. An important change came in 1896, however, when the big New York City Sunday newspapers began to produce and publish comic pages. In 1907 the comic strip was introduced in daily papers. This form of art gradually changed the whole character of the business and made it more profitable. The strips were shipped in matrix form to the subscribers for simultaneous publication. Originally, they were truly "comics" in that they were intended to make readers laugh, but later many became continued stories with no humour. When Bud Fisher's "Mutt and Jeff" was first bought and published in England in 1920, many British readers scoffed at the idea. It proved successful, and British editors later originated many strips in competition with the American products. By the late 1950s American comic strips were being translated into several languages and sold all over the world.

Many writers, photographers, and graphic artists syndicate their own materials. Some newspapers with especially strong resources syndicate their own coverage, including news, to papers outside their own communities. Examples include the *New York Times*, with major resources in every news department, and the defunct *Chicago Daily News*, which was

known for its foreign coverage. Papers sometimes syndicate as a team with another newspaper—*e.g.*, the *Los Angeles Times–Washington Post* syndicate.

Electronic journalism –

It is also known as e-journalism or multi-platform journalism - refers to new practices in TV, print, radio, and online news that have blurred media boundaries. If you are Internet-savvy, driven to communicate, socially conscious, and perhaps interested in becoming an expert in a subject area such as science, business, or the arts, electronic journalism might be for you. Schools offering Digital Marketing degrees can also be found in these popular choices.

Electronic Journalism Defined

Electronic journalism is a compendium of new communications opportunities that affects the entire news business. News stories today can be received and discussed instantly by worldwide audiences thanks to digital cameras, laptops, cell-phones, audio feeds, and lightweight video cameras that put on-scene recording into the hands of writers and reporters. All journalists have to be e-journalists, at least to some extent.

Use of the Internet

National newspapers regularly present information through the Internet. Interactive websites include slideshows of work by photojournalists and stories layered with related video content, sometimes narrated by staff writers. Newspaper editors and reporters are becoming familiar faces and distinct personalities. To some extent, this blurs the distinction between newspaper and TV journalists.

Interactive News

Nearly all television news organizations now post content on websites. This poses new challenges for TV journalists who may find themselves posting content on social media websites or blogs. These sites allow users 24/7 access to news, so viewers don't have to set aside time for the news hour. As a result, working hours may shift dramatically during major news events, according to the BLS.

Radio News

Station managers launching multimedia approaches are stretching the boundaries of the medium. With the introduction of multimedia radio, webcams are boldly going into radio studios and newsrooms. Radio, however, is still about the spoken word.

Citizen Journalism

Demonstrating excellence as a citizen journalist - an unpaid person who contributes news tips and content to news organizations - can be a way for aspiring reporters to gain experience. It can also help you find work in issue-oriented or political, non-profit organizations.

Education and Skills

Despite the shift to multi-platform media, some things in the world of journalism haven't changed. As Andrew Boyd states in *Broadcast Journalism: Techniques of Radio and Television News*, professional e-journalism still takes news sense, an understanding of ethics and media law, fact-gathering ability, and storytelling skills.

Subject-matter specialization and experience at smaller news outlets may make you more marketable to larger news organizations. It may also be important for a budding journalist to study the use of digital video editing and take courses in Web publishing. Journalists must also be comfortable with both print and online writing.

Ethics in Journalism:

Ethics in journalism are based on professional conduct, morality and the truth. Not adhering to these fundamental principles leads to misrepresenting or misleading members of the public, and in some cases jeopardizing their lives. Professionally, betraying media ethics could result in a journalism career being destroyed.

While specific elements of journalism ethics vary among media sources and professional societies/organizations, there are some basic professional standards that are universal across the board.

Be Truthful and Give Credit Credit Where Credit is Due

- The *International Federation of Journalists* states that the first duty of a journalist is to have “respect for truth and for the right of the public to truth”.
- Never, ever plagiarize! Give credit to the sources of information you have employed, whether you are paraphrasing or using a direct quote. If you are just beginning your **journalism degree** and are still unclear about what plagiarism exactly entails – do not be embarrassed – consult professors or veteran journalists for guidance.
- Do not fabricate sources (or quotes from actual sources), events, information, statistics, experiences or scenes.
- Do not distort photographs or videos (this could lead to a misrepresentation of the truth). The *Society of Professional Journalists* states, “Image enhancement for technical clarity is always permissible”. Credit photographers/videographers and make sure you are not infringing on any copyright rules (i.e. ask for permission before using photos/videos).
- Strive to uncover the truth to the best of your abilities in order to avoid misrepresentation and oversimplification for subjective means. Seek to cover all angles and thoroughly research multiple, reputable sources. That being said, unofficial sources can also be credible.

Journalists Respect Human Rights

- In some cases, the identity of your sources may need to be anonymous for their own personal and professional safety. Respect this and acknowledge them as a source chosen to be unnamed. The *Society of Professional Journalists* adds that you should question why a person wishes to be anonymous and to establish clear conditions with your source from the beginning.
- When a source asks for sections of an interview to be “off the record,” respect this request.
- Respect the privacy of those dealing with tragedy and avoid providing potentially harmful information (such as the name of a minor, a victim of a sex crime or the address of a lottery winner).
- Do not engage in slanderous or stereotypical/discriminatory communication. For example, be wary of naming suspects before they have been formally charged.
- You’re encouraged to illustrate the diversity of human experiences and views, no matter how unpopular they may be.
- As a photojournalist, be conscious of your behavior. There is a fine line between taking photos to accurately represent a breaking news story/opinion piece and infringing on privacy or even risking the safety of your subjects.

Objectivity

- Distinguish between writing factual-news stories and opinion/advocacy pieces and label them accordingly. The former should be written as objectively as possible.
- You should not purposefully hide or omit information in order to further support your own personal agenda.
- Stay clear of any potential conflicts of interest.
- Avoid showing preferential treatment to corporate, political or public groups. Every entity should be reported on equally. Do not accept gifts/bribes in exchange for covering stories in a certain way.

Accept Responsibility

- If you’ve realized you’ve made mistakes accurately presenting to the truth, accept responsibility and supply the corrections to the public via your media source.
- Invite the public to ask questions/seek clarification on the stories you’ve covered and with the media at large.
- Hold yourself and others accountable to journalism ethics.

Journalism Ethics in New Media

Media ethics are not limited to traditional print publications. Ethics in journalism also extend to all forms of new media, including social media, online magazines and newspapers, blogs, newswire websites and other forms of digital media. Although some online writers seem to get away with writing falsehoods or plagiarizing (through “cutting and pasting”), as a journalist, you never want to sink to that level. The same journalism ethics apply. In fact, in an online environment, you can further credit sources through providing links to their webpages, if applicable, in addition to naming the author and/or publication.

Unit 3: Organization and structure of a newspaper house:

Below is a list of the basic departments that the average newspaper organization has:

1. The Editorial Department – as the name implies, this department is the one responsible for content creation in any newspaper establishment. It is headed by the Editor. The main responsibilities of this department is the gathering of news, selecting of which news and features get to be published in the paper, editing the news and features that have been selected for publication and then laying them out for print. Like was said above, the Editor is the head of the Editorial department of a newspaper and he or she is the one responsible for all the content that appears in a newspaper. The Editor works in conjunction with Assistant Editors, Sub Editors, Copy tasters, feature writers, correspondents and so many others to gather news from various sources and bring them to the doorsteps of readers.
2. Advertising Department – the advertising department is also another very important department of any newspaper establishment. Everyone knows how much revenue advertisement brings newspapers. As a matter of fact, advertisement is said to be the major source of revenue for newspaper establishments. Without advertisements in a newspaper, the establishment cannot survive. The Advertising department of a newspaper is in charge of advertisements that are published in the paper.
3. The Circulation Department – this department as the name suggests is in charge of circulating or distributing the newspapers. They are also a very very crucial department in a newspaper organization. This department is responsible for selling the newspapers, which is also another major source of revenue for the organization. The department also sees to it that the newspapers are delivered to the right places.
4. The Production/Printing Department – this is another department in a newspaper establishment whose name simply tells people the job that they perform. This department is responsible for the printing of the newspapers. The department is in charge of everything that has to do with the production and printing of the papers, which includes, transforming journalists' stories into type and maintaining the printing machines.

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT-

What is the Role of Editorial Department of a Newspaper?

The primary concern of the copy editor in the organizational chart of his newspaper is, of course, the editorial department. Here the description is not so easy, since very marked differences are discernible from one newspaper to another. However, a typical organizational scheme would go something like this:

The editorial department actually has two sides, and usually these are separately responsible to the publisher. They are "news" and "editorial". The news side is usually under the supervision of a managing or executive editor. The editorial page crew consists of editorial writers and is

directed by a "chief editorial writer," and "editor", or "editor-in-chief", or sometimes an "editorial page editor".

(i) The News Desk:

All stories destined for the newspaper, whether they come from the typewriters of reporters and rewrite men or from the several wire services, teleprinters and other sources-require editing. This duty falls chiefly on the copyreader who sits on the horseshoe shape table called the desk. The city editor and other editors read all the copy.

In the old days there was what was called the universal desk system under which the desk editor handled everything that came in. Nowadays, even in small dailies, the work is usually divided between the city desk and the teleprinter's desk. Between them they edit the copy and write headlines for all spot news-everything except sports and financial coverage.

The independent or separate desk system in operation on a large scale allocates the news of different readers, each of whom has his own team of copyreaders. The editors with a crew of men edit the news designated as cable, teleprinter, city beats, society, business, finance, sports and reserve news. In larger newspapers there is a separate desk for international news.

Where the system is the universal desk or separate desk, the process of editing runs along similar lines, in which case the story goes to a 'slot man' who sits at the head but on the inside rim of the horseshoe desk.

This editor, called the news editor, glances through the copy quickly, gauges its relative importance, determines the space it should occupy-200 words or a half or three-quarters of a column- and decides the type on the copy and passes it on to one of his copyreaders who sits on the rim of the horseshoe.

This copyreader, also called the desk man, rim man or 'mechanic' of the editorial room, is the anonymous and frequently unappreciated collaborator of the writer. Newsmen or correspondents who see his blue pencil flay their cherished prose, have no words of praise for him. Neil Mac Neil in his book "Without Fear or Favour" indicates the newsman's true worth. He says that the reputation of many a star reporter rests partly on the work done by rim man in the green eye shade who comes out the reporter's cliches and trims them, to pieces.

Only where the copyread^er happens to be a former reporter, driven to the horseshoe desk by the dint of seniority, does the correspondent feel encouraged.

Copyreaders are generally paid higher than reporters. The work holds out attractions for men with editorial ability. The chances for advancement are good as the copy desk is a recruiting ground for office executives. The work is mainly two-fold: the editing of the story and the construction of a suitable headline for it.

The amount, of this work varies with each paper and even at different timings on each day. On a big desk the copyreader may edit from 10 to 15 columns. His editorial function is to bring

each news that comes to him up to par. As he picks up the copy and reads; he forms general conclusions about the story in hand.

Has it news value? If it hasn't, then it is not worth printing.

Is it accurate and fair? Inaccurate and uncertain items are no; wanted by a good newspaper. If at all he selects anything which is dubious or doubtful, he takes the responsibility for published inaccuracies.

Is it libelous? An item that contains words or implications that may get the paper into legal difficulties has to have the danger spots eliminated.

Is it complete? Is the treatment fragmentary and partial? Will it lead the reader up in the air? If so, its details must be rounded, with or without the help of background materials.

If the item meets these qualifications, the copyreader starts his editing to fit his paper's requirements. These requirements may vary but, as a general rule, we take it that the paper requires.

(i) Clearness:

The reader must have no difficulty in finding out what the story means.

(ii) Condensation:

The copyreader must cut and condense each story to the length assigned to it. Condensation applies to words and not to ideas. Verbal frills may go but the meaning must remain. Condensation is done by substituting short words for long ones-even smaller words for bigger ones; for example, 'try' in place of 'endeavour'.

(iii) Arrangement:

The copyreader's notion of arrangement differs from that of the literary man. It is based on the convention of the Mead' which puts the important parts first and the least important parts last. It also makes for the sequence of ideas.

(iv) Style:

The copyreader's style has nothing to do with literary quality. It refers to particular rules which his paper has laid down for spelling, punctuation, capitalisation, abbreviation, use of numerals and the like.

The copyreader edits his copy along the foregoing principles by means of a set of standardised copy reading symbols, which tell the typesetter what section to omit, when to transpose, when to spell a word out and when to contract. He then proceeds to check the copy paragraphs and if the story has sufficient length, supplies subheads.

The subhead is a line to be printed in a type which differs from the body of the story/article and is used to break up the too solid look of a long column. The best rule is to paragraph for ideas and not for mechanical reasons. Copyreaders try to avoid being mechanical when it comes to the subhead.

The look of the column demands a sub-head every two sticks or a stick and a half at least, or say about every 300 or 350 words.

The copyreader aims to have his subheads make divisions in the subject, each division meant for something new, and not merely for repeating what has been already told.

The copyreader usually faces three problems: (i) to tighten up the story and thereby speed up the action; (ii) to cut out the excess matter and bromides; and (iii) to reduce the story so that a telegraphic editor could splash it in a page-one box if he chose to handle it that way.

The Art of the Headline:

Although the copyreader works anonymously, when he constructs a good headline, he feels the pleasure of a creative artist. With short words and in short compass, he can tell a whole story. He knows that the headline must fulfil two requirements-it must attract attention to the story; it must announce the story's main facts. He sees to it that each headline he concocts does both.

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT-

The circulation department takes care of everything after the newspaper is printed. This includes delivering the publication to homes through their own or third-party carriers, to the post office to be mailed into homes, as well as to newsstands, vending machines, and other places it's distributed.

They're also the department responsible for encouraging people to start or keep reading the print and digital editions.

Since people are constantly moving out of the area or canceling subscriptions for other reasons, the circulation department is always working to bring in new people through telemarketing, direct mail, and advertising campaigns in print and multiple digital platforms.

You'll may see them at major community events promoting your newspaper and often sponsoring the event itself. Although typically advertising sales brings in about 75% of all newspaper revenue and circulation brings in the other 25%, without the circulation department, nobody would be reading the paper and therefore no ads could be sold.

What is the Role of Circulation Department of Newspaper?

Circulation is another major division of the business office and is usually headed by a major executive, the circulation manager, since the newspaper ultimately stands or falls on the basis of the number of steady readers that can be enrolled.

The circulation manager may have any or all of the following subdivisions under his supervision:

(i) City Circulation:

It involves the maintenance of circulation records for the city of publication; the recruitment, supervision and reimbursement of carrier boys; the supervision of district men who oversee circulation by subdivisions of the city, taking responsibility for moving papers to the news-stands, relations with news-stand operators, etc.

(ii) Area Circulation:

Responsibilities here include getting papers destined for the surrounding area into the mail and operation of a fleet of tempos/taxis to carry the papers into surrounding areas where mail service is not rapid enough.

The circulation manager is also in charge of moving the papers into the appropriate distribution channels as they move into the mailing room from the press room.

(iii) Sales Promotion:

It involves the direction of an office staff to keep records, notifying subscribers when their subscriptions need renewing, the handling of complaints, new subscriptions and renewals over the counter, by mail, etc.

Promotion is essentially the "public relations" department of the newspaper. Where a separate promotion department exists, it usually is responsible for initiating promotion policies, subject to the approval of the publisher, and usually coordinates the promotional activities of other departments.

ADVERTISING DEPARTMENT -

An advertising department for a newspaper is responsible for generating revenue for the business by selling advertising space to local or national organizations. To sell advertising space, the department carries out a number of functions, including accepting and processing orders from advertisers, creating advertisements, providing media information to advertisers and advertising agencies, helping businesses develop advertising plans and working with editorial teams to develop features that will attract advertisers.

Business

The newspaper advertising department plays an important role in helping small businesses market their products and services. According to Professional Advertising, 57 percent of adults in the United States read a daily newspaper, and newspapers get the biggest share of advertising revenue in the country. Over 85 percent of newspaper advertising expenditure is accounted for by local advertisers.

Classified

Many advertisements in a newspaper are small, low in cost and generally consist of text only, although some may include the use of photographs. These are known as classified advertisements and they are published in a special section of the newspaper under different headings or classifications. The advertising department takes orders for classified advertisements via telephone, email or the Internet, and processes the orders for publication on an agreed-upon date.

Design

Advertisements that appear within the editorial sections of a newspaper are known as display advertisements. Generally, they include photographs or illustrations as well as text. The advertising department may offer design services to advertisers who do not have their own facilities or do not use an advertising agency; an in-house graphic designer will create and write an advertisement to suit the space the advertiser has purchased.

Media Data

Providing media data to advertisers is an important function of the advertising department. Media data includes the circulation of the newspaper, its frequency of publication, geographical coverage and a profile of its readership based on audience research. The department also produces a rate card that lists the costs of different sizes of advertisements, together with discounts available for multiple bookings. Advertisers and advertising agencies use media data and rate cards to plan their advertising campaigns. They choose a medium, such as a newspaper or magazine, that reaches the largest proportion of their target audience for the lowest cost.

Features

Advertising departments work with editorial teams to develop special features that will attract advertisers. An example is a feature on home improvements where the editorial content would

include a series of articles on decorating, furniture placement and small building projects. The advertising department contacts suppliers of relevant products and services, inviting them to advertise in the feature and emphasizing the benefits of the editorial environment.

Relationships

To encourage customers to become regular advertisers, advertising departments call or visit businesses or advertising agencies to discuss their advertising requirements. Advertising departments also help small businesses plan advertising campaigns. Sales representatives often meet with advertisers to discuss their business objectives and recommend the best way to use the newspaper to advertise their products and services. Advertising departments may also offer special deals or discounts to high-profile advertisers that they wish to attract to the newspaper.

MECHANICAL DEPARTMENT-

What is the Role of Mechanical Department of Newspaper? PRAVEEN KARTHIK

Advertisements:

The entire mechanical operation is usually under the supervision of plant superintendent who is directly responsible to the publisher. In a typical situation, he will have five departments under his control; the composing room, the stereotype department, the press room, the engraving department, and the proof desk.

The basic functions of each are:

(i) Composing Room:

This is the point of chief contact between the editorial side and the mechanical side. It is in this department that "copy" is set into type and the type is assembled into newspaper pages.

The type is "set" by automatic typesetting machines such as the Linotype. "Straight matter" or body type is set according to instructions on news copy sent from the newsroom, headlines are set from similar directions, ads are first set into type and then assembled on the basis of instructions on advertising copy from the advertising department.

All of these materials are then assembled into newspaper pages, following the instructions on page "dummies," which show where each element is to go.

The composing room is often subdivided, especially in the larger plants, to permit the greater efficiency that specialization makes possible. Hence there may be an "ad alley" where ads are made up before they are put into newspaper pages.

(ii) Stereotype Department:

Here newspaper pages are run through a series of steps which prepare them to be clamped as curved plates of metal onto today's high-speed rotary presses.

Some small daily papers still use "flatbed" or "cylinder" presses and others use "Duplex" presses. In both cases the papers are printed directly from type and hence there is no need for a full-scale stereotype department as described here.

The vast majority of dailies use rotary, web-perfecting presses, which means that the newspaper is printed on paper which feeds from huge rolls and the impression is applied from curved plates which rotate at high speed. This requires that the pages be converted from the flat form in which they are originally made up to the curved plate from which they are actually printed.

The stereotype department has two major operations; first, to roll out a reverse impression of the newspaper page onto a papier-mâché "mat"; then to "cast" into a curve by pouring molten metal against the curved surface of the mat. After the cast has cooled and been trimmed, it is ready to be clamped onto the press.

(iii) Press room:

Rotary presses can turn out newspapers at phenomenal speeds. They not only print but cut, fold, and trim the papers and deliver them directly to the mailing room.

(iv) Engraving department:

Many smaller newspapers have insufficient need for "art" to operate an engraving department, having the work done commercially instead. However, most large newspapers find it economical to do their own work.

Photoengraving reduces news pictures and other newspaper art to a form in which they can be printed. In the case of a photograph, the job is to "screen" the picture in such a way that an etched metal plate is produced with a surface of dots. The dots vary in size to produce shadings of black and white that can be impressed on paper.

(v) Proof Desk:

In a sense, proof desk lies by the side of the mechanical, editorial and advertising departments but is usually responsible to the mechanical superintendent. Its object is to correct all typographical errors. A "proof" is taken of all material set in the composing room, including ads and editorial matter, by inking the type and taking an impression of it on a rather simple "proof press".

These proofs are then compared with the "copy" to make sure that the two conform. Proof reading is hence a more or less mechanical operation, unlike copy reading.

Unit 4: Basics of report writing

NEWS VALUES

Journalists are the best judges about what is news and what is not. They take this decision based on certain news values. The following are the salient points to judge the newsworthiness.

1. **Timeliness:** News is something new. So timeliness is a great factor in deciding news. An incident that happened one month back will not make news for today's newspaper. Also timeliness varies from publication to publication. For a newspaper, events that had happened on the previous day is news. But for a weekly, events of the previous one week can make news. For a 24-hour television news channel, every second is a deadline. They can break the news anytime. So their timeliness is different from that of a newspaper.
2. **Impact :** Impact of an event decides its newsworthiness. When the tsunami waves struck several parts of the world, thousands of people were affected. It became major news for the whole world. But if a cyclone kills 20 people in Bangladesh, it may not have any impact on other parts of the world. When dengue fever affects 100 people in Delhi, it makes news not only in Delhi but in other states also because the impact is more wide and people become more alert about the news.
3. **Proximity :** "Bird flu spreading and hundreds of chicken dying in England". Does it make news for you? You may read it but do not worry about it. But bird flu spreading in West Bengal will make you alert. This is because it is in your proximity. A plane crash in Peru will not be big news in India, but if an aircraft crashes in India, it will be headlines everywhere. So proximity decides the news.
4. **Controversy:** - People like controversies. Anything that is connected with conflicts, arguments, charges and counter-charges, fights and tension becomes news. All of you might have heard of Kargil. It was a conflict between India and Pakistan. It became great news all over the world. Many of you may remember the controversy about the Indian and Australian cricket teams. It was news for all the media. When terrorists crashed their plane into the World Trade Centre in New York it was lead news everywhere.
5. **Prominence:** If a prominent person is involved in any event, it becomes news. If an ordinary person's car breaks down and he has to wait for ten minutes on the roadside till the vehicle is repaired it makes no news. But if the Prime Minister's car breaks down and his motorcade has to stop for five minutes it becomes news. A person visiting Rajghat and paying homage to Gandhiji may not be a news item, but when the US President visits Rajghat it becomes news.
6. **Currency:** News is about current events. Suppose the Olympic Games are held in India. It becomes news because everybody is interested in it. Likewise when SAARC leaders meet in Delhi to formulate future action plans, it becomes the current news. Similarly, if extreme cold weather continues for a week and fog disrupts air, rail and road traffic, it becomes news.

7. **Oddity** : Unusual things makes news. Extraordinary and unexpected events generate public interest. You might have seen box items in newspapers about such happenings . A man pulls a car by his hair, a woman gives birth to triplets, a singer enters the Guinness Book by singing non-stop for 48 hours, the painting of a famous artist is auctioned for a very expensive price . All such odd stories evoke much public interest.
8. **Emotion**: Stories of human interest make good news items. For eg. the police rescue a school boy kidnapped by mischief makers after a search of two weeks. The parents meet the boy in an emotionally surcharged atmosphere. The story of this meeting with a photograph makes a good human interest report. Doctors advise a girl in Pakistan to undergo a heart surgery urgently. But her parents cannot afford the expenses. The Rotary Club of Delhi east offers help through their scheme of 'Gift of Life'. The girl comes to India and undergoes surgery successfully. While going back she and her overwhelmed parents narrate their experiences in India. This makes a good human interest story.
9. **Usefulness**: Sometimes news items help the public in various ways. You must have noticed that weather forecasters warn fishermen not to go to the sea for fishing on certain days because of rough weather. Newspapers gives the phone numbers of police stations, hospitals, ambulance services etc. to help people. You might have seen in newspapers, requests from relatives to donors of blood for a patient in a critical condition. Newspapers also raise funds from the public to help victims of disasters and natural calamities, like tsunami and earthquake.
10. **Educational value**: News has also an educational value. In almost all newspapers, you can find columns about educational and job opportunities. These guide you about different educational courses, career options available, opportunities for higher studies etc. These news items help you become more knowledgeable.

News values, sometimes called **news criteria**, determine how much prominence a news story is given by a media outlet, and the attention it is given by the audience. A. Boyd states that: "News journalism has a broadly agreed set of values, often referred to as 'newsworthiness'..."^[1] News values are not universal and can vary widely between different cultures. In Western practice, decisions on the selection and prioritization of news are made by editors on the basis of their experience and intuition, although analysis by J. Galtung and M. Ruge showed that several factors are consistently applied across a range of news organizations.^[2] Some of these factors are listed below, together with others put forward by Schlesinger^[3] and Bell.^[4] According to Ryan, "there is no end to lists of news criteria".^[5] Among the many lists of news values that have been drawn up by scholars and journalists, some, like Galtung and Ruge's, attempt to describe news practices across cultures, while others have become remarkably specific to the press of certain (often Western) nations.

Galtung and Ruge, in their seminal study in the area put forward a system of twelve factors describing events that together are used as a definition of 'newsworthiness'. Focusing on newspapers and broadcast news, Galtung and Ruge devised a list describing what they believed

were significant contributing factors as to how the news is constructed. Their theory argues that the more an event accessed these criteria the more likely it was to be reported on in a newspaper. Furthermore, three basic hypotheses are presented by Galtung and Ruge: the additivity hypothesis that the more factors an event satisfies, the higher the probability that it becomes news; the complementarity hypothesis that the factors will tend to exclude each other; and the exclusion hypothesis that events that satisfy none or very few factors will not become news.

In 2001, this 1965 study was updated by Tony Harcup and Deirdre O'Neill, in a study of the British press. The findings of a content analysis of three major national newspapers in the UK were used to evaluate critically Galtung and Ruge's original criteria and to propose a contemporary set of news values. Forty years on, they found some notable differences, including the rise of celebrity news values and that good news (as well as bad news) was a significant news value, as well as the newspaper's own agenda.

A variety of external and internal pressures influence journalists' decisions on which stories are covered, how issues are interpreted and the emphasis given to them. These pressures can sometimes lead to bias or unethical reporting. Achieving relevance, giving audiences the news they want and find interesting, is an increasingly important goal for media outlets seeking to maintain market share in a rapidly evolving market. This has made news organizations more open to audience input and feedback, and forced them to adopt and apply news values that attract and keep audiences. Given these changes and the rapid rise of digital technology in recent years, Harcup and O'Neill updated their own study in 2016.^[6] The growth of interactive media and [citizen journalism](#) is fast altering the traditional distinction between news producer and passive audience and may in future lead to a deep-ploughing redefinition of what 'news' means and the role of the news industry.^[7]

- **Frequency:** Events that occur suddenly and fit well with the news organization's schedule are more likely to be reported than those that occur gradually or at inconvenient times of day or night. Long-term trends are not likely to receive much coverage.
- **Familiarity:** To do with people or places close to home.
- **Negativity:** Bad news is more newsworthy than good news.
- **Unexpectedness:** If an event is out of the ordinary it will have a greater effect than something that is an everyday occurrence.
- **Unambiguity:** Events whose implications are clear make for better copy than those that are open to more than one interpretation, or where any understanding of the implications depends on first understanding the complex background in which the events take place.
- **Personalization:** Events that can be portrayed as the actions of individuals will be more attractive than one in which there is no such "human interest."
- **Meaningfulness:** This relates to the sense of identification the audience has with the topic. "Cultural proximity" is a factor here—stories concerned with people who speak the same language, look the same, and share the same preoccupations as the audience receive more coverage than those concerned with people who speak different languages, look different and have different preoccupations.

- **Reference to elite nations:** Stories concerned with global powers receive more attention than those concerned with less influential nations.
- **Reference to elite persons:** Stories concerned with the rich, powerful, famous and infamous get more coverage.
- **Conflict:** Opposition of people or forces resulting in a dramatic effect. Stories with conflict are often quite newsworthy.
- **Consonance:** Stories that fit with the media's expectations receive more coverage than those that defy them (and for which they are thus unprepared). Note this appears to conflict with unexpectedness above. However, consonance really refers to the *media's readiness* to report an item.
- **Continuity:** A story that is already in the news gathers a kind of inertia. This is partly because the media organizations are already in place to report the story, and partly because previous reportage may have made the story more accessible to the public (making it less ambiguous).
- **Composition:** Stories must compete with one another for space in the media. For instance, editors may seek to provide a balance of different types of coverage, so that if there is an excess of foreign news for instance, the least important foreign story may have to make way for an item concerned with the domestic news. In this way the prominence given to a story depends not only on its own news values but also on those of competing stories. (Galtung and Ruge, 1965)
- **Competition:** Commercial or professional competition between media may lead journalists to endorse the news value given to a story by a rival.
- **Co-optation:** A story that is only marginally newsworthy in its own right may be covered if it is related to a major running story.
- **Prefabrication:** A story that is marginal in news terms but written and available may be selected ahead of a much more newsworthy story that must be researched and written from the ground up.
- **Predictability:** An event is more likely to be covered if it has been pre-scheduled. (Bell, 1991)
- **Time constraints:** Traditional news media such as radio, television and daily newspapers have strict deadlines and a short production cycle, which selects for items that can be researched and covered quickly.
- **Logistics:** Although eased by the availability of global communications even from remote regions, the ability to deploy and control production and reporting staff, and functionality of technical resources can determine whether a story is covered. (Schlesinger, 1987)
- **Data:** Media need to back up all of their stories with data in order to remain relevant and reliable. Reporters prefer to look at raw data in order to be able to take an unbiased perspective.

NEWSGATHERING - definition

The collection of information about current events, esp. for a news broadcast or publication.

Qualities and aptitude necessary for a reporter:

What are the qualities of a reporter?

The following are the basic qualities of a reporter or rather a good reporter:

1. Credibility is something that every good reporter should have. In other words, a reporter must exhibit characters and behaviors that make him or her to be believed and trusted by people.
2. A good reporter should be courageous and confident. Without courage and confidence it is difficult for a person to be a good reporter. Timidity on the part of any reporter will get them nowhere.
3. Curiosity is another very important quality of any good reporter. There is the need to be curious all the time. The spirit of curiosity helps the reporter get good stories.
4. A journalist should have a healthy skepticism. This means checking and rechecking information which is very important because every story is based on facts and evidence.
5. A reporter should be able to work fast and enthusiastically on any given story. News writing especially has a lot to do with deadlines. This therefore means that a good reporter should be able to work under pressure and meet deadlines. If you can't soak the pressure then it is going to be hard to work as a reporter.
6. A good reporter should be able to gather facts in a very careful and accurate way.
7. Reporters should be able to write well. By writing very well I mean writing clear and well-focused stories that is easy to understand by everyone. Good spellings, punctuations and grammar are also requirements.
8. Reporters should be able to write very good leads for their news stories and features.
9. A good reporter should have the habit of self-editing their copy before submitting it to their editors.

10. There is the need to have wide general knowledge on different issues.
11. A good reporter should have an eye for what is newsworthy and should be able to produce new stories without being told.
12. Another very important skill a good reporter should have is the skill of producing stories that are fair and balanced.
13. A good reporter should be skilled at taking notes.
14. A good reporter must be able to analyze and interpret information.
15. Must be good at asking the right questions at the right time.
16. The work of news gathering is quite an unpredictable one. One might never know when news will break or where it will happen. It is for this reason that a reporter should be able and willing to work at irregular hours.
17. A reporter should be a good team player and be capable of working with other reporters, photographers and even editors.
18. A good reporter should be able to take corrections and criticisms in the course of performing their job.
19. The most important characteristic of a reporter is ethical behavior. When a reporter fails to operate according to a strong ethical and moral code of behavior, that one individual's failing can damage the overall credibility of the news media in long-term, serious ways.

The above are some of the basic qualities that reporters should have regardless of whatever medium they are working – print media or broadcast media.

Characteristics of Good Reporters

Regardless of the news subject, news value or format and technology that delivers the information, someone must gather the facts and organize them to tell the story.

That person is called a reporter, and good reporters have some common characteristics that make them effective.

Even honest reporters seem to be making too many mistakes. As a result of major episodes of dishonesty combined with too many factual errors, readers and viewers of news are having a harder time believing what they read and see in news reports—even in the places they should

be able to trust. Polls show that the public's confidence in media is falling. Today, fewer than half of Americans refer to their trust in media as "fair" or better, while in 1976, 72 percent of Americans reported fair or substantial trust in the news media (Newport, 2007). It's no wonder. One major news program famously faked an explosion during an automobile safety test, and a number of other high-profile news outlets have had to confess to their staff members' lies, plagiarism and invented quotes.

If character is what we are when no one is looking, we hope that reporters operate as if they are the subject of a constant hidden-camera investigation. Temptations are great—to help a friend or to write the story without being absolutely certain of the facts. In addition, reporters have opportunities to use their power for personal financial gain. Many individuals and businesses could benefit from stories in the news, and they are sometimes willing to offer bribes to get their viewpoint expressed. Individuals and businesses may also offer to pay for a reporter's travel or may entertain reporters and editors with the same goal: getting the story they want in the news. If a reporter is grateful for an expensive meal and wants to return the favor with a news story, the story may not be objective—and the story will surely not look objective.

Our economy, as well as our democracy, depends on people dealing honestly with each other. We expect our citizenry to operate with some sort of moral foundation, and journalists especially need an ethical code. But what is ethics?

Ethics is a system of deciding what is right and wrong. As a student, you may have had to develop your own code of ethics to help you make decisions about cheating or plagiarism. As a reporter, you will surely be called on to make ethical choices, and you should give some thought to developing a personal process for making moral decisions.

The right ethical decision is not always clear, and even individuals with strong moral systems and the best of intentions can make mistakes. At the very least, journalists must examine their personal ethical codes and realize that behaving honestly in the pursuit of truth is the most important characteristic of a reporter. Honesty and credibility are the only product mainstream media have for sale.

Another important characteristic for a reporter is **curiosity or inquisitiveness**. Although some people may declare a lack of interest in certain subjects, the reporter may not. The reporter should be curious about everything, including science, psychology, literature, history, politics, differing cultures, children's games, animal behavior and economics. The reporter wants to understand all subject areas, because they eventually relate to or intertwine with news stories. A good reporter also has a desire to get the story right. Lunch conversations and water cooler chats are usually full of rumor, alleged conspiracies and sloppily drawn conclusions. There's great satisfaction in hearing others discuss an issue and being the one who healthily skepticism knows the real story—or the one who's willing to find the full story.

A healthy skepticism leads reporters to important information that others might miss and can be a vital characteristic for those who want to bring news to light. Skepticism takes the form of

constant questioning or continual doubt. When the city treasurer resigns and says it's because he wants a job with less stress and wants to spend more time with family, the reporter wonders if that is the real reason for the resignation. When a local company issues a news release announcing layoffs because of the need to "streamline operations," the reporter will be skeptical. Why the need to "streamline"? Could there be other reasons for the downsizing?

Please notice that the characteristic should be a healthy skepticism, not cynicism. Cynicism—a pervasive distrust of people's motives—is not a good characteristic for reporters. Reporters generally devote energy to bringing information to the public in the belief that an informed citizenry is able to make wise decisions. Furthermore, even though human beings can have tendencies toward selfishness, disregard for others and dishonesty, the media offer an important balance of power that helps keep people honest and helps weed out those who misuse their power. Doomsayers don't make good reporters, but those with a healthy skepticism help keep the system strong.

Persistence is a helpful characteristic for a reporter. When someone says no comment, some people may become discouraged, but a good reporter finds challenge in such a refusal and becomes more determined to get the story. The reporter goes on to ask, How can I get the person to agree to comment? Or how can I get the information another way?

Another important characteristic for a reporter is to enjoy **interacting with people**. It's hard to imagine anyone getting any pleasure out of a reporting if she doesn't enjoy talking to people. The job often involves approaching strangers and asking questions that many people would consider too personal to ask even their closest friends. Although you may not think of yourself as an extrovert, you may find that with a little practice and experience, talking with people can become enjoyable.

Regardless of whether an individual is an extrovert who enjoys working with people, anyone interested in working in a newsroom should be willing to be a **team player**. The process of putting a newscast together happens in a group of people. The reporters and anchors are most visible to the audience, but the producers, writers and assignment editors hold vital responsibilities as well. Just like most jobs, no one does it alone, and enjoying the group effort and recognizing the contributions of others will make the work much more pleasant.

Most successful professionals share the characteristic of **being organized**, and reporters need this skill as well. Working on deadlines and dealing with lots of different people on many different subjects require self-imposed structure. Reporters must manage their time effectively and give attention to managing many details and lots of information. The simple ability to keep names, addresses, phone numbers, fax numbers and e-mail addresses in an accessible format is an important job skill. Finding the name of a contact and a phone number quickly could mean the difference between getting or losing a story.

Broadcast reporters must also be willing to **accept criticism**. Everyone makes mistakes, and in the broadcast business the mistakes are usually seen by many thousands of people. News directors and producers should tell the reporter how to be more effective. Audience members

may write or call to criticize the story content or more personal aspects of a presentation, such as the reporter's delivery or appearance. Stations may bring in consultants to work with on-air personnel in making changes. Because of the nature of some stories, there will be people who will not like you. In short, the broadcast reporter will work more successfully by learning to accept criticism.

Reporters must also show **flexibility**. Those who want the routine of a 9 to 5 desk job should avoid the world of television news. Few reporters, editors and producers work Monday through Friday during normal business hours, and as your career advances, you'll probably work a variety of schedules that may include weekends.

Newsroom personnel must be able to change plans in an instant and make the change with a **positive attitude**. You may be on your way to cover a council meeting and be diverted to the scene of an accident. You may have dressed for a live shot in front of a theater and find yourself trudging through mud during a driving rain. Reporters and photographers work in a variety of settings and meet and interview all types of people. Although some days in the newsroom are routine, most days are not, requiring a person to be flexible.

Definition of News Reporting

News reporting involves discovering all relevant facts, selecting and presenting the important facts and weaving a comprehensive story. Reporting involves hard work, which in turn involves stamina and patience. The main function of journalistic profession is news reporting.

A reporter needs not only energy to spend long hours chasing a story, collecting facts from various sources in an effort to dig up the truth, he needs must have the will to pursue the course of his investigation to the very end in order to produce a really comprehensive story without any missing links or unanswered questions.

In the modern age news journalism the responsibilities of the press have grown manifold. These days, the people are governed by multiplicity of authorities, viz. Municipality, District Administration, State Government and the Central Government. Even non-governmental authorities are involved in the lives of the people in one-way or the other. Man cannot live alone. He is a social animal. The way his neighbours behave or act affects him. Man is thus anxious to know more about the world he lives in. Satisfaction of this curiosity is the major task of a good journalist.

The variety and the depth of news has, of late, increased manifold. In fact, newspapers, magazines and periodicals have become the main source of information for the people. This fact underscores the need for accuracy in news reporting. Giving inaccurate news or putting out news in a casual manner is fraught with grave dangers. A journalist, who is careless in news reporting or indulges in lies, is a disgrace to the profession. It is better to ease him out from this profession. If a journalist reports that 50 persons belonging to a particular community, died as a result of communal riot when in fact only 5 persons had lost their lives, his misreporting can trigger off a major communal flare up and pose grave threat to law and order.

A journalist should not only perform unbiased news reporting but should bear full responsibility for the accuracy of the facts

Types of News Reporting

There are different types of news reporting which are as under:--

1. Investigative Reporting
2. Court Reporting
3. Accidence Reporting
4. Political Reporting
5. Fashion Reporting
6. Business Reporting
7. Sports Reporting
8. Specialized Reporting

Requisites of News Reporting

A News Reporter should follow the following steps

1. A reporter must appreciate the importance of having a good reputation for absolute reliability. For this purpose he must be systematic in his habits and punctual in keeping his appointments. By observing these principles, every reporter can make his path smooth and trouble free.
2. A reporter should have the ability of news reporting and writing skills in the language of his paper. He should possess the quality to compose in a condensed manner as per allowable space.
3. The reporter of any local newspaper occupies a unique position and he becomes quite popular with the people of his town. He reports the local events, functions, fairs, socials etc. and comes closer to the social life of the town. A reporter should follow some professional ethics in his work. Sometimes, while engaged in his profession, he may come to some persons and develop confidential relations with them.
4. Sometimes, a reporter may be asked to write short length paragraphs regarding the local intelligence or about the city news. For this he should keep his eyes and ears open and develop a nose for local news. He should develop a system to ensure that none of the interesting news is missed by him. He should try to know the secretaries of social, religious, political, musical dramatic, legal, official and other organizations and should call upon them regularly to get some interesting stories. He should make inquiries from the police regarding news of accidents and crimes. He should also contact the fire-station for the particulars of local fires.
5. Every reporter should keep an engagement diary. In this way he can systematize his working and attend to all his appointments properly and punctually. By keeping an engagement diary he can know about the important engagements and other events in the future and cover them without fail.
6. The reporter should not forget to give a head line to his typed copy. Every copy which goes to the printer to be set is given a catchline. The catchline is a key word, because

during the production it identifies all the sheets of the copy. Tile catchline is given on each sheet so that the printer can collate the whole story. The catchline should be chosen very carefully. It is better to choose an uncommon word, which may not resemble with another news catchline.

Unit 5: Writing of Reports:

5 Ws and 1 H

What are the Five Ws and One H? They are **Who, What, Why, When, Where** and **How**. Why are the Five Ws and One H important? Journalism purists will argue your story isn't complete until you answer all six questions. It's hard to argue this point, since missing any of these questions leaves a hole in your story. Even if you're not reporting on the news of the day, this concept could be useful in many professional writing scenarios.

In case it's not obvious what information you would be looking to gather from each of the six questions, let's look at what information you might want to gather with the Five Ws and One H if you were reporting on *The Three Little Pigs*:

- **Who was involved?** The three little pigs (the first pig, the second pig and the third pig) and The Big Bad Wolf (a.k.a. Wolf).
- **What happened?** Each pig constructed a house out of different materials (straw, sticks and bricks). Wolf (allegedly) threatened to blow over their houses and is believed to have destroyed both the straw and stick homes at this time. Pig one and two were able to flee to the brick house, where they remain at the moment. We're still waiting to hear from local authorities, but it looks like the Wolf may have been injured while attempting to enter the brick house.
- **Where did it take place?** Outside a straw house, a stick house and a brick house.
- **When did it take place?** At various times throughout the day.
- **Why did it happen?** Apparently the Big Bad Wolf was trying to eat the pigs. Several eyewitnesses recall the Wolf taunting the pigs before he destroyed the straw and stick homes by chanting, "Little pigs, little pigs, let me in." The pigs apparently scoffed at the Wolf's idle treats, saying "Not by the hair of our chinny, chin chins." It's believed this angered the Wolf and led to him blowing the houses down.
- **How did it happen?** It would appear the first two homes were not built to withstand the Wolf's powerful breath. The incident inside the brick house is still being investigated, but early indications suggest the Wolf fell into a boiling pot of water when trying to enter the house through the chimney.

It's a silly example, but you can see how getting answers to these six questions can really help you get all the information needed to write an accurate report. Next time you are preparing interview questions or outlining a story, consider walking through the Five Ws and One H to see if you left anything out.

***“I keep six honest serving-men, (They taught me all I knew);
Their names are What and Why and When, And How and Where and Who” – Rudyard Kipling***

Headline writing:

Writing great headlines is an art. You can bang out the most interesting article ever written, but if it doesn't have an attention-grabbing headline, it's likely to be passed over.

Whether you're at a newspaper, news website, or blog, a great headline (or "hed") will always get more eyeballs scanning your copy.

The challenge is to write a hed that's as compelling, catchy and detailed as possible, using as few words as possible. Headlines, after all, have to fit the space they're given on the page.

Headline size is determined by three parameters: the width, defined by the number of columns the hed will have; the depth, meaning is the hed one line or two (known by editors as a "single deck" or a "double deck"); and the font size. Headlines can run anywhere from something small - say 18 point - all the way up to banner front-page heds that can be 72 points or bigger.

Here are some headline-writing tips to follow:

BE ACCURATE

This is most important. A headline should entice readers but it shouldn't oversell or distort what the story is about. Always stay true to the spirit and meaning of the article.

KEEP IT SHORT

This seems obvious; headlines are by nature short. But when space limitations aren't a consideration (as on a blog, for instance) writers sometimes get verbose with their heds. Shorter is better.

FILL THE SPACE

If you're writing a headline to fill a specific space in a newspaper, avoid leaving too much empty space (what editors call white space) at the end of the hed. Always fill the specified space as best you can.

DON'T REPEAT THE LEDE

The headline, like the lede, should focus on the main point of the story. But if the hed and the lede are too similar the lede will become redundant.

Try to use slightly different wording in the headline.

BE DIRECT

Headlines aren't the place to be obscure; a direct, straightforward headline gets your point across more effectively.

USE ACTIVE VOICE

Remember the Subject-Verb-Object formula from newswriting? That's also the best model for headlines. Start with your subject, write in the active voice, and your headline will convey more information using fewer words.

WRITE IN PRESENT TENSE

Even if most news stories are written in the past tense, headlines should almost always use the present tense.

AVOID BAD BREAKS

A bad break is when a hed with more than one line splits a prepositional phrase, an adjective and noun, an adverb and verb, or a proper name.

Example:

Obama hosts White House dinner.

Obviously, "White House" should not be split from the first line to the second.

Here's a better way to do it:

Obama hosts dinner at the White House

MAKE YOUR HEADLINE APPROPRIATE TO THE STORY

A humorous headline may work with a lighthearted story, but it most definitely wouldn't be appropriate for an article about someone being murdered. The tone of the headline should match the tone of the story.

KNOW WHERE TO CAPITALIZE

Always capitalize the first word of the headline and any proper names. Don't capitalize every word unless that's the style of your particular publication.

Types of Leads

In many newsrooms, editors will take one hard look at the lead of the article written by a reporter and decide whether the story will make it to the cover page or be relegated to the dark depths of the inside pages. That is why it is often said that a lead can make or break a story.

Journalism educators will tell you that summary leads are sacrosanct for breaking news stories and punch leads are to be avoided for soft features. But the only rule for writing a power-packed article is that there are no rules...just ensure it is interesting, packs a punch and leaves your reader transfixed.

This is especially true in today's time when any news or information loses its breaking status by the time it reaches its readers in print form or even if you are analyzing it through online articles/blogs. That is why it is not enough to just state facts in a lead when you write a piece. You have to make sure that it makes your reader take notice.... Do that and you've already won them over. To grab your reader's attention, an imaginative lead often comes in handy, be it for talking about a tornado that hit a village or a bikers' group that rides vintage wheels.

That said it is always better to follow some guidelines on the use of various leads when you are a beginner, so that you can ensure that those who read your story would be eager to go beyond the lead.

The Different Types of leads –

1. Summary lead – This is the most common and widely used lead especially in newspapers and most of us have come across these while browsing stories with the morning cuppa. These are straight leads that just state the facts and include the who, where, what, when, why and sometimes even the how of the event or happening. Traditionally, summary leads have been used to report breaking news or a developing story. Of late, most breaking news reaches us through electronic media or mobile much before the print form, so even if you apply the summary to your lead, it makes better sense to start with the why, what and the how rather than the who, when and where.

For e.g. look at this lead of a recent news report —

A suspected al-Qaeda threat prompted the United States to issue a rare worldwide travel alert Friday, just a day after it announced that it would shutter 21 US embassies across the Muslim world this weekend.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-issues-worldwide-travel-alert-amid-terrorism-fears/2013/08/02/22b9c05e-fb84-11e2-a369-d1954abcb7e3_story.html

The purpose of such leads is clear – to give specific information without wasting too much time. Straight leads need not be boring and can be made sharp and lively.

2. Punch lead – It uses strong verbs and short sentences that are meant to create an impact. The purpose of this type of lead is exactly that – giving a jolt so that readers will sit up and take notice.

E.g. — The President is dead.

The punch lead is most often used in news stories and can be used in news features where you want to convey a hard-hitting message to the readers or to reveal some high-voltage piece of information. To give an example, if you are writing an investigative story about a thick wooded forest that has been destroyed because of deforestation and construction activity, a lead simply saying “The trees are gone” or “the birds have flown away” will give the desired impact. But such leads should be used sparingly and only when the story warrants it otherwise it will look contrived. And if you decide to begin with such a lead, you should be sure to have equally impactful information in the paragraphs that follow otherwise your readers would be disappointed.

3. **The contrast lead** – This lead uses two different thoughts or two sentences that are exactly opposite to each other in the opening paragraph to make a strong statement. The contrast in the lead is employed to drive home the point about a particular event, person or happening. For e.g. pitting joy against sorrow, new against old, tragedy against happiness are some of the ways to do it. Just read the lead of this story to understand what I am talking about – <http://www.bangaloremirror.com/article/125/201307242013072420151388769e4e0a0/-Iblur-Lake-has-seen-it-all-Water-to-weeds-and-trash-.html>

In this news report, the earlier lush state of the lake is compared to its present sorry state to drive home the point that it is dying and needs immediate attention. Contrast leads are used for all kind of stories – news, features, reviews etc but not often for breaking news.

4. **Anecdotal lead** – This one begins, as is obvious, with an anecdote. Often, an interesting anecdote can pull in the readers’ attention like no amount of statistics and straight narration of facts can. This kind of lead is rarely used for breaking news but works well for both soft stories and news-based features. But a word of caution, don’t get carried away with the anecdote and make a mess of the broader point that you want to talk about.

Investigative story –

http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2012/04/29/nursing_home_residents_with_dementia_often_given_antipsychotics_despite_health_warnings/?page=full

Travel

http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/travel/traveling-with-a-disability-in-europe/2013/07/25/0dc6ecea-c3f7-11e2-8c3b-0b5e9247e8ca_story.html

5. **Descriptive lead** – As the name suggests, this type of lead goes into great detail to describe the scene or person that makes up the subject of the story. The idea is to create visual impact. So if you are writing a news report about a high-profile murder, instead of using a boring summary lead informing who was murdered and why, you could make the piece more impactful by graphically describing the crime scene.

Check out this news story which effectively uses a descriptive lead to convey the news about a mid-air crash –

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/trafficandcommuting/fighter-jet-crash-leads-to-harrowing-ocean-rescue/2013/08/02/0a947162-fb8f-11e2-a369-d1954abcb7e3_story.html?hpid=z3

Many leads do not really fall into particular categories but use the features of different types of leads to create a unique beginning. The following food review is an altered version of a summary lead but it also has elements of a descriptive one. What matters is that it makes for interesting reading. See for yourself —

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/gog/restaurants/lauriol-plaza,792217.html>

There are also other leads such as question lead, quotation lead etc but are better used only when absolutely necessary.

Report Writing:

Journalism is a fast paced industry, requiring reporters to get the facts about newsworthy events and to write about them before a deadline strikes. It takes a certain amount of skill to be able to do this. Despite the pace, news reporters must adhere to high standards, and should have a firm understanding of news writing.

Know what you're going to write about. Stories are usually assigned by an editor. However, newsworthy events can happen anytime, anywhere, and alert reporters develop a good nose for news. It helps to have as many contacts as possible to alert you when news worthy events happen.

Get all the facts first. Journalists know this as the five W's and one H which pertain to who, what, where, when, why and how. These are the most important things to look for.

Look at the details. Most news isn't as straightforward as it seems. Be sure to look at a story from different angles, and get to know the subjects of a story more intimately. It is sad to know that a woman is killed by a drunk driver, for example. But when you find out that the victim was an honor student and a very active member of a charity, it gives the story more depth and personality.

Double-check facts to avoid errors. Sources may also make mistakes when giving you information and some may even deceive you. It is wise to get in touch with other sources. In a shooting incident, for example, getting the facts from the police and from both the criminal and victim is not enough. You should also interview other witnesses who may give information that will reveal more about the incident.

Start writing the news, beginning with the lead. The lead is what hooks your readers and urges them to read on. Most leads are usually a summary of the story, but they can also be dramatic or take the form of a question or a quote in order to gain and retain reader interest. Always use the active voice in reporting. The passive voice is awkward and may discourage readers from reading on.

Write the body of the article. The most common form of a news report is the inverted pyramid. Here, the important information is given in the first few -- if not the first -- paragraphs. Other

information relating to the story follows. This form is common because it allows editors to delete the last paragraphs if there are space constraints.

Check your article for errors. If time permits, leave the article for a moment then read through it again with a fresh eye. Newspaper publications usually have proofreaders and editors to check for errors but keep in mind that you are the first line of defense. Grammar mistakes are embarrassing, and factual errors can result in a lawsuit.

- Be as simple and as concise as possible. Always eliminate needless words and avoid using slang and technical jargon. Your article has to be read and understood by everyone.

A report concentrates primarily on information, though it may well be leading to a particular conclusion or opinion

1. Role, Audience, Purpose, Tone. = Before you start writing your report, know who your readership is.
2. Report writing presents factual information using details
3. Use headings to make it clear what your main points are: begin with one major heading, and use sub-headings throughout.
4. Sub-headings serve to divide your writing into shorter, focused sections
5. Before you start writing, decide on the headings you want to use and make lists under these headings; this ensures that your final piece presents the facts in an organized way.
6. The sections or paragraphs of a report are shorter than articles, essays, and stories. Brevity allows the reader to access and quickly assess the information.
7. Paragraphing is shorter too. Similar to newspapers: 2-4 sentences
8. Use of bullets is acceptable from time to time.

Journalistic Report Writing: news or magazines

The key points given above about report writing also apply to the writing of journalistic reports. However, these reports have a few special features:

1. They usually start with a headline.
2. The headline should set the tone for what comes after – are you reporting a tragic or shocking event, or a funny or surprising event, or are you giving a straightforward account of a recent political decision, for example?
3. A journalistic report often contains transcripts (written records) of interviews, which are reported verbatim (word for word). If you choose this technique, you must either use speech marks correctly or turn the interview into reported speech.